

ADVOCATE

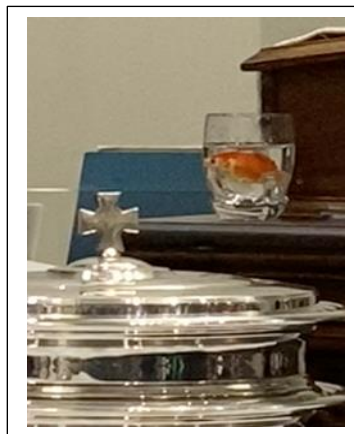
First Presbyterian Church
41 West College Avenue
Westerville, Ohio 43081-2103
614-882-3155 Phone
www.westervillefirstpresbyterian.org

July 2024

Reluctantly, We Said Goodbye

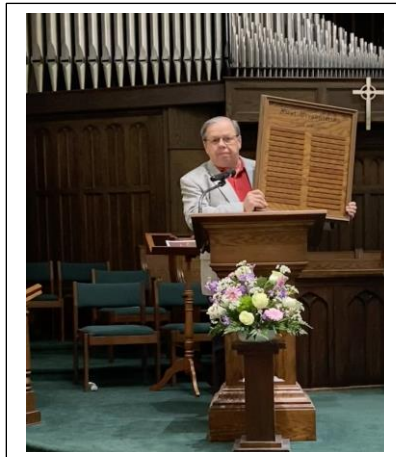
When Rev. Mark Gauen preached his last sermon at our church on June 2, he was the second-longest serving pastor to lead this congregation. He retired after more than 26 years with us, so it was befitting that we sent him off with a bang. Some somber and meaningful moments were topped with a few comic touches (like a goldfish in Mark's water glass on the pulpit – just like on his first Sunday with us in 1998).

We didn't just say goodbye to Mark, though. We also will miss his wife Kathy, with her big smile and bigger heart. Fortunately, at least some of the Gauen "children" will remain in our church, contributing greatly to our programs with their compassion, dedication, and many skills.

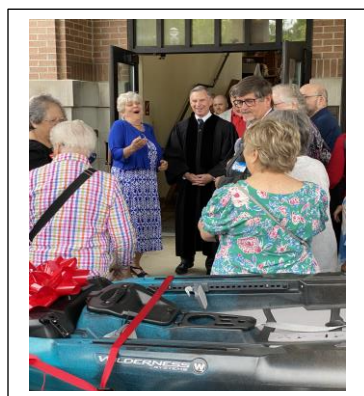


Pastor Mark donated his stole to be preserved in our time capsule in a special retirement benediction conducted by Rev. Kathy Nice, acting head presbyter at the Presbytery of Scioto Valley. In the first photo below, Mark lays the stole on the communion table.

In the middle photo, Jim Hines displays the church's wooden plaque with the names of our previous pastors carved into it. The plaque has hung on our sanctuary walls for decades. Pastor Mark's name is now included, of course. The third photo below shows Rev. Nancy Dumford, our Interim Transitional Pastor, leading prayers during the service.



After the service, we presented Pastor Mark with a Wilderness Systems fishing kayak and trailer (and an empty cradle to hold Kathy's kayak) – the combined gift of many parishioners. The middle photo shows a surprised and delighted Mark and Kathy, seeing the new kayak for the first time. And we wound up the festivities with a delicious catered luncheon served to roughly 150 people, dining both indoors and out.



Most photos by Mike Krotz

Thoughts on Transition

This pithy description of church pastoral transitions really captures the scope of the process:

Transition starts with an ending and finishes with a beginning.

The idea of transition first entered our congregation when Pastor Mark announced his decision to retire last fall. Since then, our church has achieved many milestones, including appointing two transition coordinators, hiring an interim pastor, celebrating our love and appreciation for Mark and Kathy Gauen in their fruitful 26+ years of ministry, and beginning anew with a different voice in the pulpit. Well done.

Recently, I shared with the leaders of the church that there are really three phases of a good transition. **Phase 1:** Leaving/Losing/Letting Go; **Phase 2:** The Neutral Zone; and **Phase 3:** A New Beginning. Each phase has unique work to be done, and each helps the congregation to lower anxiety, encourage good mental health, and prepare to receive a new pastor.

On a lighter note, I have a friend who is currently serving her fourth congregation in transition. She uses a scene from the movie “Shrek” to explain to her congregations what transition may feel like. “Pastor” Shrek is trying to get Donkey to cross a scary bridge, to complete the task they set out to do. I don’t believe that I would be effective in emulating Shrek’s style, but it is worth a quick look to identify the analogy to our situation.

[Shrek & Donkey](https://youtu.be/Za2QkHEAE9Q?si=03XfomeUxLozwHCJ) [https://youtu.be/Za2QkHEAE9Q?si=03XfomeUxLozwHCJ]

Pastor Nancy

Welcoming Visitors Is Everyone’s Role

One thing was clear in the Step Forward survey results: we value our reputation as a welcoming congregation. So what is your role in welcoming visitors?

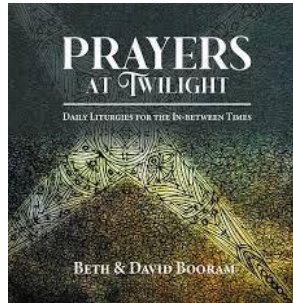
We all share in perpetuating our welcoming reputation. We’ve begun wearing name tags on Sundays to help visitors, newcomers—and current members! We are always willing to extend a hand and a hello. But let’s take Step Forward a step further.

When you greet a newcomer, make sure they receive a welcoming scroll, which you’ll find in a basket in the Gauen Gathering Area. Created by Deacon Mary Lee Jones, these scrolls include a welcoming letter from First Presbyterian, a current edition of the *Advocate*, a Visitors Information card, and a First Pres pen, tied up with a bow. Visitors do appreciate receiving them.

Prayers at Twilight

Sunday Evenings, August 4, 11, 18, 25

7:30-8:15 pm



This August, we will start a new prayer group on Sunday nights at 7:30 PM in the sanctuary. We will use the guidebook *Prayers at Twilight* to help us pray in a way that foster seeing all of life as a place to encounter God. With themes that include vocation, beauty, presence, conversation, hospitality, and wholeness, we will explore contemplative prayer together. No need to bring anything, just come and enjoy. This group will be led by Pastor Nancy.

The Blessing Box

The Blessing Box is located on the east side of the church building, facing State St., and serves as a small pantry. This is a deacon-sponsored project. **“Take what you need; leave what you can”** is the simple message. Those who leave items are blessed in giving. Those in need are blessed in receiving. This is a community project and an anonymous program.

Please consider donating to this meaningful mission to show God’s love in a tangible way. The following lists the most needed items. Those highlighted are low in supply:

- Chicken and tuna packets or cans
- Other sources of protein: peanut butter, canned meat
- Crackers with cheese or peanut butter and breakfast or protein bars and snacks
- Other non-perishable foods, e.g. juice boxes, fruit cups
- Bottled water
- Toiletries including hand soap, shaving cream, razors, shampoo, toothbrushes and toothpaste, and deodorant
- Personal hygiene products
- Diaper and baby wipes, Laundry detergent
- Small cans or pouches of pet food

Items can be dropped off at the church throughout the week, including Sundays. Please place your donated items on the storage shelves under the rear entry stairs near the Pike County crates. If canned goods or other items are not selected, they are donated to Pike County. Nothing is wasted. Please consider donating. Thank you.

For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger and you invited me in. (Matthew 25:35)

Rehoboth

From Sharon and John Davis:

On a not-so-happy note, our last delivery to Rehoboth will be July 22. This organization in Rehoboth, Ohio, offers free clothing to residents in need, but the task has outgrown us! Rehoboth is still open and will accept non-food items, but John and I must give up making the deliveries from our church. Let us know if you would like to take over the task. We'd be glad to answer questions. THANKS for all of your contributions over the years.

John & Sharon Davis

Another Way to Serve Our Church

The Worship and Music Committee has a pressing need for people to sign up for communion preparation. This easy, once-a-month activity requires about 45 minutes on Saturday and Sunday for preparation and set up. You can find clear, complete instructions in the white binder, and an experienced person will be there to guide you. Please sign up for this vital church activity—for one Sunday or several. Thank you for your consideration! Contact Marilyn Linkous with any questions.

Have You Heard of the People's Fund?

The People's Fund was established long ago to provide temporary financial assistance to people in dire need. Its aim is to assist in alleviating a temporary financial crisis. If you or someone you know would benefit from the People's Fund, please contact our pastor.

The Stewardship and Finance Committee assists the Treasurer in year-end accounting for this fund, which comes from direct donations and loose offering in the offering plates. Currently, our fund has a strong balance and is available as a need arises.

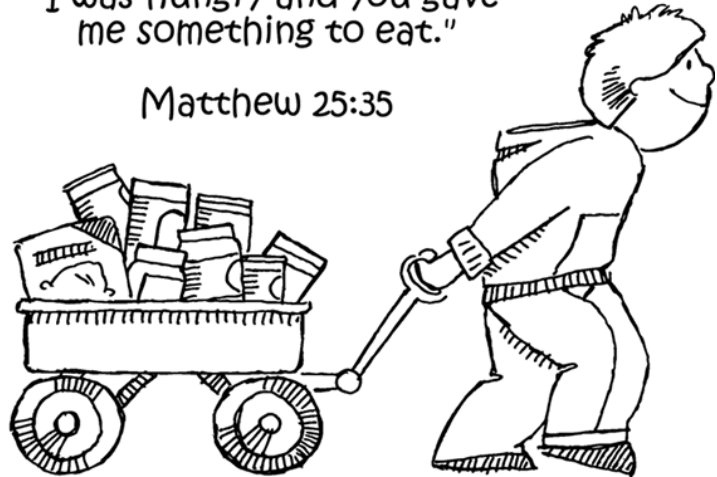
Pike County Donations

Members of First Presbyterian have collected food and transported it to the Pike Outreach Food Pantry in Waverly, Ohio, for 30 years, helping to feed people in one of the poorest counties in the state.

Sharon and John Davis have spearheaded this effort since the beginning, transporting food in their small car on many occasions. Over the years, other church members have gathered, loaded, and transported food alongside Sharon and John. At the present time, Bob Doherty transports food in a van that is generously provided by his employer. After we have gathered a vanload of food, about every 2-3 months, Bob makes the trip.

"I was hungry and you gave me something to eat."

Matthew 25:35



Summertime is very difficult for Pike County families. Children are not receiving breakfast and lunch in school every day, so food budgets are even tighter than during the rest of the year.

How can we help Pike County? Please bring non-perishable food to the church. Baskets at the rear entrance make it easy. Items that are always needed:

- * canned goods (vegetables, fruit, beans, tomatoes, soup)
- * canned meats, stew, fish
- * breakfast cereals
- * whole grain pasta
- * brown rice
- * peanut butter

An alternative to shopping and bringing groceries is to give money so the Food Pantry can purchase fresh produce and perishables. You can donate through the church (make a check out to First Presbyterian and write Pike County in the memo) or give directly to Pike Outreach: <https://pikeoutreach.org/>.

Our brothers and sisters in Pike County wish they could thank us in person for our continuing generosity!

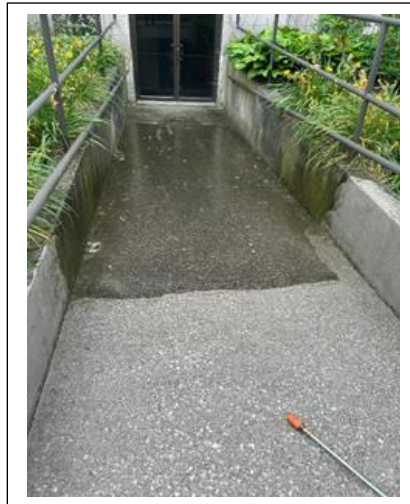
Former Member Recognized for Academic Work

Andrew Monteith, son of Gene and Sherri Monteith and a former First Presbyterian member, was awarded the British Association of American Studies/Arthur Miller Foundation First Book Award for 2024. Andrew is an assistant professor of religious studies at Elon University in North Carolina. His book, [Christian Nationalism and the Birth of the War on Drugs](#), was published last June.

The *Advocate* is a great way to keep track of First Pres kids after they grow up and move away!

Power Washing, Thanks to Administrative Services

Church member Kenny Goble kindly volunteered to power wash our steps, walk, and ramp. What a difference he made! Many thanks to Kenny and the Administrative Services Committee. They do a miraculous job of caring for our church!



The Church's May Financial Report

6/1/2024
01:05 pm

First Presbyterian Church
Treasurer's Report, Majors with Annual Budget
Finance year 2024, May

Book 01: Operating	Actual May 2024	Actual as of 5/31/2024	Budget as of 5/31/2024	Budget 2024
Income				
01 - Budgeted Contributions	21,196.00	144,088.05	128,149.20	307,558.08
02 - Administrative Services	312.50	762.50	416.65	999.96
03 - Christian Education	0.00	35.00	83.35	200.04
05 - Membership & Evangelism	0.00	0.00	83.35	200.04
08 - Worship	132.00	1,230.11	1,083.35	2,600.04
Income:	21,640.50	146,115.66	129,815.90	311,558.16
Expense				
01 - Personnel	26,358.92	94,928.16	110,339.13	232,896.24
02 - Administrative Services	7,328.91	24,693.38	23,579.20	53,510.08
03 - Christian Education	0.00	212.41	1,875.00	4,500.00
05 - Membership/Evangelism/Events	0.00	578.26	1,479.15	3,549.96
06 - Stewardship	0.00	2,720.00	3,095.85	21,950.04
07 - Outreach	156.95	2,068.01	2,816.70	8,800.00
08 - Worship	169.27	2,786.64	2,929.15	6,625.00
09 - Deacons	0.00	0.00	104.15	250.00
10 - Communications and Technology	446.00	3,159.32	3,512.50	8,430.00
Expense:	34,460.05	131,146.18	149,730.83	340,511.32
 Summary: Book 01: Operating				
	Actual May 2024	Actual as of 5/31/2024	Budget as of 5/31/2024	Budget 2024
Income:	21,640.50	146,115.66	129,815.90	311,558.16
- Expense:	34,460.05	131,146.18	149,730.83	340,511.32
Net Income:	-12,819.55	14,969.48	-19,914.93	-28,953.16

June Session Actions

The June Session Meeting was moderated by General Presbyter Kathy Nice, who spent time talking to the Session about the future. Rev. Nancy Dumford gave a short presentation about the phases and goals of Pastoral Transition. Each committee chair gave a report and Anne Bates gave a report from the Deacon Board.

Session Actions included:

- Approve minutes from the 5/13/2024 regular session meeting.
- Approve minutes from the 5/19/2024 congregational meeting.
- Accept the May financials.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

PARISH PARTIES MEET & GREET

The Deacons will be hosting several Parish Parties this summer to connect with others in your parish, and to meet Rev. Nancy Dumford.

If you can not make the timeslot with your parish, we hope you will choose a time that is convenient for you and your family. Your Deacon will be reaching out to you in the next few weeks for your RSVP.

Light snacks and refreshments will be served!

July 28 before church 9:00 - 10:00

Deacons: Vicki Moon, Jeff Walland, Bernie Simpkins

July 28 after church 11:30 - 12:30

Deacons: Karen and Harrison Gaines, MaryLee Jones

August 11 after church 11:30-12:30

Deacons: Jen Henson, Ceryl Marquez and SharoSept 15 - after church 11:30-12:30

Sept 15 - after church 11:30-12:30

Deacons: Anne Bates, Audra Hauff and Deb Gamble

Youth Ministries at First Presbyterian

Christian Education Committee Gathering

Our Christian Education Committee recently held a pizza lunch to facilitate a conversation about the needs and ideas for the under-45 demographic group of our congregation. We had 14 adults and children attend, with everyone giving input. Strengthening our programs for children, youth, young singles, and families is a vital priority. It surfaced in the Step Forward report last fall and fits within our Matthew 25 priority of Vital Congregations. The group members affirmed the desire to hire a new Children and Youth Minister and to create a plan for the next six months that would offer activities and opportunities for gathering and connecting with new guests. We invite the congregation to join us in praying for growth and direction in this vital aspect of our ministry.



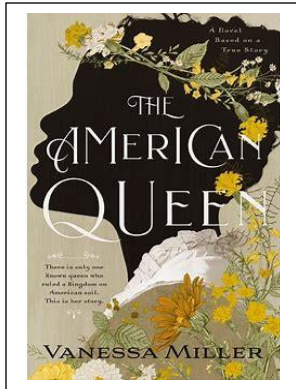
Farmers' Market Ministry



First Presbyterian Church is continuing its Farmers' Market Ministry again this year, and our CE department is supporting this mission outreach by helping to staff the market. We are asking families with children to sign up for one Saturday morning from 9:00-11:30 during the summer. You will be paired with experienced Market helpers from the church, and together you will set up our church's booth and entertain the children with bubbles, sidewalk chalk, and other fun outdoor activities. When the Market is over, you will take down the booth and store the materials back in the church. This is an excellent activity for children of all ages, and older children can receive service hour benefits, if needed. This ministry helps entertain the kids who come to the market and is a great way to promote our church. You may sign up at:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0F4EA5AA28A1FE3-48546200-farmers>

The American Queen by Vanessa Miller



This novel is based on the true story of the Kingdom of the Happy Land that existed in the Appalachian Mountains of North Carolina. The Happy Landers were formerly enslaved in Mississippi before the Civil War. Queen Louella ruled with grace and honor over a society that made sure all would be cared for and treated with respect after enduring the dehumanization and demoralization that came with slavery.

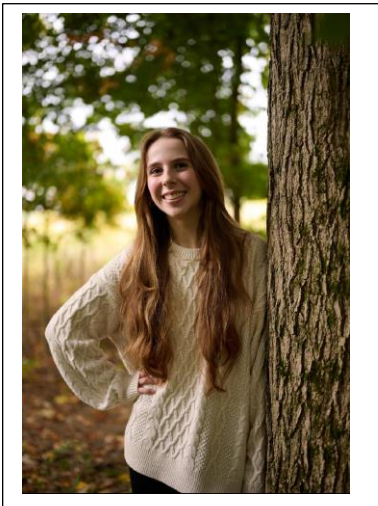
Review offered by Mary Lee

Jones

Volunteer Photographer(s)

We are seeking anyone interested in photographing group meetings and special events (i.e. Farmers' Market, Ring Our Bell, awards, etc.) and supplying those photos to our newsletter editor, Linda Barr, for publication in the *Advocate*. Please contact Pastor Nancy if you would like to utilize your skills to meet this request.

Another New Graduate!



Leah Bichon graduated from Westerville Central High School this spring, earning a 4.0 grade point average. She is currently working at 5 Below and babysitting as she considers tentative plans to enroll at Wright State University and study dermatology.

Thank You, 1ST Pres – from Bev Etling

Thank you, congregation, for your support of my recent concert on June 9. It was a personal recital, but when I share my music, I think of it like a big party where everyone is welcome and will find some fun and joy! Beginning my program with songs from The Sound of Music, plus “My God (My Guy)” and “I Don’t Know How to Love Him” from Jesus Christ, Superstar, I couldn’t help but bring out a nun costume I had worn more than 25 years ago...in my former life? No! In a show that featured a song from Sister Act. When I entered the sanctuary at my concert, laughter started in the back as the audience saw me walking down the aisle and grew until I was standing in front of everyone, and applause followed. I have never had a reaction like that before to anything I have performed. I found it hard to keep a straight face myself. I felt the love and support from the audience throughout the entire program!

I also want to thank my talented accomplices, young Everett Etling on the accordion and Megan Rainey on the piano. And I really appreciate help from the Membership/Evangelism/Events Committee and Deacons for acting as hosts and providing cookies and juice. It was good to see so many people lingering and interacting with each other afterward. Some had never been to our church before, so you are welcome for my little part in evangelism that day.

A few of you have asked about obtaining a recording of the concert. I am deeply humbled by that. The man who did the recording for me sent me a link last week for both audio and video recordings. I share that below so you may download it. It does have a time limit as to how long it will be available on Google, so open it soon and make a copy for yourself. If you cannot do that, you can obtain a copy from me directly. Anyone who has this link should have access to the videos and audio files online.

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1j2O4Q_KijspjxA2CV-_NWk-WZcZxYgQl?usp=drive_link



Proclaiming: I'M SHY!!!

With respect for those
who serve The Lord!

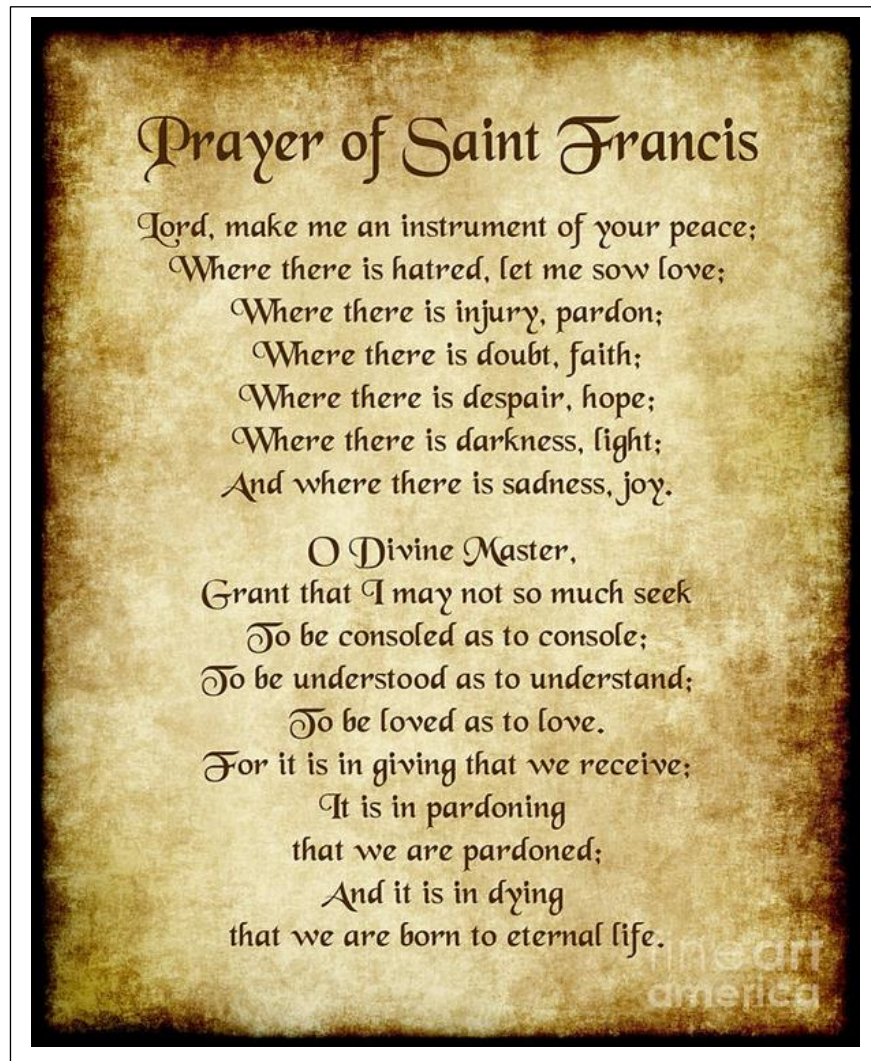


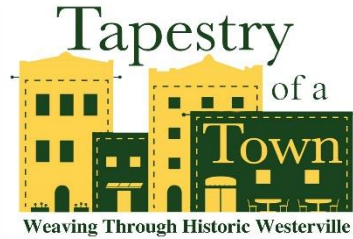
Also from Bev:

Dear friends,

On Sunday, June 23, I had the honor of singing an arrangement of “The Prayer of St. Francis.” Many of you have heard another arrangement of this sung or read as a poem. Accompanied by Todd Wise on guitar, I sang this along with using American Sign Language. This was the way Kristen Chenoweth performed the song on a sacred music television special during the 2023 Advent season. This new version of the music was written by Ms. Chenoweth along with Vince Gill. The song was an abridged version of the complete prayer, which I have included here. The words spoke to me, and I hope they will do the same for you.

In Christ, Bev Etling





Westerville Habitat Partnership's Tapestry of a Town **Sunday, July 28, 1-5 pm**

The annual tour of our special town is on! Plan to visit iconic businesses, public buildings, and private homes on Sunday, July 28, from 1 - 5 pm. Your \$20 ticket includes a souvenir booklet of information with photos and a map for the self-guided tour. Tickets are available at church on Sundays, July 7 through July 28, paid for with cash or a check made out to "Westerville Habitat Partnership." You can also purchase tickets from our web site: westervillehabitatpartnership.org using your credit card. You will pick up these tickets the day of the tour at City Hall, starting at 12:45. Or scan the QR code below.

This year's sites include Grace Lutheran Church, W.A.R.M., Good Vibes Winery, the Local History Museum at the Library, Blend Candle Company, High Bank Distillery, Howard House and Cowan Hall on Otterbein's campus, Longfellow School, and a mid-century modern residence.

Every penny of ticket sales will go toward home-building projects of our local Habitat for Humanity Partnership. Our church is a longtime member of the Partnership, along with four other local congregations and Columbus Academy. Learn our town's unique history! Support a great cause! And even get some exercise (although you may want to drive part of it)!



Event Update

Genealogy Club: Thursday, July 18, 7:00 pm



Our next meeting will be July 18 at 7:00. Van Young will speak in the Knox Room on “The History of US Immigration.” Van regularly speaks on US history topics at the Westerville Senior Center. He is always enthusiastic, up-to-date, and not afraid to tackle controversial topics. His recent talk on Medicare was so interesting that some of us stayed afterward to continue the discussion.

October 17 at 7:00--We will meet at the Westerville Library for a talk by librarian Elizabeth Tait on Westerville Library Genealogy Resources. Zoom will not be available.

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

Dine Out: Friday, July 12, 6:30 pm

On Friday, July 12, we will meet to enjoy dinner together at Wendell’s Pub, 925 North State Street, near Meijer’s. We have dined there several times and always enjoy it. Members and friends of the church are all welcome. Please contact Jim Hines to make reservations or ask questions.

Ladies’ Night Out: Tuesday, July 16, 6:30 pm

We had a big group and a great time at Rusty Bucket in June and look forward to getting together again on July 16. The restaurant is still to be determined, but it will be fun! Watch the church bulletin and daily emails for information. Suggestions? Contact Diana Westfall (dwestfa@gmail.com)

Fabrics of Faith: Monday, July 22, 1-3:00 pm

Our group creates handmade gifts for those in, or connected to, our church family. Grab your knitting needles or crochet hook or quilt squares and join us! For information, call Beckey Stamm. See you there!

Presbyterian 9 Patchers: Tuesday, August 20, 12:00 – 3:00 pm

The P9P (Presbyterian 9 Patchers) create quilts to be donated to others. We will not be meeting in July, so our next meeting is on Tuesday, August 20, in the basement meeting area. If you wish, bring your machine and any project you’re working on. No project, no problem! There are unfinished projects at the church. If you just want to come and visit, that would be great!

Adult Growth and Development

ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN			
Activity	When	Where	What
Monday Seminar	Mondays 4:00-5:00 p.m.	Zoom Meetings - Interested? Contact Tom Jonard	The Monday CE Seminar remains on hiatus. We hope to restart soon.
Weekly Bible Studies			The Weekly Bible Studies have concluded with Rev. Gauen's retirement. Watch this space for future Bible Study offerings.
Fourth Monday Group			The Fourth Monday Group has also concluded. Future groups are under discussion.
Circle 4 Women	3rd Thursdays, 11:00 am	Zoom Meetings -If interested, call Elaine Foley.	Our Presbyterian Women's group usually meets monthly for fellowship and Bible study. However, we will not meet in July. Join us as we continue our study of <i>Sacred Horizons</i> at our next meeting on Thursday, August 15.