

# ADVOCATE

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

**November 2024**

## **October 20 Church Soup Luncheon**

After the Sunday service on October 20, we had a delightful soup luncheon sponsored by the Membership, Events, and Evangelism (MEE) Committee, chaired by Debby Nealer-Bice. We enjoyed five delicious soups made by Jack Anderson, Dorothy Driskell, Anne Bates, Mary Jane Matthews, and Jen Henson. It was another excellent opportunity to get to know each other better and just enjoy some time together. The meal also included sandwiches, chips, and other goodies, all organized by the committee. Let's do this again! Photos by Mike Krotz.



## **Pledge Dedication Sunday, November 10**

You should have received your 2025 pledge card by mail the week of October 20, along with a comparison of 2024 and 2025 budgets and the highlights of the 2025 budget. The Session approved a 10% increase in our budget for next year to fund new programs in Youth and Families, Communications, Local Mission, Social Justice Programs, and the Pastor Nominating Committee. Please bring your pledge card to church on November 10. Thank you!

## **Our Mission Study:**

# What it is, How it informs, How we will do it

## What is a Mission Study?

The purpose of this Mission Study is to help us know whether a potential pastor is “right” for our church. As described by the PCUSA guide “On Calling a Pastor,” we need to answer three questions key in determining the type of leadership we seek from our new pastor. These answers will also communicate our ministry narrative to prospective pastors discerning a call. The questions are:

- Who are we?
- Who is God calling us to be?
- Where is God calling us to go?



## What does a Mission Study inform?

The answers to those questions inform both the makeup and work of the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC). The PNC is elected by the congregation. For this to happen, the Session will direct our own Nominating Committee (the one that proposes new elders and deacons for us each spring) to propose a slate of candidates to fill the PNC. This direction will include how many people should be on the PNC and what should be considered in its makeup, such as how many females/males, how many people above/below a certain age, and how many people who have been a member of the congregation more than/less than a certain number of years.

The work of the PNC is also influenced by the Mission Study. Once the PNC has been elected by the congregation, members will complete a Ministry Information Form, which provides information about the congregation to prospective pastors. The Mission Study will be a direct input to this and provides the PNC with a view of who we are, who God is calling us to be, and where God is calling us to go. The PNC will use this information throughout their work.

## How will we do the Mission Study?

We have received recent sample Mission Studies from the Presbytery and are looking at what we can learn from them. We also will take information from our recent Step Forward Study.

However, we recognize that the Mission Study should be agnostic of any individual pastor, so we will update some of the perspectives from the Step Forward work with that lens.

Additionally, the Step Forward Study focused on what we wanted to continue and what we wanted to change coming out of COVID.

We also want to have some time removed from Rev. Gauen's retirement. We are already experiencing another perspective as we see what Rev. Nancy is doing differently. Especially considering how long it has been since our last pastoral transition, a broader perspective will give us a better idea of what we want in a new pastor.

For us to complete the Mission Study, we want input from all of you on those key questions:

**Who are we? Who is God calling us to be? Where is God calling us to go?**

During November, we will provide notecards and a box for each question. We will also have an email address for those who prefer to provide input that way. We ask each of you to answer each question in a sentence or two. Please take time for prayer and reflection on these questions.

We look forward to receiving your input throughout November. As always, you can reach out to Transition Coordinators Sherri Monteith and Scott Reichley with any questions. Thank you!

## **Exploring Membership**



Are you considering deepening your connection to our church community, growing in your faith, or learning more about our Presbyterian roots and mission? If so, we warmly invite you to join us for Exploring Membership on Sunday, November 3, from 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM.

This class will explore what it means to be a member of our church. Together, we'll reflect on our shared faith, a brief timeline of our church history, and distinctives of the Presbyterian tradition. We'll also consider how our church participates in God's mission in the world. Whether you're new to our church or simply want to learn more, this class will offer an opportunity for discussion and connection. Lunch will be served. Come join us! An RSVP helps but is not required. To ask questions or to RSVP, email Pastor Nancy ([revnan@fpcw.us](mailto:revnan@fpcw.us)) or call the church (614-882-3155).

## **Last Call in 2024 for the Pike County Food Pantry Wednesday, November 13**

Bob Doherty plans one more trip to the Pike County Food Pantry on Wednesday, November 13. Please bring your non-perishable food donations, plus any hats, gloves, and scarves you've collected, to church before then. The people in Pike County really appreciate your support!

## **Partners in Conservation Returns November 10**

On November 10, Partners in Conservation (PIC) will again visit First Presbyterian. They will be bringing items produced by artisans in Rwanda and The Democratic Republic of Congo. The money earned by the sale of these items goes back to the countries to help the animals and the people.

PIC was established at the Columbus Zoo 30 years ago. The purpose was to help save the mountain gorillas, but the organizers soon realized that to save animals, you had to help people. Some of their projects include subsidizing a school for handicapped people; supporting beekeepers; growing and providing trees, seeds, and goats for local people; buying school supplies for children; and, of course, supporting the local artisans. They also pay the salaries of three gorilla veterinarians and support gorilla trackers.

Their policy is to ask the people what they need, and all projects are revisited each year. While in Rwanda each year, PIC staff purchase items that are then sold in the U.S., including at our church. Be sure to stop by and choose some one-of-a-kind



Christmas gifts!



## **First Presbyterian Meal Train**

The deacons are looking for some culinary help! They are creating a list of willing people to prepare and deliver a meal to our members in time of need. When the time comes, you would be contacted by one of the deacons to see if you are available to help. If you are interested in serving, please email Anne Bates.

Hebrews 13:16 reminds us "Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have for such sacrifices are pleasing to God."

## **Blessing Box Needs**



We have created an Amazon Wish List as an alternate way to donate to the Blessing Box. Buying items in bulk makes the per-piece price less than purchasing them individually. You could even split the cost with a friend. Many of the items are individually wrapped for sanitation. You can copy and paste the website address below to view the list and place an order. Please call, text, or email Audra Hauff with any questions.

[https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1DY4C82NTO9BE?ref\\_=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1DY4C82NTO9BE?ref_=wl_share)



Of course, you can still donate individual items to this meaningful mission to show God's love in a tangible way. The most-needed items include proteins (peanut butter, chicken and tuna packets or cans), soups (cans with pop tops are appreciated), bottled water, breakfast bars, and hygiene products: soap, shampoo, toothpaste, and toothbrushes.

Money donations are also gratefully accepted. All items can be dropped off at the church throughout the week, including Sundays. Please place your items on the storage shelves under the rear entry stairs near the Pike County crates. Any canned goods or other items that are not picked up are donated to Pike County. Nothing is wasted. Please consider donating. Thank you!

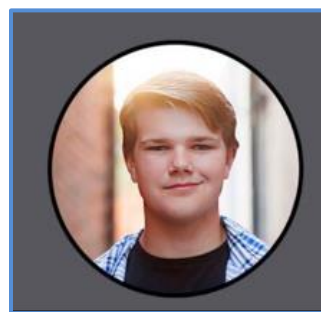
## Seeking a Part-Time Youth and Family Ministry Director

Our church is looking for a part-time Youth and Family Ministry Director. This person will oversee all aspects of our Youth Ministry, from nursery through high school. Key responsibilities include planning and implementing programs, managing volunteers, and ensuring a safe and nurturing environment for children. The director will also explore innovative approaches to attract new families and engage the congregation in outreach activities. For more information, please contact Chris Henson or Nancy Dumford at [jobs@fpcw.us](mailto:jobs@fpcw.us).

### And We Have a New Intern!

In addition to a new Youth and Family Ministry Director, our church will soon have two new interns, one focusing on children's ministry and the other on communications. They each will work six hours a week during the school year.

**Jeffrey Siefkler**, our new children's ministry intern, is a Westerville North grad and Otterbein sophomore. He will start November 1 and is eager to begin developing and implementing Christian Education programs and strategies for our children and youth. His experience on the staff of YoungLife will certainly help! We are still looking for the communications intern. Suggestions?



## Poinsettias for the Sanctuary



Beautiful red poinsettias will color our church again this year for the holiday season. You can help by contributing **\$11.00** to dedicate a plant in honor or memory of a loved one or a friend. If you wish, you may take your plant(s) home after the Christmas Eve service.

Please bring or mail your order form to the church office by Monday, November 25, along with a check made out to our church and marked "poinsettias." Forms will also be available at the church.

*I/We will donate \_\_\_\_\_ poinsettia(s)*

*Total Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\$11/each)*

*Name: \_\_\_\_\_*

*Phone: \_\_\_\_\_*

*Name of person(s) you wish to be remembered or honored:*

*In **memory** of* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*In **honor** of* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



FRIDAY

13

DECEMBER



## SOUP FOR SHELTER

5 - 7PM, TICKETS \$20

(LIMITED TO 350, NO TICKETS SOLD AT THE DOOR)

WESTERVILLE SENIOR CENTER

350 N CLEVELAND AVE, WESTERVILLE, OH 43082



## PROGRESSIVE *Christmas* CONCERT

7 - 9:15PM, TICKETS \$15

WALK TO THREE UPTOWN WESTERVILLE CHURCHES

Church of the Master, Church of the Messiah, First Presbyterian Church



Attend one or both events. Tickets can be purchased online by scanning the QR codes.

Confirmation email to be used for entry.

(Any remaining concert seats will be sold at the door at 6:30pm.)

ALL PROCEEDS FROM BOTH EVENTS SUPPORT BUILDING PROJECTS FOR  
HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OF DELAWARE / UNION COUNTIES



# The Church's September Financial Report

10/7/2024 02:19 pm		First Presbyterian Church <b>Treasurer's Report, Majors with Annual Budget</b> Finance year 2024, September			
<b>Book 01: Operating</b>		Actual Sep. 2024	Actual as of 9/30/2024	Budget as of 9/30/2024	Budget 2024
<b>Income</b>					
01 - Budgeted Contributions	26,590.00	250,449.80	230,668.56	307,558.08	
02 - Administrative Services	0.00	912.50	749.97	999.96	
03 - Christian Education	0.00	35.00	150.03	200.04	
05 - Membership & Evangelism	0.00	20.00	150.03	200.04	
08 - Worship	110.00	1,730.11	1,950.03	2,600.04	
<b>Income:</b>	<b>26,700.00</b>	<b>253,147.41</b>	<b>233,668.62</b>	<b>311,558.16</b>	
<b>Expense</b>					
01 - Personnel	23,490.78	161,636.45	179,528.56	232,896.24	
02 - Administrative Services	3,490.55	46,388.95	41,282.56	53,510.08	
03 - Christian Education	0.00	293.43	3,375.00	4,500.00	
05 - Membership/Evangelism/Events	150.00	1,807.10	2,662.47	3,549.96	
06 - Stewardship	176.00	14,294.76	16,187.53	21,950.04	
07 - Outreach	184.09	4,525.75	5,100.06	8,800.00	
08 - Worship	560.40	4,426.18	5,037.47	6,625.00	
09 - Deacons	0.00	82.95	187.47	250.00	
10 - Communications and Technology	399.15	4,764.87	6,322.50	8,430.00	
<b>Expense:</b>	<b>28,450.97</b>	<b>238,220.44</b>	<b>259,683.62</b>	<b>340,511.32</b>	
<b>Summary: Book 01: Operating</b>		Actual Sep. 2024	Actual as of 9/30/2024	Budget as of 9/30/2024	Budget 2024
<b>Income:</b>	<b>26,700.00</b>	<b>253,147.41</b>	<b>233,668.62</b>	<b>311,558.16</b>	
<b>- Expense:</b>	<b>28,450.97</b>	<b>238,220.44</b>	<b>259,683.62</b>	<b>340,511.32</b>	
<b>Net Income:</b>	<b>-1,750.97</b>	<b>14,926.97</b>	<b>-26,015.00</b>	<b>-28,953.16</b>	

## October Session Actions

At its October meeting, the Session voted to

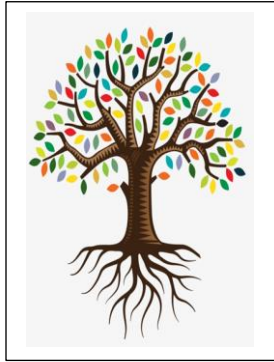
- Approve the expenditure of up to \$27,000 from the Capital Improvements Fund to complete the exterior painting and roof projects.
- Approve \$15,000 for painting the interior stairwells, coming from the Capital Improvements Fund.
- Approve minutes from the 9/16 regular Session meeting.
- Approve minutes from the special Session meeting on 10/14.
- Approve the Roles and Operations Manual.
- Nominate Debby Nealer-Bice to chair the nominating committee with Naomi Wriston as co-chair (in training) with the right to vote.
- Accept the budget as presented.
- Accept the September financials.
- Begin Session meetings at 6:30 PM starting in November.

--Scott Reichley, Clerk of Session



# Event Update

## Genealogy Club: Next meeting: 2025!



In October, we met at the Westerville Library, where Elizabeth Tait explained the free genealogy resources and technology. The library staff will help you scan slides, print your family tree, and make audio and video records for posterity. The only cost is the materials used.

The October meeting was the last of 2024. Next year, we will move to quarterly meetings. If you are interested or just curious and have not contacted us before, contact Bill Hitt or Ken Bonvallet.

## Dine Out: Friday, November 8, 6:00 pm

The Dine-Out Group will be meeting at DON TEQUILA'S (on Cleveland Ave., just south of I-270) on Friday, November 8, at 6:00. **NOTE the earlier start time -- 6:00 pm.** You and your friends are all invited to come and have a good time with us! As usual, please contact Jim Hines if you plan on attending or have any questions.

## Ladies' Night Out: Tuesday, November 19, 6:30 pm

We all had fun at the Bonefish Grill in October and look forward to getting together again on November 19. The restaurant is still to be determined. Watch the church bulletin and daily emails for information. Suggestions? Contact Diana Westfall.

## Fabrics of Faith: Monday, November 25, 1-3:00 pm

Pull out the yarn and thread for our next Fabrics of Faith meeting! Please join us in Fellowship Hall on November 25, 1:00 pm. You don't have to have a project in hand; you don't have to know how to do one. We have materials; just bring yourself and a smile. Please contact Beckey Stamm for information or to say you'll be there. And men—you're invited, too!

## Circle 4 Women: Thursday, November 21, 11:00 am on Zoom

Our Presbyterian Women's group meets monthly for fellowship and Bible study. Join us as we continue our study of *Sacred Horizons* at our next meeting on Thursday, November 21. Interested? Call Elaine Foley.

## Presbyterian 9 Patchers (P9P): Monday, November 18, 12-3 pm

You are welcome to join us once or every week as we work on quilts and other projects to be given away. Question? Contact Karen Hoggarth.

# Reflections from Two of Our Members

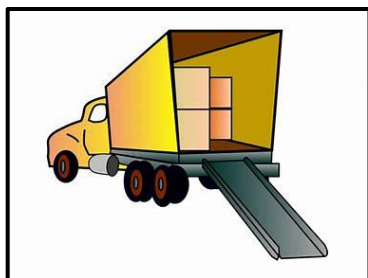
## Questioning

Wounded by a body turned in on itself,  
Adrift without focus,  
What can I do now?  
Desires of heart and mind and body no longer in tune,  
Life's rhythms different somehow,  
What can I do now?  
Before, I knew and it really seemed clear!  
Now with long days and short nights,  
I float aimlessly without a rudder  
Uncertain where to aim the prow,  
Pushed side to side by competing opportunities,  
What should I do now?  
Deep in prayer and caressed by silence,  
With each beat of my heart I hear,  
Listen,  
Share,  
Support,  
Care,  
Oh sure, but where and how?  
Out of the stillness from deep in my mind,  
Came the response,  
You will know, my child,  
You will know.

by Diane Clever, written about 2003

# REFLECTIONS ON MOVING....AND MOVING ON

October 2, 2024



I am standing in my now-empty home of 38 years, overcome by a sense of loss and sadness. My husband passed away from cancer almost 2 ½ years ago. When we moved to this house, our sons were in elementary school. They are now grown, married, and have given us one wonderful grandson! Life has been full and sweet for so many years while living in this home. Last summer, I knew it was time for me to begin to seriously work toward ‘downsizing’ and leaving my home to live someplace that would require less work. Afterall, living on a half-acre of land on a hill and taking care of a swimming pool and so many plants had become more work than I could care for. Knowing my husband had Stage 4 cancer, we had begun to work toward downsizing 3-4 years ago.

But in my heart, I did not want to leave this home that I loved so much. Every room had memories that I felt as I worked to empty them. Some purging felt very freeing. Some did not and felt painful. I am standing in what once was my dining room as I see the ‘Got Junk’ men take my beautiful cherry French Provencial dining room table and chairs, China cabinet, and buffet out the front door. I have tears in my eyes as that disappears. There were so many wonderful dinners with family and friends around that table over the years! Lots of laughter and lots of delicious food. That is all gone. So, I am physically feeling all that loss today. That was one of the first pieces of furniture we purchased when we moved into the house, and now it is the last to go.

I now must shame myself for having such feelings of loss over *things*. I know the significance of why sadness follows this loss. However, two hours from now I will attend the memorial service of one of our long-time beloved church members. She and her husband, who shared a deep love for many decades, are now separated just like I have been from my husband. I understand some of his sorrow, but the depth of their love was one for the ages, lasting many more years than many of us live. The *loss of one so dear* is so much more significant and painful than the loss of things that I face today.

Like Lots wife, looking back is not a good thing if we get trapped in that mindset. I know God is with me on my journey and moving me forward. I have felt that all along the journey with my husband’s illness. I have felt that as God has moved me forward with love and gentleness to places that are unfamiliar and has put people in my life who have been unexpected. My life is different now, but richer in many ways. I THANK GOD for loving me always!

Jesus said, “I am with you always.” I have found that to be true and so comforting many times throughout my life. Whatever my future holds, I know The Lord is with me. He will comfort me, will give me strength and courage to keep moving forward AND to be salt and light to others. I have made peace with saying ‘good-bye’ to my home and hold on to the precious memories. But I have so much more living to do, with the Lord by my side.

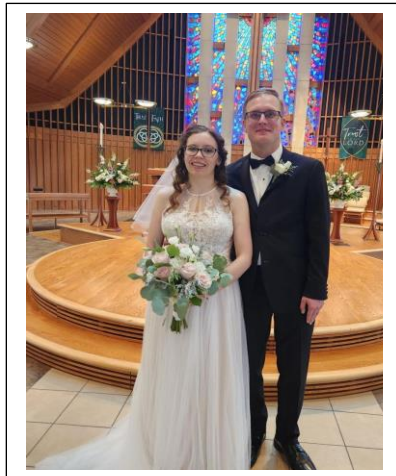
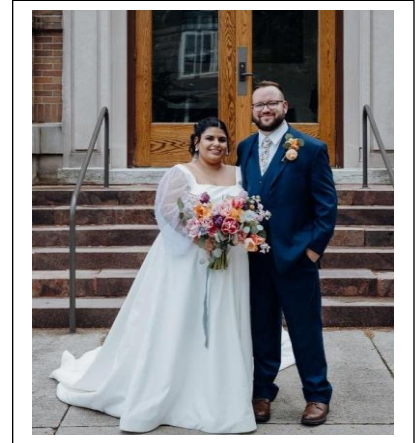
by Bev Etling

## Our Newlyweds!

### Vili and Max Power

Proud parents are Cheryl and Carlos Marquez

Married on May 4, 2024. May the Fourth Be With You! Yes, they are Star Wars Fans! The wedding party had lightsabers upon their entry into the reception hall. They were Pastor Mark Gauen's last wedding that he officiated at our church before his retirement. Vili works for MI Homes in contracting. Max is a certified Electrician and in the Army Reserves. They reside in Westerville and have a kitten named Lucy.



### Andrew and Marissa Buser

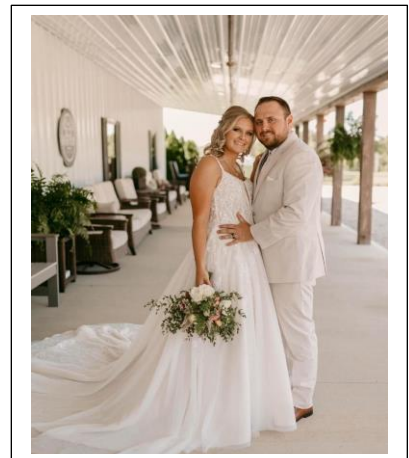
Proud parents are Jeff and Robin Buser

Andrew and Marissa were married in June at the church where she grew up, Grace Lutheran, and honeymooned on Cape Cod. They met in the pit orchestra for *Annie* at Westerville South. Andrew graduated from the University of Dayton with a master's degree in civil engineering, while Marissa earned an engineering degree from Ohio State. They now live in the Detroit area. Marissa is an engineer at Ford, working toward her master's in data science. Andrew works for the city of Detroit as an inspector for road/sidewalk building and repair.

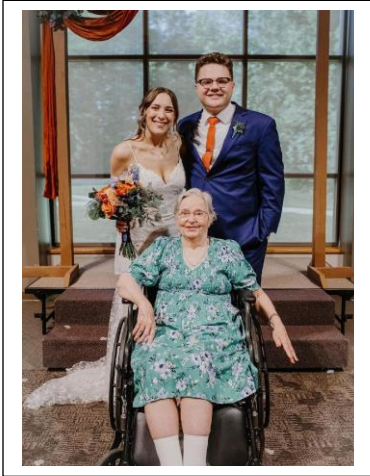
### Camden and Caitlin Doherty

Proud parents are Bob and Cheryl Doherty

Married August 10, Camden and his new bride, Caitlin, reside in Williamsport, OH. Camden works for the City of Hilliard in the Parks and Recreation Dept, and Caitlin works in Health Information at Riverside Hospital.







## **Abby and Aidan Bott**

Proud parents are (again!) Bob and Cheryl Doherty

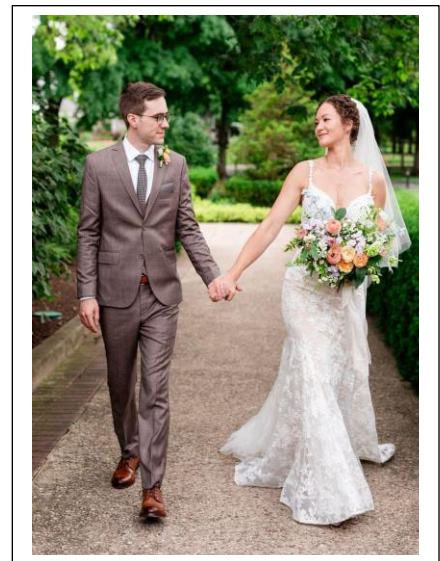
Proud grandmother of Abby (and Camden) is Bettie Doherty

Married June 8, Abby is the Director of House Affairs at Our Home in New Albany. Her husband, Aidan Bott, is currently attending OSU, working toward an engineering degree. He has also been working at Northstar Cafe while attending college.

## **Julia and Todd Ives**

Proud parents are Anne and Tim Bates

Julia and Todd were married on June 1 in the bridal garden at Franklin Park Conservatory in Columbus. They live in Clintonville with their two cats, Remy and Lola. Todd is a researcher for the Criminal Justice Sentencing Committee at the Supreme Court of Ohio. Julia is a nurse at Ohio State University Brain and Spine Hospital. Together, they spend a good deal of time working on restoring and renovating their 100-year-old home. Todd and Julia also enjoy traveling.



**Many thanks to Anne Bates for compiling these photos and the summaries!**



## Pastor's Page      Rev. Nancy Dumford

### Surprise the World

Abraham is blessed, but not just for himself. He is blessed so that he can be a blessing.

On Sunday, October 13, we examined Genesis 12 - the "call" of Abram. It leads us to wonder, is this call fair? Why is Abe the lucky one who gets blessed?

God chooses one man and through him builds a nation that will be the means of blessing others. One nation is chosen, but all nations will benefit. Fast forward to the New Testament, and this nation, started with Abraham, will be represented by a new kind of human, Jesus, who is God incarnate. Through this one man, Jesus, God's redemptive blessing is opened to all.

We are talking about "**election**," which is a \$10 theology word. Too often, we think of election as God's determination before time about salvation. *Election* is broader. It's unconditional because it does not depend on anything other than God. No amount of good work will earn the honor of being "elected." Which can feel unfair and like a relief all at the same time. Simply put, God does the choosing. Consider this: the election of Abraham is not the rejection of the rest, but ultimately for their benefit.

Consider a group of explorers who get trapped in a cave. They then choose one from the group to squeeze through a narrow flooded passage to get to the surface and call for help. The point of the choice is not that the one alone gets saved, but that one is able to bring help and equipment to rescue the rest. "Election" in this case is choosing one for the sake of many.

The story repeats with the disciples. As devout Jews, they would have known well the call and promise to Abraham. I wonder how long it took for them to make a connection between the call of Abraham and their last instructions from Jesus to "Go" (Matt. 28:18)? Surely, they saw the connection and that was why they were willing to give their lives to the cause of this mission – given by God himself.

So what? We are Abraham's seed, and Abraham is the "father of us all." In Christ, we share in the blessing of Abraham (Gal. 3:29). And *even more*, we are commissioned to spread the blessing of Abraham to others.

Go, and be a blessing... and all the nations will be blessed through you.

So who are we and what are we here for? We are people, in the line of Abraham, sent on a mission to GO and bless others. Ultimately, in this struggle with sin, the blessing will prevail over the curse, a truth that is good news for all of us!

It is my prayer that many of us will engage in these missional habits: Bless, Eat, Listen, Learn, Sent. It is news too good to keep to ourselves!

PS. The missional habits can be remembered by the acronym BELLS. May they ring in our hearts!