Diagram

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First Presbyterian Church, Waynesboro, VA

*First Presbyterian Church of Waynesboro is a community-minded*

*congregation living out the love of Christ as we serve one another with*

*humility, gentleness, and patience through God’s grace.*

THE COLUMNS

**December 2023, Volume 61, Issue 12**

**A person leaning on a steering wheel

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**We tend to think of our lives as linear, moving in one direction, from birth to death, and that is certainly true. But within that linear framework are circles, spirals, waxing and waning, transforming the straight line of life into an endless circle of memory and anticipation. Our lives are measured in days, weeks, months, years, and marked by the seasons which come and go and come again. From Advent to Christmas, Lent to Easter, Pentecost to Christ the King, the church year is a cycle, enacting the life of Jesus Christ and looking forward to the coming Kingdom.**

**As we close the circle of another year, we look forward to what comes next: the search for a pastor to walk with you into the future. While the details may be unique, even this is part of a cycle; many of you recall, or have even participated in, the pastor search before.**

**As we prepare once again to celebrate the birth of our Lord, let rejoice in the circle of life that brings us redemption, and look forward to closing even more circles in the coming year.**

**A close-up of a black background

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**December Music Notes**

With Thanksgiving in the rear-view mirror, the season of Advent is now upon us. This month, we will sing familiar carols and hear other seasonal pieces that help us prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of our Lord and Savior.

We open the season with one of the most ancient of all Advent hymns, *O Come, O Come Emmanuel.* The tune has been sung for over a millennium, originally intoned by monks in the 8th century. It has been used by scores of composers ever since, including Ottorino Respighi (1879-1936), who quoted the melody in “The Gift of the Magi” movement of his *Three Botticelli Pictures.* The tune also found its way into Samuel Barber’s (1910-1981) *Die Natale.* More recent renditions include U2’s 2009 song, “White As Snow” and Kelly Clarkson’s version in her 2013 holiday album, *Wrapped in Red.*

For the second week of Advent, we will sing other hymns that have been around for centuries. *Comfort, Comfort Now My People* dates back to the 16th century. Louis Bourgeois (c. 1510-1559) adapted the tune and published it in *The Genevan Psalter.* This collection of 126 melodies was composed and collected between 1539 and 1562 at the request of John Calvin for the Reformed churches in Geneva, Switzerland. The English version was translated by Catherine Winkworth (1827-1878) and published in 1863 in the *Chorale Book for England*. The closing hymn, *Bereden väg för Herran* (Make Way for the Lord), is a Swedish tune that has been sung even longer. It was first published in 1697 in a collection called *Then Swenska Psalmboken* (The Swedish Psalm Book). Franz Michael Franzén (1772-1847) paired the popular Swedish tune with the Advent text. The text was translated into English by Augustus Nelson (1863-1949), a Swedish immigrant who settled in Minnesota in 1883 and was ordained as a Lutheran minister in 1898.

This year, Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday. We will celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior with Lessons and Carols at the 11am service, hearing the age-old story of Christ’s birth along with familiar carols and music sung by the choir.

For the final Sunday of the year, we will be joined by the congregation of Second Presbyterian Church, which also includes their singers! The combined choir will sing the *Calypso Carol* by Michael Arnold Perry (1942-1996). He was a student at Oak Hill Theological College in London when he wrote the piece in 1964 for a school concert.

We are thankful for your continued support of the music program at First Presbyterian Church. May you have a blessed Advent and Christmas season!

Roger and Kimberlea Daggy

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Session held a Stated Session Meeting on November 14, 2023.

* Commissioner Jean Hashagen reported on the Shenandoah Presbytery meeting held November 4 at Opequon PC in Winchester.
* A Thanksgiving Luncheon will be held on November 15 in the Barksdale Room.
* The Mission/Outreach report for October was received (details printed elsewhere in *The Columns.*)
* Roof replacement is almost finished.
* Regular Advent Services will be held during December with a Joint Service with members of Second PC on New Year’s Eve Day.
* Decorating of the sanctuary will begin on Saturday, November 25, at 10:00 a.m.
* The *Presbyterian Better Together* Bible Study will take a break after Nov. 20.
* Session approved the “Ministry Profile Information” form which was returned to CPT.
* Session will be sent the following documents for final approval: Employee Contracts for Church Administrator and Preschool Director plus Storage Unit Rental Agreement.
* Session received drafts of required policies: 1) Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults, 2) Anti-Racism and 3) Social Media (for minors).
* Session denied two requests from outside groups for use of the Fellowship Hall.
* Session is in the process of forming a Pastor Search Committee.
* All Session meetings are opened and closed with prayer.

--Betsy Ruehl, Clerk of Session

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**THE BIRTH OF JESUS**

**Luke 2:1-20**

“About that time Caesar Augustus ordered a census to be taken throughout the Empire. This was the first census when Quirinius was governor of Syria. Everyone had to travel to his own ancestral home town to be accounted for. So Joseph went from the Galilean town of Nazareth up to Bethlehem in Judah, David’s town, for the census. As a descendant of David, he had to go there. We went with Mary, his fiancée, who was pregnant.

While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. She gave birth to a son, her firstborn. She wrapped him in a blanket and laid him in a manager, because there was no room in the hostel.

There were sheepherders camping in the neighborhood. They had set night watches over their sheep. Suddenly, God’s angel stood among them and God’s glory blazed around them. They were terrified. The angel said, ‘Don’t be afraid. I’m here to announce a great and joyful event that is meant for everybody, worldwide: A Savior has just been born in David’s town, a Savior who is Messiah and Master. This is what you’re to look for: a baby wrapped in a blanket and lying in a manger.’

At once the angel was joined by a huge angelic choir singing God’s praises:

Glory to God in the heavenly heights,

Peace to all men and women on earth who please him.

As the angel choir withdrew into heaven, the sheepherders talked it over. ‘Let’s get over to Bethlehem as fast as we can and see for ourselves what God has revealed to us.’ They left, running, and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, lying in a manger. Seeing was believing. They told everyone they met what the angels had said about the child. All who heard the sheepherders were impressed.

Mary kept all these things to herself, holding them dear, deep within herself. The sheepherders returned and let loose, glorifying and praising God for everything they had heard and seen. It turned out exactly the way they’d been told!”

(From *The Message* by Eugene Peterson, who describes his book as a “Bible in

Contemporary Language, a Reading Bible, simply to get people to read the Bible.”)





**MISSION/OUTREACH OCTOBER 2023**

* Ordered and received food from Blue Ridge Area Food Bank October 3, 10, 17 and 24. Volunteers assembled 20 pantry boxes for each order.
* Maintained temperature logs for refrigerators and freezers.
* Food Bank held October 5, 12, 19 and 26.
* Purchased eggs, bread, and margarine for Food Bank weekly.
* Updated weekly shopping list for extra options.
* Completed pantry inventory and report: Served 169 individuals and 61 households.
* Of the $14,090 raised by the CROP Walk September 24, the *Better Together* Team donated $2,482. Members of FPC contributed $1,010. FPC CROP Walk walkers numbered just one. {Editor’s note: That “one” was Cynthia.}
* Next Disciples’ Kitchen is December 7.
* Received significant donations to Food Bank: $850 cash plus Food Drive donations from the Cub Scouts and from LD&B Insurance Co. in Harrisonburg.
* November: Collected chicken noddle soup and spaghetti (dry pasta) for Food Bank.
* Still collecting soup and pasta. Requesting hats, gloves, and socks for Disciples’ Kitchen for distribution in December. --Cynthia Hoover, Mission Chair

**SUGGESTIONS FOR DECEMBER MISSION ITEMS:**

**FOOD BANK – CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP and SPAGHETTI. (dry pasta)**

**HYGIENE KITS – Individually Wrapped TOOTHBRUSHES**

**PLUS**

**For DISCIPLES’ KITCHEN: WARM GLOVES, KNIT HATS AND SOCKS**

A group of kids posing for a photo

Description automatically generatedA room with shelves and food items

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A group of boxes on a shelf

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**Above : Boy Scouts**

**before and after**

**donations**

**Donations from LD&B**

**Offices**



**December 3 First Sunday of Advent Jean Hashagen**

**December 10 Second Sunday of Advent Betsy Ruehl**

**December 17 Third Sunday of Advent Bill Pannill**

**December 24 Christmas Eve 11am Jo Pannill**

**NO CANDLELIGHT**

**December 31 First Sunday of Christmas Cynthia Hoover**

**Second Presbyterian will join us**

**PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE 2023 MID-YEAR REPORT**

**QUICK FIGURES**

**Grants to 15 countries $1,625,820 granted 15 grants for migration**

**1,117 volunteers at PDA 57 grants disbursed accompaniment volunteer host sites ministry**

**Migration Accompaniment Ministry**

In 2023, the world continues to face a rise in human mobility and forced migration due to oppression and persecution, war, climatic catastrophes (sudden events as well as droughts and flooding due to changing weather patterns) and other forms of violence. It is within this context that PDA made a joint trip with World Mission colleagues to Ukraine, Hungary, Czech Republic and Poland where PDA met with partner churches and relief organizations as well as Ukrainians. In Latin America and the Caribbean, PDA participated in the ACT Alliance regional migration consultation where they identified steps to better support each other in their ministries and advocacy with people on the move. Several grants supported refugee integration and self-reliance.

**National Response**

Through June, 64 members of the National Response Team (NRT) were deployed for natural and human-caused disasters in 26 presbyteries including responding to tornadoes, gun violence, arson and storms; leading trainings on resilience and church security planning and preparedness and onboarding new volunteer host sites. 1,117 volunteers served as PDA volunteer host sites, and 34 grants were disbursed totaling $590,500.

**International Response**

23 grants totaling $1,035,320 were disbursed to partners in 15 countries that included the following: Response to flooding and hurricanes in Haiti, the Bahamas, Malawi, Rwanda, Nicaragua, Indonesia; climate response and disaster preparedness in India, Columbia and Jamaica; political unrest and war in Ukraine and nearby countries, Sudan and Peru; and emergency and long-term response to the earthquake in Turkey and Syria.

**OUT OF CHAOS, HOPE**

A blue and white logo

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PRESCHOOL NEWS

November was full of fun and crazy warm weather; the children are always looking to take advantage of the warm weather to explore the joy of nature outside.

The four-year-old class learned about Veterans and how we honor our heroes. Our preschool classes talked about Indians and pilgrims and what it means to be thankful.

Ms. Lynda has been working hard with the children on their music for the Christmas program. We hope everyone will join us!

**Upcoming dates to remember:**

December 14th: Christmas Program @ 6:30pm \*A Night to Remember\*

December 15th- January 2nd Winter Break

A child throwing leaves up in the air

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A child with arms up in the air

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A group of children sitting at a table

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**WHAT MAKES US UNIQUE**

Part 6

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) is distinctly a confessional and connectional church, distinguished by the representation of elders in the government.

**Sacraments**

“The Sacraments are the Word of God enacted and sealed in the life of the Church, the body of Christ. They are gracious acts of God, by which Christ Jesus offers his life to us in the power of the Holy Spirit. They are also human acts of gratitude, by which we offer our lives to God in love and service. The Sacraments are both physical signs and spiritual gifts, including words and actions, surrounded by prayer, in the context of the Church’s common worship. They employ things – the basic elements of water, bread, and wine - in proclaiming the extraordinary love of God. The Reformed tradition recognizes the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper (also called Eucharist or Holy Communion) as having been instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ through the witness of the Scriptures and sustained through the history of the universal church.” (W-3.0401.)

**Baptism.** “Baptism is the sign and seal of our incorporation into Jesus Christ. In his own baptism, Jesus identified himself with sinners – yet God claimed him as a beloved Son an sent the Holy Spirit to anoint him for service. In his ministry, Jesus offered the gift of living water. Through the baptism of his suffering and death, Jesus set us free from the power of sin forever. After he rose from the dead, Jesus commissioned his followers to go and make disciples, baptizing them and teaching them to obey his commands. The disciples were empowered by the outpouring of the Spirit to continue Jesus’ mission and ministry, inviting others to join this new way of life in Christ. As Paul wrote, through the gift of Baptism we are ‘dead to sin and live to God in Christ Jesus’. (Rom.6:11)”. (W-3.0402.)

“Baptism enacts and seals what the Word proclaims: God’s redeeming grace is offered to all people. Baptism is at once God’s gift of grace, God’s means of grace, and God’s call to respond to that grace. Through Baptism, Jesus Christ calls us to repentance, faithfulness, and discipleship. Through Baptism, the Holy Spirit gives the Church its identity and commissions the Church for service in the world.” (W-3.0402).

“The water used for Baptism should be from a local source, and may be applied with the hand, by pouring, or through immersion.” (W-3.0407.)

“God’s faithfulness to us is sure, even when human faithfulness to God is not. God’s grace is sufficient; therefore, Baptism is not repeated. There are many times in worship, however, that we may remember the gift of our baptism and acknowledge the grace of God continually at work in us. These may include: profession of faith; when participating in another’s baptism; when joining or leaving a church; at an ordination, installation, or commissioning; and at each celebration of the Lord’s Supper.” (W-3.0402.)

“As there is one body, there is one Baptism. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes all baptisms by other Christian churches that are administered by water and performed in the name of the triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.” (W-3.0402).

(*What Makes Us Unique* to be continued)





4 – Jean Hashagen

10 - Burnie Powers

12 - Connie Sachlis

14 - Nancy Garber

Roger Daggy

24 - Joyce Tipton

27 - Hunter Trimble

Judy Tomey

**Liturgists**

 3 Jean Hashagen

10 Betsy Ruehl

17 Bill Pannill

24 Jo Pannill

31 Cynthia Hoover

***CHRISTMAS***

*Every time a hand reaches out to help another…..that is Christmas*

*Every time someone puts anger aside and strives for understanding….that is Christmas*

*Every time people forget their differences and realize their love for each other….that is Christmas*

*May this Christmas bring us closer to the spirit of human understanding*

*Closer to the blessing of peace*



**REV PETTIT’S WORK SCHEDULE**

Monday – work at home

Tuesday and Thursday– onsite First Pres

Wednesday – visitation

Friday – off



**Friday, December 1**

7-9 pm Waynesboro Symphony Holiday Pops

**Saturday, December 2**

3:30-6:30 pm Waynesboro Symphony Holiday Pops

**Sunday, December 3**

11 am Worship Service

**Thursday, December 7**

6-7:30 pm Food Bank

**Saturday, December 9**

12:30-5:30 pm Piano Recital Practice/Sarah Braverman

**Sunday, December 10**

11 am Worship Service

3pm Piano recital /Sarah Braverman

**Tuesday, December 12**

2:30 pm Session Meeting

**Thursday, December 14**

2-4pm Food Bank

**Sunday, December 17**

11 am Worship Service

**Sunday, December 24** Lessons and Carols

11am Worship Service

**Thursday, December 28**

2-4 pm Food Bank

**Sunday, December 31**

11 am Worship Service/ Second Presbyterian

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church@firstpresway.com

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www.firstpresway.org

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8 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Thursday

8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Interim Pastor

Rev. Patrick S. Pettit

pspettit@gmail.com

Church Office Hours

Monday-Wednesday

8 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Thursday

8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

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Audio/Visual Technician

Mr. Craig Cavanaugh

Maintenance Technician

Mr. Michael Griffith