

First Presbyterian Church of Woodstock

A fellowship of people in all stages of life who gather together, praising and worshipping God with gratitude for our many blessings, accepting and caring for all God's children, and serving the community and the world with love and joy.

December 2022



What DOES Christmas Mean?

I love the classic Dr. Seuss book *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* The Grinch hated Christmas, while the Whos who lived in Whoville loved it. The Grinch thinks that he can stop Christmas from coming by stealing the Whos' presents and food, and so he tries just that. However, he soon finds out that he hadn't stopped Christmas, after all, as the Whos awoke and sang their joyful song, nonetheless. The Grinch realizes that Christmas "came without ribbons! It came without tags! It came without packages, boxes, or bags!" He can't figure out how, but eventually he realizes something big: "Maybe Christmas," he thought, 'doesn't come from a store. Maybe Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more!"

Now, I'm not suggesting that we all celebrate Christmas without any gift-giving. This Christmas, my family will gather around our tree and delight in the giving and receiving of gifts. However, I am hoping that all of us will spend time pondering the fact that Christmas "doesn't come from a store" and that it does "means a little bit more" – in fact, a *lot* more! At Christmas, we celebrate the miracle of the Incarnation – that Almighty God came to Earth in human form, as a baby born in a lowly manger. Or, as *The Message* paraphrase puts it, "The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood." That "good news of great joy" has perhaps become *old news* to us. We know the Christmas story by heart, and so we might not deeply consider what it means *for us, today*. I hope you'll join in worship services during Advent and Christmas as we ponder those matters.

If you can't make it to the Great Hall for worship, please join in online by going to fpcwoodstock.org/worship. Check the calendar for other ways to join together as we prepare for the coming King. Also, while we sing about this being "the most wonderful time of the year," we know that's not necessarily the case for everyone. On Wednesday, December 21st at 7 PM, we'll have a "Longest Night Service" for those of us who are experiencing some amount of grief or sadness during this season. We'll hold space for each other, just as we are, knowing that God is present with us in our joy and in our sorrow.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Eric

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Sunday Worship Services

In the Great Hall @ 9:30 a.m.

Sunday School

After Children's Time



Newsletter Editor

Jeri Loiselle

Reporters:

Eric Corbin, Angie Boe,
Mark Bundick, Bob Clark,
Christy Johanson, Sue Ayers-Krause,
Joyce Maynard, Pat Morozink,
Ray Thuma, Cheryl Wormley

TOGETHER TO LAUGH AND LEARN

Men's Group/Bible Study

John Moorhouse, 815-236-7408
johnmoorhouse54@gmail.com

Wednesday Early Bible Study

Velma Downes, 815-245-4043
vmdownes@gmail.com

Adult Spiritual Growth Groups

Chris Nejd, 815-337-1070
canejd@hotmail.com

Hospitality Team

Pam Moorhouse, 815-814-5585
pammoorhouse54@gmail.com

Music Ministry

Christy Johanson, 815-382-5234
christy@fpcwoodstock.org

No-Name Knitters

Kay Darby, 815-572-1729
kedarby@icloud.com

T.L.C. (Tender Loving Care)

Mary Hill, 815-338-6051
mary.hill2759@gmail.com

Meals-On-Wheels

Marla Norgard, 815-482-4855
marlanorgard01@gmail.com

WACM Local Mission Team

Pat Morozink, 815-338-7769
pmorozink@yahoo.com

Food Pantry

Joyce Maynard, 815-338-7265

Fishing Mission

Bob Clark, 847-274-8247
robtmclark@aol.com

N.O.W. Team

Lee Nejd 815-546-1731
Katie Spaldon 815-276-3410
Mark Bundick 815-337-9068
Linda Hansen 815-451-8735
Cheryl Wormley 815-519-7402
indepublisher@comcast.net

N.O.W. Dinner Fall Season Concludes

The N.O.W. Team's fall dinner season has come to an end. We served 359 meals over 9 dinners, averaging 40 persons per dinner. The team also has hosted 5 brunch dates for 207 diners, an average of 41. Thanks to everyone who came out to enjoy our Wednesday nights of food and fellowship. Also, a "thank you" shout out to everyone who provided desserts and sides for our Thanksgiving feast.

We have one remaining 2022 brunch on Sunday, December 4. Our brunch menu will feature French toast casserole, eggs, sausage, fruit, coffee and milk. Be sure to hang around after worship for some yummy brunch and conversation with friends.

After the December 4 brunch, the team will meet to evaluate our season and plan for the spring. We're expecting to continue coordinating our N.O.W. brunches with Sunday School dates. Wednesday dinners will start early in January, continuing till just prior to Easter. Be sure to keep an eye open for details in the January newsletter and mid-week updates.

We are also still interested in having more groups join us in "sponsoring" a dinner. Dinners could be used as a fundraiser, as was done by the youth this fall. The N.O.W. team will be around to assist any small group and help with meal planning ideas and support.

Please contact [Cheryl Wormley](#) or [Mark Bundick](#) if you're interested in hearing more about being a N.O.W. dinner host group.

Finally, thanks to our hard working, fun loving N.O.W. Dinner team of **Cheryl Wormley, Lee Nejd, Linda Hansen, Katie Spaldon, and Mark Bundick** for a great fall dinner season!



Men's Bible Study - Saturdays at 7:00 a.m.

Join us via Google Meet for Bible study on Saturday mornings at 7:00 a.m. Contact **John Moorhouse**, 815-236-7408 or johnmoorhouse54@gmail.com, to get connected through Google Meet and to obtain a copy of the material.

All are welcome to join with us during this time of learning, understanding, and fellowship, as in faith that God is in charge and by the grace of God, we will experience God's love in right relationship through God's son Jesus.

CARING TOGETHER

Sunday School News:

We have been busy rehearsing for this year's Children's Christmas Program! The program will take place with the Musical Cantata on Sunday, December 11th, during the 9:30 a.m. Worship Service. It's sure to be a smash hit! Come find out ..."What Happens Next"!

Sunday School families - please mark your calendars for the following events:

- Sunday 12/4: Rehearsal during normal Sunday School time
- Saturday 12/10: Dress rehearsal with the choir at 9am at the church
- Sunday 12/11: Please arrive at church by 9:15 a.m.
- Sunday 12/18: No Sunday School
- Sunday 1/8: Sunday School returns to normal 2nd and 4th Sunday schedule

Questions? Please reach out to [Erin Kaye](#) or [Jackie Lawler](#).



Youth Group Cookie Making

On Saturday, December 10th from 1:30-3:30, Ray and Angela Thuma will be hosting a cookie baking and decorating event at the church to deliver to our homebound members. Don't worry, the kids will get to sample plenty before they are packed up! Please let [Ray](#) or [Angela](#) know if you can make it so they can plan accordingly.



Valet Parking Service Begins

The Hospitality Team is happy to offer a valet parking service, starting in December. With wintery weather upon us, perhaps you'd like a little help getting into and out of worship on Sunday morning. Just pull up to the door, get out with your keys and let the greeter know you'd like to take advantage of the valet parking service. A friendly FPCer will get your keys, carefully park your car close to the door, and return your keys to you after parking.

Once service is over, let your valet parking helper take your keys again, and bring your car right up to the front door. You can skip a long and possibly slippery walk across the parking lot. Thanks to the Hospitality team, getting into and out of the worship service couldn't be easier or safer.

Meals on Wheels

Thank you to all FPC members and friends who have given the time to deliver meals to those in our community throughout 2022: **Gary Mazur, Velma Downes, Cathy Baxter, Jim Wormley, Alexandra Norgard, Maura Bridges, Marcia Gummerson,** and Dave Davis.

The schedule is already filling up for 2023. If you are interested in delivering on the following dates, please email [Marla Norgard](#).

- Mondays, January 16, February 20, March 27, May 1, June 5, July 10, August 14, September 18, October 23, November 27
- Tuesday, March 27
- Wednesdays, March 29, June 7, July 12, August 16, September 20, October 25



CARING TOGETHER

Birthday Blessings

Chris Dahm	12/01
Elin Kaye	12/02
Noa Moorhouse	12/02
Pat Morava	12/04
Aidan Greenlee	12/05
Collin Greenlee	12/09
Matt Thuma	12/13
Rob McMahan	12/15
Chris Carr	12/16
Larry Riggs	12/24
Barb Parrish	12/26
Pam Mathison	12/28
Bryan Dahm	12/30
Sue Hunt	12/30

Happy Anniversary!

Jay & Jessie Justice	12/17
Dan & Joyce Chwalisz	12/25

Our Thoughts and prayers are with...

Gayle Abrams, Tom Thennes, Kristen Matter, Sue Hunt, Tom Schwarz, Tim Arnold, Phil Dahm, Blakely Stock, Jamie Robinett, Lance Sobczak, Braelen Kittle, Ron Parrish, Sean Rowe, Tommy Roewer, Dick Sweeney, and the families of Jim Higgins & June Haasler.

WACM News

As you think about your Christmas shopping today and what might be the perfect gift for your CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN, NEICES, NEPHEWS, or YOURSELF, head over to WACM's website and purchase the gift of TICKETS for fun filled Children Shows. Through the purchase of tickets, you'll be donating to WACM's Direct Assistance Program (DAP) that serves local people in need of emergency financial assistance. www.wacmgroups.org

Join us in raising funds for WACM's Direct Assistance Program (DAP) which helps residents living within District 200 boundaries who are experiencing an emergency financial crisis.

A PERFECT CHRISTMAS GIFT FOR CHILDREN
WACM 2023 SATURDAY MORNING CHILDREN SHOWS
At Woodstock First United Methodist Church - 9:30 a.m.



Tickets:
\$10 for each show or \$25 for all three.
Buy On-line
at wacmgroups.org
Capacity 150

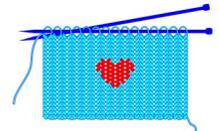
This series of fundraising shows is produced by Woodstock Area Community Ministries. The net proceeds of the shows will support the work of WACM's Direct Assistance Program (DAP) which helps District 200 residents who are experiencing an emergency financial crisis.

No Name Knitters

The knitters and crocheters have been very busy making items for various community groups. We have donated winter hats and scarves to School District 200 Kindness Closets, the Woodstock Public Library, Community Health Partnership, and baby hats to the First Way Pregnancy Support Center.

If you are unable to join us at our meetings, but would like to knit or crochet items from your home, please contact [Kay Darby](mailto:Kay.Darby@wacmgroups.org). We need many hands to help us in our mission to give warmth and comfort to others!

Our group meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at 6:30. Please call Kay Darby at 815-572-1729 if you have any questions.



December Red Wagon Items for the Food Pantry

Corn, Sweet Peas, Green Beans, Tomatoes, Mixed Vegetables, Pork and Beans. Monetary Donations are always welcome!

Lectionary Bible Study Wednesdays at 7:30 a.m.

The group is meeting virtually using Google Meet. We select a single reading from the Revised Common Lectionary and take turns leading the discussion. Join us for lively discussion, thoughtful readings and good fellowship. Contact Velma Downes to be added to the mailing list or for more information at vmdownes@gmail.com.

The TLC Group will not be meeting in December.



Christmas Joy Offering

Advent is the time of year when we collect the fourth of the four special offerings collected by the Presbyterian Church (USA). This offering is split equally between the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. The Assistance Program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families. Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage.

When considering giving to this special offering, please think about the many stories of ways this offering has helped. For example, PC(USA) shares this:

As a lifelong advocate of the connectional nature of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Rev. Ben Franklin Whitfield never expected that this denominational doctrine would one day prove indispensable to him at his own time of greatest need. Ben, honorably retired since 2007 in the Presbytery of Wabash Valley, suffered a stroke in January 2021. After a hospital stay followed by a period of rehabilitation, he was released into the care of his loving wife, Helen, and allowed to return home.

Facing financial hardships after a lifetime in ministry serving primarily rural congregations with limited budgets, the Whitfields received support from the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions, part of our Presbyterian connectional system. The Assistance Program provides need-based grants to help active and retired plan members and their families in times of financial crisis. The Whitfields received immediate help from an Emergency Assistance grant and long-term help from a monthly Housing Supplement for Retirees receiving Home Health Care.

The support the Whitfields receive is made possible, in part, by the Christmas Joy Offering, a Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s. Our overall goal for this offering is \$1400, but more importantly, our goal is to encourage everyone to participate in some way no matter how small. Please prayerfully consider contributing to this offering as we prepare to celebrate the birth of the Christ child. For more information about this special offering you can visit:

<https://specialofferings.pcusa.org/offering/christmas-joy/>



DEACONS

Following to Lead | Leading to Serve

DEACON UPDATE FOR DECEMBER NEWSLETTER:

We are happy to be continuing to offer coffee hour after church hosted by the Deacons. This month Cheryl Wormley, with the help of members of the congregation, will be serving. Hope to see many of you after church!

We were happy to welcome Kristen Matter to the Deacons.

We plan to have training for all Deacon members in December. There will also be a joint Session/Deacon meeting in January and a new moderator of the Deacons will be elected.

Some of the Deacons plan to help bring cookies for after the Sunday School Christmas Party.

There was a discussion of listing Deacons and Session members on our church website.

We are working on updating the photo directory, which we hope to have come out in January. Please make sure you let the office know if your address or phone number has changed.

Deacon shepherds plan to send out information about Advent in a note or email.

Deacons discussed members who are going through certain difficulties who need some special care. We have been in contact with them through phone, email and in person. Dinners have also been taken to members in need and prayer shawls made by the "No Name Knitters" have been delivered.

Please let us know if there is anything we can help you with. Concerns, health issues and celebrations are helpful to know about as we continue to care for you.

Angie Boe 815-338-7782

Pam Moorhouse 815-814-5585

Sherry Thuma 815-847-8339

Kristin Matter 847-609-8340

John Moorhouse 815-236-7408

Barb Parrish 815-338-8112

Cheryl Wormley 815-519-7402

Craft Fair



Our fund-raising annual craft fair is fast approaching. In order to make it more convenient for shopping, the craft items for sale will be displayed on tables in the back of the Great Hall near the Playground. Items will be available for purchase on Sunday, Dec. 11th, one-half hour before the worship service and up to one hour following the service. All proceeds will be donated to the church's youth group(s) for their year's activities. Please bring your hand-made crafts to the church anytime after the Dec.

4th worship service up until Saturday, Dec. 10th, placing them on tables near the Playground in the Great Hall. So get those wonderful crafts finished and plan on doing some gift shopping on Dec. 11th. Cash and checks made out to the church will be accepted.

Giving Tree

There are still some tags left on the Giving Tree in the entryway at church. Please take one or more tags, sign up with their numbers on the clipboard, purchase and wrap and attach the tag, and bring it to the church by December 18th. A container will also be available at church for any extra unwrapped new or nearly new items (or gift cards) for the families. Your generosity for this annual outreach is always greatly appreciated.



November Session Notes

Clerk's Report: Mark Bundick provided session with a preliminary review of the membership roll for the annual membership review.

Nominating Committee: Given the treasurer's desire to step down at the end of 2023, the committee is seeking an assistant treasurer to begin to transition the treasurer duties to someone new.

COVID Task Force: Chris and Ray will be stepping down at the end of the year and will need replacement.

Committee Reports:

Compassion, Peace and Justice: The Peace and Global Witness offering met its \$1,400 goal. Sarah Michehl of the Land Conservancy will speak on pollinator gardens after the March 22 N.O.W. dinner.

Congregational Life: The Education and Spiritual Growth committee confirmed Sunday School will continue on the 2nd and 4th Sundays (generally); N.O.W. will work to schedule brunch on those dates when it meets on December 4.

Education and Spiritual Growth: The Youth Group will bake cookies for shut ins on December 10. The committee is investigating Go and Serve trips organized by Group Mission Trips. A committee recommendation to sponsor the Boy Scout troop that Ray Thuma volunteers with was approved.

Ministry Support : Building and Grounds: Session needs to keep in mind that our building will be 20 years old only four years from now, and thus we face some major expenses for systems that are reaching end of life: fire pump replacement, full paint job for the Great Hall, carpeting, rooftop AC units, and parking lot replacement.

Worship, Music and Arts: Advent preparations continue to go well. The committee budgeted to continue with packaged communion elements given the uncertainties around COVID, the flu and RSV. Accessibility needs for those with visual impairments was discussed, but no decisions about how to accommodate these needs has yet been made. Recommended communion dates for 2023, January 1, February 5, March 5, April 2, April 6, (Maundy Thursday), May 7, June 4, July 2, August 6, September 3, October 1 (World Communion Sunday), November 5, and December 3, were approved.

Next Regular Meeting: Tuesday, December 13, 2022 at 6:00 p.m., jointly with the Deacons.

Compassion, Peace & Justice

Ray Thuma

815-338-9780 or

rpthuma@sbcglobal.net

(Awareness, Service)

Congregational Life

Mark Bundick

815-337-9068 or

mbundick@comcast.net

(Hospitality, Fellowship & NOW)

Education & Spiritual Growth

Jackie Lawler

jackieboe@comcast.net

(Adult, Youth, Child, Intergenerational)

Ministry Support

Bob Clark & Dawn Cook

847-274-8247 or

robtmclark@aol.com

815-861-7002 or

cookdawn82@gmail.com

(Finance, Staff Support, Building and Grounds & Stewardship)

Worship, Music and Arts

Chris Nejdil & Erin Kaye

815-337-1070 or

cnejdl@hotmail.com

(Worship Arts, Worship Leadership, Audio-Visual)

Clerk of Session

Mark Bundick

815-337-9068 or

mbundick@comcast.net

Worship News

The Great Hall is ready for the Advent Season thanks to the many hands that helped decorate the Christmas Tree on November 20. Young and the young at heart worked side-by-side to hang ornaments on the tree. A big thank you to the Hospitality team for putting together a tasty lunch of pizza with cookies for dessert.

John Rigby and his enthusiastic team of **Matt Thuma, Rob McMahon, Steve Bingham, Lee Nejd, and John Moorhouse** spent the Saturday morning after Thanksgiving hanging the greens and helped set up the poinsettias to finish the decorating. Thanks to all who contributed to the beauty of the Great Hall this season.



Save the date for these special Advent worship opportunities:

- The December 4 service, we will celebrate Communion and enjoy special music by the Advanced Bell Choir. The service will be followed by brunch prepared by the NOW team.
- December 11 is Cantata Sunday featuring the intergenerational choir, Sunday School youth, with accompaniment by **Roger Dickman** and **Winds Off the Lake**. This is also the time to shop for some unique Christmas gifts at the fundraiser craft sale by Compassion, Peace and Justice.
- 4th Sunday of Advent, December 18, the Beginner Bell Choir will perform.
- December 21, 7 pm Longest Night Service, a time for solace.
- Christmas Eve, December 24, a Candlelight Service for the entire family at 4:30 pm.
- Christmas Day Service will be online, available on demand at 9:30 am.
- New Years' Day Service will also be online, available on demand at 9:30 am.

Respectfully submitted by;

Chris Nejd,

Worship Music and Arts Committee

Worship Volunteers Schedule

Date	Liturgist	A/V	Usher	Acolyte
12/04/2022	Cheryl Wormley	Rob McMahon	Lee & Chris Nejd	Brayden Sobczak
12/11/2022	Cantata	Dave Johanson	Pat & Rick Morozink	None
12/18/2022	Sue Krause	Rob McMahon	Bob Clark	Elin Kaye
12/25/2022	Virtual			8

December 2022

December 2022

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY															
Nov 27	28	29	30	Dec 1	2	3	7:00am Men's Bible Study														
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	7:00am Men's Bible Study 9:00am Christmas Cantata Dress Rehearsal 1:30pm Youth Cookie making event														
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	7:00am Men's Bible Study														
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	7:00am Men's Bible Study														
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	7:00am Men's Bible Study														

December 2022



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF WOODSTOCK**

CELEBRATING AND SHARING GOD'S LOVE

A Family of Faith... praising God and serving others.

MINISTERS

All members and friends
of the congregation

STAFF

Rev. Eric Corbin
Pastor

Jeri Loiselle
Office Administrator
Social Media
Financial Secretary

Roger Dickman
Organist

Christy Johanson
Worship Arts
Coordinator

Visit us on Facebook

www.fpcwoodstock.org

Website:

office@fpcwoodstock.org

E-mail:

Phone: (815) 338-2627

Woodstock, IL 60098

2018 IL-HWY 47

CHURCH

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN