

Fenton First Presbyterian Church Newsletter December 2017

Living with Christ, serving the world

Mark Your Calendars

December 2nd

- *Red Cross Blood Drive

December 3rd

- *1st Sunday of Advent, HOPE
- *Blue Christmas Service, 5pm at the Fenton United Methodist Church

December 9th

- *Salvation Army Bell Ringing

December 10th

- *2nd Sunday of Advent, PEACE
- *Breakfast with a Christmas Angel
- *Intergenerational Caroling Party

December 17th

- *3rd Sunday of Advent, JOY
- *11am Worship Service will feature the Choir Cantata, "The Winter Rose" by Joseph Martin
- *Youth Christmas Party

December 24th

- *4th Sunday of Advent, LOVE
- *10am Worship Service
- *7pm Family Christmas Eve Service with Christmas Pageant
- *11pm Christmas Eve Lessons & Carols Service

December 31st

- *Sunday After Christmas Day
- *10am Caroling Service

Pastor's Article...

The following is an Christmas Parable. It doesn't use the scenes of the season to warm our hearts, but it does begin to explain why we celebrate the gift of a baby in a manger. It is an adaption of "A Parable of a King and a Maiden" by Soren Kierkegaard, Philosophical Fragments (ch. 2).

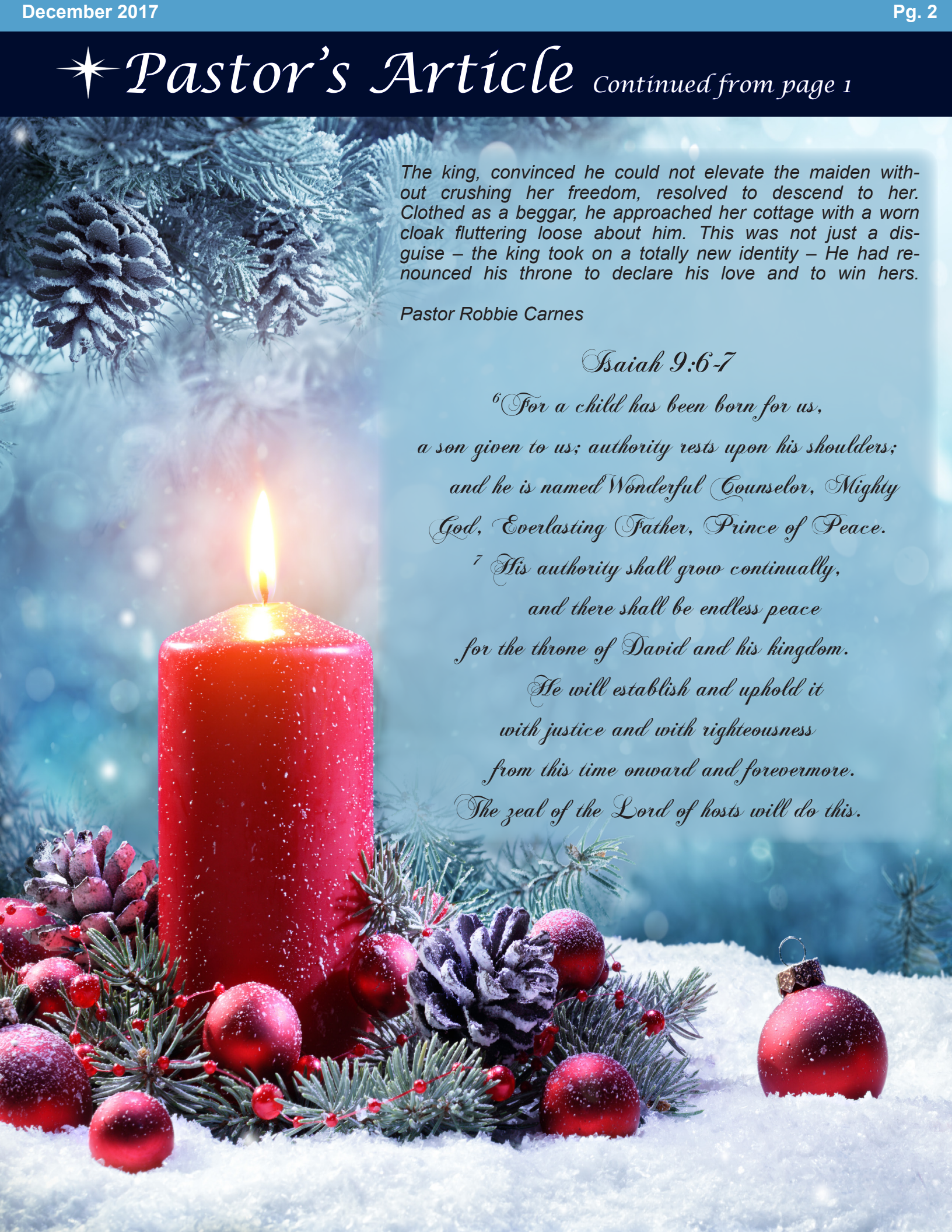
Suppose there was a king who loved a humble maiden. This king was like no other king. Every statesman trembled before his power. No one dared breathe a word against him, for he had the strength to crush all opponents.

And yet this mighty king was melted by love for a humble maiden who lived in a poor village in his kingdom. How could he declare his love for her? In an odd sort of way, his kingliness tied his hands. If he brought her to the palace and crowned her head with jewels and clothed her body in royal robes, she would surely not resist-no one dared resist him. She might even live forever in gratitude to his largesse. But would she love him?

She would say she loved him, of course, but would she truly? Or would she live with him in the fear of losing everything she had gained, nursing a private grief for the poor but consistent life she had left behind? Would she be happy at his side? How could he know for sure? If he rode to her forest cottage in his royal carriage, with an armed escort waving bright banners, that too would overwhelm her. He did not want a cringing subject. He wanted a lover, an equal. He wanted her to forget that he was a king and she a humble maiden and to let shared love cross the gulf between them. For it is only in love that the unequal can be made equal.



★ Pastor's Article *Continued from page 1*

A festive winter scene featuring a lit red candle, pinecones, and red ornaments on a snowy surface. The candle is the central focus, with a bright flame. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blue and white, suggesting a snowy or icy environment. The overall mood is warm and celebratory.

The king, convinced he could not elevate the maiden without crushing her freedom, resolved to descend to her. Clothed as a beggar, he approached her cottage with a worn cloak fluttering loose about him. This was not just a disguise – the king took on a totally new identity – He had renounced his throne to declare his love and to win hers.

Pastor Robbie Carnes

Isaiah 9:6-7

*⁶For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty
God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

*⁷His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.*

*He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.*

★ Mission & Stewardship

Food Bank of Eastern Michigan: The Food Bank of Eastern Michigan helps provide food to the hungry in 22 counties in the eastern half of Michigan. Over 19% of the people in eastern Michigan are food insecure. There are 400 partner agencies in 22 counties that work daily to make a difference. 98% of the money raised goes toward services.

Through your pledges to our church's program, the Mission Committee makes donations to the Food Bank. In addition, our members have supported their Empty Bowls fund raiser in September as well as volunteering our hands to assist them in sorting food for distribution. On November 18, 20 volunteers from our church spent the morning sorting food for distribution to the partner agencies. The Mission Committee wants to thank our members for their numerous methods of supporting the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan!



CHRISTMAS JOY
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
CHURCH LEADERS—PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

**BECAUSE CHRIST IS
GIVEN, WE GIVE**



CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING A Christmas Joy envelope is included in your envelope box. We ask that you consider giving during the month of December (Advent).

The Christmas Joy Offering supports retired church workers with financial and housing needs as well as gives scholarships for ethnic students and future church leaders to attend Presbyterian related colleges.

Please consider giving generously to the Christmas Joy Offering.

★ Mission & Stewardship



Ring Bells for the Salvation Army

It is time to prepare our hearts for the Christmas season. We all get caught up in the seasonal trappings: Dinners, travel plans, gifts.....

Well, for only one hour of your day on Saturday, December 9, you can have "the reason for the season". Ring Bells for the Salvation Army at VG'S on Silver Lake Parkway or the east door of Walmart. You will collect money for the truly needy and also see the generosity of Fenton neighbors.

100% of the money collected helps the needy, the donors give from their hearts and you are the vessel that brings them together.

A sign up sheet is in fellowship hall along with some instructions. If you have any questions, please ask Nancy Berger or Ken Wensel.

Winter Blood Drive

Did you know a shortage of all blood types happens during the summer and winter holidays? Our winter blood drive is Saturday, December 2, from 9am to 1:45pm. We have



three ways you can schedule your time to donate: online-www.redcross.org., call Red Cross @ 1-800-733-2767 or contact Sherry Hunt @ 810-735-

6428 or Jo Beardslee @ 810-750-9768 and we will guide you through the process. If you do not wish to donate we also need volunteers and cookie bakers for the day. Thank you for your support.

Family Promise



Our sister congregation, the Flushing Presbyterian Church, is depending on us to provide volunteers to help them host Family Promise homeless children and their parents Monday

and Wednesday evenings, December 18 and 20 at Flushing. Sign up in Fellowship Hall and do contact David Eshleman with questions and comments. Family Promise of Genesee County is our faith-based co-op of 26 churches that provide temporary housing, job-search counseling and life-skills training for up to 5 families at a time. This 3-year old mission is steadily helping families get back into sustainable housing and employment.

Searching for Christmas gifts for a friend or family member? Take a look at the Presbyterian Giving Catalog, which can be found on the sign-up table in Fellowship Hall.

★ *New Member & Outreach*



Holiday Concert:

New Member and Outreach Committee would like to invite you to the Fenton Community Orchestra Concert on Thursday, December 7, at 7:30pm in the Fenton High School Auditorium. The cost of admission is free.

Please feel free to invite relatives and friends to this great event as well. This is a wonderful way for our church to support the community and church members, including many of our youth, who participate in this music program. Let's try to meet up inside the entry way of the Fenton High School by 7:10 so we could possibly sit together as a group. Contact Margie Congdon with any questions at (810)750-3826.



Simply Carols Sunday, Dec. 10th

We will meet in Fellowship Hall at 1:00 to organize teams & review routes. Caroling will begin about 1:15 when each team will head to the residence or nursing home they are caroling at. We will meet back at the church for donuts and hot cocoa. Please sign up in Fellowship Hall at the Congregational Life table. We need Captains & Carolers and YOU DON'T NEED TO BE ABLE TO SING! This is a fun outreach opportunity for us all! For more Info Contact Roy Fetzer 248.807.0016 OR Cheryl Kopplin 517.304.5362

Photo Directory Update: PHOTO DIRECTORY HAS ARRIVED and is available for pick up in Fellowship Hall. Please choose the directory with your family's name on it. Enjoy!

★ *Congregational Life*

Breakfast with a Christmas Angel

Sunday, December 10th

10am

Fellowship Hall

Families and grandparents and neighbors are invited to bring their little ones for a continental breakfast, craft, Christmas hymns and to take their picture with the angel. At the beginning of 11am worship the angel will share the Christmas story with all of God's children. The Congregational Life and Christian Education Committees hope this event adds to the awe and wonder of this holy season.



★ Christian Education

Winter Bible Studies

★ Beginning on January 14th, the Sunday Morning Class will be studying the Scots Confession of 1560. This often overlooked confession identifies our church with the Nation of Scotland and has a great deal to say about confessing gospel truth in the face of political opposition. Come join us at 10am in the Conference Room.

★ Tuesday Morning Bible Study continues to discuss The Letter to the Galatians and Ephesians through December 19, and will resume on January 9, 2018. Join Pastor Lindsey in the Conference room from 11am – 12:15pm. Books are available in the office for \$12 each, and newcomers are always welcome.

Prayer Ministry Group

- *Would you like to deepen your prayer life?
- *Do you sometimes receive more clarity from praying with others?
- *Do you ever feel like you need to set aside a special time and place to talk with God?

Come as you are able to the Prayer Ministry Group on the 2nd & 4th Mondays of each month. We meet from 10-11am in the prayer corner of the Sanctuary and read through hymns, printed prayers and creeds, practice meditation, and offer our gratitude and concerns to God. Please join us!

Mens's Group

Men of Fenton First Presbyterian Church: We have two ongoing gatherings a month open to all men of all ages. On the first Saturday of every month, we meet at a local restaurant for fellowship. On the Third Sunday of every month, we meet at a home to share, study and pray together. Currently we are reading "Wild at Heart" by John Eldredge and discussing what it means to be a faithful Man and Christ follower. All men are welcome please provide Pastor Robbie with your email so that you can receive handy reminders.

Women's Groups

Monday Evening Women's Covenant Group resumes in January for a 12 week study on Daniel: Lives of Integrity, Words of Prophecy by Beth Moore. Led by Pastor Lindsey in the Conference Room, the class will meet from 6:30-8:30pm January 8 – February 12, break through Lent, and resume April 9 – May 14. Participant books are \$16 each. Register in Fellowship Hall by December 17 to reserve your **copy!** Childcare provided upon request – see Tina Ritchie.

Wednesday Morning Women's Covenant Group will discuss Dwelling in God's Peace from the Jesus Calling Bible Study Series by Sarah Young January 3 – February 21 from 10:00am – 12:00pm in Fellowship Hall. Participants will explore what the Bible has to say about the peace God provides, how they can obtain it, and why Jesus said that peacemakers are blessed. Facilitated by Tina Ritchie, study books are \$10 each – please reserve your copy in Fellowship Hall by December 10.

McFarlan House Ministry Update: Vanessa Skaff and Michelle Eisert from our Women's Covenant Group are coordinating a visitation schedule to provide conversation, prayer, hymn singing and activities once or twice a month from 1-3pm on specific dates. Our kick-off event is 1:30pm December 10 caroling at McFarlan House! Women interested in joining our efforts must fill out a volunteer form and are asked to see Vanessa Skaff.

Ever wonder what the women are learning in their study groups? Here are a couple thoughts from the Daniel study on why we attend church:

People have asked me, "Why do you go to Church?" It's pretty simple; I come to Church to worship my Lord and Savior, my Father, my Redeemer! I'm lost if I miss a Sunday; I really feel out of sorts. Attending helps me feel closer to God and want to do more. This closeness has led me to join Bible study groups, to serve on committees, to help God's people. As I learn and grow, I want to support my church - my church family where I find the love and acceptance of God's family. I can't do that staying home. No, I can't stay home on Sundays; I have to worship at Church. I'll say that again, I HAVE to worship at Church....it's what keeps the family of believers together! – Debbie Bard

In the Women's Covenant Group I've learned that "churches are meant to be places where we become equipped and fortified to minister out in the world" (Beth Moore quote). So therefore, to grow as a Christian, I need to partake in what my church offers! – Julie Grams



FPU Legacy Journey Course

6-8pm Wednesdays: January 3rd – February 14th

Do you already have Financial Peace? What's the next step and why should you take it? Take the Legacy Journey to be an example to those of us who are working to secure our futures. Show us the steps to take to leave a legacy of spiritual and financial well-being for generations to come.

The Legacy Journey is a seven week, biblically based class that will lead you deeper into investing, basic estate planning, purposeful living, safeguarding your legacy, and discovering the keys to generational wealth and true generosity. You'll discover a biblical framework for living intentionally now so that later you'll be able to leave a legacy that will secure your family's future and make a lasting impact on the world around you. Led by Larry Zimble, class membership material costs \$110 per family and meets in the Conference Room. Register in Fellowship Hall, online at www.daveramsey.com/legacy/, or contact Larry at larry@4squaretax.com.

★ Youth Group



Youth Group Service Blitz lock-in November - 18th & 19th

Thirteen youth participated throughout the day in various service projects. We had hoped to help clear brush at Bev & Jerry Welch's house, but the weather did not cooperate. Instead, we cleaned classrooms at church! Below are the projects we accomplished:

1. Youth served alongside adults at the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan, sorting vegetables, dairy products including eggs, and breads and sweets. The three boys did a fantastic job of bringing out pallets of food, removing them after being sorted, wrapping, weighing and marking each pallet, and then returning the pallet to the storage area. The girls and adults sorted and re-boxed all the items. With all hands on deck, we finished early and had a lot of fun!
2. Youth cleaned and organized all toys in the nursery and preschool rooms. This included dunking smaller toys in bleach water, wiping down all bigger toys and furniture, cleaning out all storage bins, and cleaning the floor mat under the loft unit in the preschool room. They also began sorting craft items in the art room.
3. Youth packaged 107 bags of feminine products for the Faith & Femininity mission. Each bag consisted of 14 tampons, 14 pads, 7 pantyliners, symptoms of toxic shock, and a scripture verse. We will be placing another order for feminine products with the \$450 still on hand, and will be having another packing night sometime in December. The bags are being delivered to Carriage Town Ministries.

The different verses Lindsey and Waverly chose are listed below:

Psalms 46:5 *God is with her, she will not fall.*

Proverbs 31:25 *She is clothed with strength and dignity, and she laughs without fear of the future.*

Philippians 4:6-8 *Don't worry about anything, instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all He has done.*

Jeremiah 29:11 *"For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."*



ZONTA
CLUB OF
FENTON AREA
MEMBER OF ZONTA INTERNATIONAL
EMPOWERING WOMEN
THROUGH SERVICE & ADVOCACY

"Safe Dates" Update: Thirty-two youth and adults participated in the program, learning the importance of expecting respect through healthy dating. Pastors Lindsey and Robbie, and Tina Ritchie are inviting everyone to **continue the conversation on Friday, December 15th from 6-8pm in Fellowship Hall**. Dinner will be provided – please RSVP on the youth bulletin board or to tina@ffpc.org by December 13th. Childcare will be provided for younger children.

We will be discussing God's desires for our relationships, components and development of healthy relationship habits, and offering communication strategies. Families will review the dating bill of rights and have the opportunity to create their own. Our desire is for parents to feel equipped to continue this important conversation with their teens, setting Godly expectations in lieu of those offered by a world view. Please see Pastors or Tina with any questions.

Youth Bible Study meets Sunday mornings through December 3rd from 9:30-10:30am in the Youth Room. We will finish our discussion on the time period of Expectations in the New Testament portion of the book CASKET EMPTY by David L. Palmer.

Two new options are offered in January:

Financial Peace University course for teens called Generation Change will be offered to 8-12 graders beginning January 7th from 9:30-10:30am in the Sr. High Youth Room. Led by Larry Zimble, this 3 module Bible study is designed to lead teens to a better understanding of God, themselves and their money—and how it all works together. Cost for each three lesson student workbook is \$10 if registered individually, OR register for the entire 9 week course for \$15. That's half price AND you could easily have your youth work to cover the cost! Register on the youth bulletin board.

The schedule is as follows:

BE Who God Created You to Be meets January 7th, 14th & 21st
 DO More with Your Money meets January 28th, February 4th & 11th
 GO Write Your Story meets March 4th, 11th & 18th

Bible basics class for youth in 6-8 grade not participating in Generation Change will meet in the Jr. High Youth Room. Led by Tina Ritchie, this fun interactive class meets January 7th – March 18th from 9:30-10:30am.

No classes will be held February 18th or 25th

Jr. Highs: Massanetta Middle School Conference June 25th-29th, 2018

Themē: Created. Claimed. Called. Ya'll Are Mine

Cost \$400

\$100 deposit is due Dec. 15th, 2017

\$300 balance due by May 1st, 2018

See Tina for Registration Form

Youth Group Upcoming Activities

To get on the youth email list, contact Tina Ritchie at tina@ffpc.org or text 810-701-4136.

Friends are always welcome, and must have a current parental consent form on file for offsite events.

Youth Christmas Party is Sunday, December 17th from noon-5pm. We'll have Jet's Pizza and a gift exchange, then head to Sky Zone in Brighton. Bring a "white elephant" gift for the gift exchange and \$20 for Sky Zone. Friends are welcome to join us and must have a current parental consent form on file. Adult drivers are also needed; please see Tina Ritchie.

December 3rd: Triple C Night – Cards, Crafts & Cookies! 5-7pm

December 9th: Salvation Army Bell Ringing 10-11am & Panera 11-noon

December 17th: Christmas Party & Sky Zone 12-5pm Cost \$20

January 6th & 7th: Youth Sunday Planning lock-in 6pm -10am

January 14th: Sledding/ice skating or movie after worship noon-3pm

January 19th: Congregation Game Night 6-9pm

January 21st: Realities of Human Trafficking Youth/Adult Forum 5-7pm

3 EASY Ways You Can Help Make A Difference

1 **DID YOU KNOW...**The children can leave their offering in the offering plate after the "time with children," before they leave for JAM. Please see one of the Pastors or Tina Ritchie with questions.

2 **Direct Your Dollars!** Drop off your ENTIRE VG's receipts to the receptacle in Fellowship Hall. This new VG's rewards program benefits the youth scholarship account!

3 **Bottle Drive:** You may drop off your returnable bottles to the receptacle in the youth room on an ongoing basis.

★ Children's Program

For Children Preschool - 5th Grade

Club 45: All 4th & 5th graders and friends are invited to this fellowship and mission group that typically meets from 12:30pm-1:30pm once a month in the Art Room. On Saturday, December 9th from 10:00am-11:00am at Walmart, we will ring the Salvation Army bells with Youth Group. For more information, please see Cherri or Glenn Maxwell.



New Nursery & Preschool News:

9am Preschool News: During the month of December, 9am worship preschoolers will be learning about who the wise men were and what part they played during Jesus' birth. The wise men followed the star and traveled to worship Jesus. Despite the bad intentions of King Herod, the message of God was revealed to them to glorify the Spirit of the newborn King. They brought gifts fit for a king, instead of the ill will of Herod.

Memory Verse: Matthew 2:1-2 Wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star at its rising, and have come to worship Him."

Christmas Word Find

G	C	P	M	E	H	E	F	F	N	Y	Y	A	S	E
V	F	I	O	G	K	N	O	C	Y	R	R	I	L	B
Z	H	S	J	Z	X	U	H	E	G	A	B	Z	N	B
H	A	T	I	D	U	R	X	S	Z	M	E	I	P	E
R	P	L	R	S	I	L	E	N	T	N	I	G	H	T
R	K	O	Q	S	N	E	M	E	S	I	W	A	J	H
Y	L	X	T	Y	Z	S	W	C	Z	S	P	E	P	L
M	I	M	F	H	F	N	P	N	S	J	V	E	K	E
J	A	B	T	T	B	A	R	I	O	R	S	X	Z	H
S	A	I	Y	L	Y	T	E	K	V	O	F	L	W	E
H	A	Y	E	Y	T	I	G	N	J	I	O	E	E	M
F	A	M	K	R	H	V	N	A	E	V	U	G	P	E
M	A	A	N	W	A	I	A	R	S	A	S	N	O	E
C	I	H	O	T	C	T	M	F	U	S	O	A	H	F
D	J	E	D	K	Q	Y	S	V	S	W	T	E	K	Q

- | | |
|-----------|--------------|
| JESUS | HAY |
| MARY | ANGEL |
| JOSEPH | FAITH |
| WISEMEN | HOPE |
| MANGER | FRANKINCENSE |
| NATIVITY | MYRRH |
| BETHLEHEM | SILENT NIGHT |
| CAMEL | LORD |
| DONKEY | SAVIOR |
| STAR | CHRISTMAS |



JAM - "Jesus And Me"

During 11:00am worship

This Sunday school program for children preschool through 5th grade explores a year of living in the Fruits of the Spirit from Galatians 5:22-23 *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law."*

We are practicing PATIENCE, the fourth quality of the Fruit of the Spirit, during our fourth rotation running November 26 – December 17. During Sunday morning class time the children will be preparing for the Christmas Pageant on December 24 for 7pm worship.

December Patience Memory Verse:

Romans 8:25 *"But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we Wait for it patiently."*



J e s u s a n d M e

Our January rotation on KINDNESS runs January 7-28 and begins with a Pineapple JAM session. The children will learn that if we believe Jesus and God, and live by their Word, we can be people who overflow with kindness. This does not mean that we will be kind all the time. As we come to know Jesus more and more, we change. Kindness becomes part of who we are. By living with the Holy Spirit inside us, Jesus gives us the power to be kind.

January Peace Memory Verse: **Ephesians 4:2** *"Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love."*

Children's Christmas Pageant

Sunday, December 24th
7:00pm During the Family Christmas Eve Service

Rehearsals take place during the 10am children's Sunday School. Speaking and non-speaking roles



Worship

December Worship Schedule

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3rd, 2017

Communion Sunday, 1st Sunday of Advent

Lessons: Isa. 64:1-9; Ps. 80:1-7, 17-19;

1 Cor. 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37

Sermon: When Heaven Walked the Earth

Scripture: Genesis 3:1-9

9am Worship & Communion

11am Worship & Communion

Layreader: Jennifer Wenzel

Ushers: 9am Dennis & Jo Beardslee

11am Bob & Nessie Brownlee, Team #1

Acolytes: No Acolytes - Communion

Communion Servers 9am: Nancy Berger & Pam Coffin

Communion Servers 11am: Larry Zimpler, Cheryl Koplinski, Ken Wensel, Amy Probyn, Rick Bard, John Hodgkin, Doug Hartwell, Lynn Watters

Sound Tech: Jay Kirkey

Coffee Hour: Red Team

Counters: Martha Smith & Dennis Beardslee

Banker: Roy Fetzer

Nursery: 9:45am

JAM: Patience & Christmas Pageant

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10th, 2017

2nd Sunday of Advent

Lessons: Isa. 40:1-11; Ps. 85:1-2, 8-13; 2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8

Sermon: When Heaven Came Back

Scripture: Luke 1:26-38; 46-55

9:00am Worship

11:00am Worship

Layreader: TBD

Ushers: 9am Dennis & Jo Beardslee

11am John & Linda Banks, Team #2

Acolytes: Adlin & Bowen Moore

Sound Tech: Doug Watters

Coffee Hour: Orange Team

Counters: Shirley Israel & Sara Wrage

Banker: Debera Bard

Nursery: 9:45am

JAM: Patience & Christmas Pageant

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17th, 2017

3rd Sunday of Advent

Lessons: Isa. 6:1-4, 8-11; Ps. 126 or Luke 1:46b-55; 1 Thess. 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28

Sermon: When Heaven Came to Us

Scripture: Colossians 2:6-12, 16-3:4

9:00am Worship

11:00am Worship

Layreader: Youth

Ushers: 9am Jack Allen & Greg Dean

11am Roy Fetzer, Team #3

Acolytes: Mason & Bella Skaff

Sound Tech: TBD

Coffee Hour: Yellow Team

Counters: Bob Brownlee & Ken Wensel

Banker: Larry Zimpler

Nursery: 9:45am

JAM: Patience & Christmas Pageant

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2017

4th Sunday of Advent

Lessons: Isa. 9:2-7; Ps. 96; Titus 2:11-14;

Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)

Sermon: When Heaven Comes to Stay

Scripture: Revelation 21:1-5

10:00am Worship

Layreader: Bob Brownlee

Ushers: 10am Roger & Karen Terrill, Team #4

Acolytes: Sammy Carnes & Mason Davis

Sound Tech: Kate Kirkey

Coffee Hour: Green Team

Counters: Jon O'Connell & Julie Jacobson

Banker: Debera Bard

Nursery: 9:45am

JAM: Patience & Christmas Pageant

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31st, 2017

Sunday After Christmas

Lessons: Isa. 6:1-10-62:3; Ps. 148; Gal. 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40

10:00am Worship

Layreader: Bob Brownlee

Ushers: 10am Jeff & P.J. Collier, Team 5

Acolytes: Jenn Wenzel & Vanessa Skaff

Sound Tech: Mark Grams

Coffee Hour: Blue Team

Counters: TBD

Banker: Janet Stork


Nursery: 9:45am


JAM: Patience & Christmas Pageant


Worship During Advent


This article is based on worship resources created by Clayton Libolt

Throughout the Advent season the sermons will focus on God being among us. We do not worship a God who chooses to stay far from us. God has consistently called people to be near and know him. We find this in the Old Testament, all throughout the New and especially in the person of Jesus Christ. The following are some helpful thoughts and Scripture readings to help you prepare for worship.

 December 3rd: **When Heaven Walked the Earth** - Scripture: Genesis 3:1-9
Imagine a starlit night. In the distant horizon, you see the farthest object that one can see with the naked eye: the Andromeda galaxy. The immensity of the night sky overwhelms you. Tears begin rolling down your cheeks. A great loneliness seizes you, a pain in the center of your being. The Bible suggests that this loneliness comes from a sense that things that belonged together have gotten separated; an original unity has come apart. This is the story of that separation. What has come apart are earth and heaven. Originally they were one. God walked in the garden in the cool of the day. What was once one has become two. But here's the good news, the great truth of the Bible: God longs for Eden, for the original unity, as much as we do. Advent is about reawakening this longing within us, the longing for Immanuel, God-with-us.

 December 10th: **When Heaven Came Back** - Scripture: Luke 1:26-38; 46-55
Suppose you grew up in a nice house in a nice neighborhood—a warm, welcoming, and orderly place. Years later you return to the house. Your family is still there, but something terrible has happened. Instead of order, you find chaos. Garbage is heaped up in the corners of the rooms. Nothing in the house seems to work. Those who live there are sullen and nasty to each other. Something like this has happened to the human race. We started out in a lush garden, but now we live in a disorderly, dysfunctional world. We find garbage heaped in the corners. Violence is rampant. We are tempted to sing, “This world is not my home.” But indeed it is. And we need someone to set it right. One day the Prince slips in, incognito, or nearly so. For the most part, the world fails to recognize him, but those who have been trained to see the clues find him. Mary is one such person, but because the Prince still walks among us, we too can see him, if only we know where to look. So where do we look? Mary's song is full of clues. Look among the poor, among those who have little, among those who suffer. In Advent we redirect our sight from the illusions that cover up the sad truth of the human race to the places and people among whom the Prince walks, and for whom the Prince has come.

 December 17th: **When Heaven Came to Us** - Scripture: Colossians 2:6-12, 16-3:4
In her book *Take This Bread*, Sara Miles encounters the mystery of the sacrament. Wandering into a worship service at St. Gregory's in San Francisco, she is moved to come forward. Someone puts bread in her mouth, and, as she puts it, “Jesus happened to me.” The sacrament is one of the ways that Jesus gets inside us. Once Jesus is inside us, his story becomes our story. We find a new identity, both our own and Christ's. The peril here, as Paul reminds us in Colossians 2, is religion. Religion tries to make us conformists. Life in Jesus allows us to become what we are. Colossians 3 says that Jesus is the person who knows who we originally were and, underneath it all, still are. This identity is hidden in heaven, but even now, in Christ, we begin to recall it and live it anew. In this way, heaven comes to dwell in us. We become the community of those for whom the unity of heaven and earth has been restored, even if the restoration is still agonizingly partial.

 December 24th: **When Heaven Comes to Stay** - Scripture: Revelation 21:1-5
This climatic passage in the book of Revelation tells us of what might be called the “greater Christmas”: the final coming together of earth and heaven. The New Jerusalem descends. God takes up residence among us. All, at last, is restored. This is set against the backdrop of the destruction of the old world order. In a surprisingly contemporary note, the merchants of the earth watch as the great Babylon, consumer of the world's goods, goes up in flames. “In one hour such great wealth has been brought to ruin!” (Rev. 18:17). But as chapter 19 makes clear, this wealth has been built on violence. When the whole structure comes tumbling down, and death and Hades are themselves thrown into the lake of fire, the earth greens in preparation for the restoration of heaven to earth. For now, that means that there is a sharp divide between those who belong to Babylon—the current world order—and those who long for the coming of this greater Christmas. Which are you?

Special Worship Opportunities

Outreach Communion



Who said Communion just happens on Sunday mornings? The next date is Monday, December 4th at 1:00pm in the Sanctuary. Each month this fall we're trying out a shorter Communion service, filled with energetic hymn singing, a shortened version of the Sunday sermon, and the bread and juice/wine served in the pews. We're trying to make this a "barrier free" worship experience--with large print bulletins, amplified speaking, and helpers to assist with walkers, wheelchairs, or to just lend a hand. Come for worship, stay for fellowship around tables in the Fellowship Hall. For questions or rides, please call Dave Eshleman or the Church Office.

Blue Christmas Service



Sunday, December 3, at 5:00pm at Fenton United Methodist with pastors from our local churches.

On this night, we remember those for whom the holidays are not joyful; they are lonely, in mourning, feeling alienated and cast apart from family celebrations; they are experiencing depression and sadness and yet are often compelled to "put on a happy face" for others, denying their true feelings.

As we gather, we embrace and claim the darkness that is present both in the world and in our own lives. As people who are familiar with the darkness, we also know that we gather to be illumined by the light of the Christ Child this Christmas season. May the Christ Child, born in a lowly stable, himself an outcast and marginal, bring light, comfort, peace, and joy this holiday season.

★ Updates & Announcements

We would like to thank our church family for all the cards, prayers and soothing words we received during the loss of my mother. We are so fortunate to belong to such a vibrant congregation.

Dennis and Jo Beardslee

Library Updates: The book Paul's Idea of Community, by Robert J Banks, was donated to the library in memory of Bob Strom's son Steve.

Also please continue to take a look at the book cart in Fellowship Hall for interesting and faith-deepening reads.

★ *Let's Celebrate*

BIRTHDAYS

Carey Muntin	Dec 2	Jill Hiscock	Dec 20
Kim Wilcox	Dec 4	Melissa Browne	Dec 21
Greg Dean	Dec 6	Amber Danules	Dec 21
Tyler Smith	Dec 6	John Marsom	Dec 22
Doug Jacobs	Dec 8	Dennis Beardslee	Dec 25
Karen Wensel	Dec 8	Roger Terrill	Dec 25
Larry Zimblar	Dec 10	Brandon McLive	Dec 27
Jim Murray	Dec 13	Scott Rourke	Dec 27
Sarah Smith	Dec 14	Elizabeth Thomas	Dec 27
Nancy Berger	Dec 19	Ron Gilbert	Dec 29
Barbara Hungerford	Dec 19	Meghan Smith	Dec 29
Mike Hussar	Dec 19	Tracy Williams	Dec 29
Jon O'Connell	Dec 19	John Foguth	Dec 31
Mary Zimblar	Dec 19	Don Kutchev	Dec 31



ANNIVERSARIES

Amy & Michael Probyn	Dec 6 1977
Dick & Nancy Berger	Dec 7 1968
Jerry & Bev Welch	Dec 7 1963
Bob & Nessie Brownlee	Dec 23 1960
Spencer & Sharon Sutherby	Dec 24 1976
Paula & Henry Glomski	Dec 29 1995

★ *Financial Updates*

2018 Pledge Results to Date

We are pleased to report that we have started the 2018 pledges much better than we started the 2017 pledges. As of November 15, we had received 68 pledges totaling \$147,050. Thank you to those 68 families for supporting our ministry programs! We are fortunate to have a community of faith that believes in what God is doing here in this place.

The Session is hopeful that it can agree on a 2018 Operating Budget at their December Session meeting. The Session will be much more confident if we can receive another 60 pledges before that meeting on December 19.

For those families who have not yet submitted their estimate of giving card toward the support of our ministry programs, we ask that you prayerfully consider making that commitment soon. You can call Kelly in the office or place your estimate of giving card in the offering plate or in the mail. If you have any questions, please ask any elder or one of the pastors.

Update: 2018 Giving Envelopes will be available for pick up in late December

WAYS TO GIVE

There are many different ways that you can give back to the Fenton First Presbyterian Church. **Together we can make a difference!!**



Online Giving: An easy and convenient way to give. Just visit the Presbyterian Mission Exchange link in the Giving section of FFPC.org website. A fast and SECURE way to give back.



Church Giving: You can give during one of our services by placing your check or cash in the Sunday offering plates. When giving cash, please complete a giving envelope so we can properly record your gift.



Automatic Bank Pay: You can set up payments through your financial institution by utilizing the bill pay feature. Simply use First Presbyterian Church as the payee and your name for your account information. Saves on postage!!



Non-Cash Giving: Assets or Planned Gifts



Mail offering to Church:
Fenton First Presbyterian Church
503 S. Leroy
Fenton, MI 48430

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DECEMBER CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 8:00am - 10:00am Men's Covenant Group 9:00am-1:45pm Red Cross Blood Drive
3 1st Sunday of Advent, HOPE 9:00am Worship Service 11:00am Worship Service 12:30pm-1:30pm Blood Pressure Check FH 5:00pm - 6:00pm Blue Christmas Service, 5pm at the Fenton United Methodist Church 5:00pm - 7:00pm Youth Group Triple C Night YR	4 1:00pm – 2:00pm Outreach Communion Sanctuary & FH 1:00pm - 2:00pm Knitting Group YR 4:30pm – 5:30pm Tiger Den FH 7:00pm – 8:00pm Den 4 YR 7:00pm – 9:00pm Boy Scouts FH	5 11:00am – 12:15pm Bible Study CR 6:30pm – 8:00pm Congregational Life Meeting CR 7:00pm – 8:45pm New Member Outreach Meeting YR	6 8:00am-12:00pm Men's Work Day 6:30pm – 7:00pm Lamplight Choir, DR 6:30pm – 7:30pm Bell Choir, CHR 7:00pm – 7:30pm Illuminate Choir, DR 7:45pm – 9:30pm Chancel Choir, Sanctuary	7 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM Den 2, FH 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM Den 3, FH 6:30pm-8:00pm Mission & Stewardship Meeting 7:30pm Fenton Commu- nity Orchestra Concert, Fenton High School	8	9 All Day Salvation Army Bell Ringing 10:00am - 12:00pm Youth Bell Ringing & Coffee@ Panera
10 2nd Sunday of Advent, PEACE 9:00am Worship Service 10:00am Breakfast with a Christ- mas Angel 11:00am Worship Service 1:00pm Simply Carols 2:00pm - 6:00pm Miller Family Christmas Party	11 10:00am - 11:00am Prayer Ministry Team, Sanctuary 1:00pm - 2:00pm Knitting Group YR 7:00pm - 8:00pm Cub Scouts, YR	12 11:00am – 12:15pm Bible Study CR 6:00pm - 8:00pm Christian Education Meeting CR Book Binders Christ- mas Party	13 8:00 AM-12:00 PM Bible Study Day 10:00am-12:00pm Card Class 4:00 PM - 4:30 PM All Staff Meeting, CR 4:30 PM - 6:00 PM Worship Committee Meeting CR 6:30 PM – 7:00 PM Lamplight Choir, DR 6:30 PM – 7:30 PM Bell Choir, CHR 7:00 PM – 7:30 PM Illuminate Choir, DR 7:45 PM – 9:30 PM Chancel Choir, Sanctuary	14 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM Den 2, FH 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM Den 3, FH	15 6:00pm-8:00pm Zonta "Safe Dates" Dinner & Conversation in FH	16
17 3rd Sunday of Advent, JOY 9:00am Worship Service 11:00am Worship Service featur- ing the Choir Cantata, "The Winter Rose" by Joseph Martin 6:00pm-8:00pm Men's Covenant Offsite 12:00pm Youth Christmas Party & Sky Zone	18 Family Promise 1:00pm - 2:00pm Knitting Group YR 4:30 PM – 5:30 PM Den 6 FH 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM Admin Committee Meeting 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM Den 4 YR 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM Boy Scouts FH	19 11:00am – 12:15pm Bible Study CR 6:30 PM - 8:30 Session Meeting CR 7:00 PM-9:00 PM All Pack Meeting FH	20 Family Promise 8:00 AM-12:00 PM Men's Work Day 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM 6:30 PM – 7:00 PM Lamplight Choir, DR 6:30 PM – 7:30 PM Bell Choir, CHR 7:00 PM – 7:30 PM Illuminate Choir, DR 7:45 PM – 9:30 PM Chancel Choir, Sanctuary	21 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM Den 2, FH 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM Den 3, FH	22	23
24 4th Sunday of Advent, LOVE 10:00am Worship Service 7:00pm Family Christmas Eve Service with Christmas Pageant 11:00pm Christmas Eve Lessons & Carols Service	25 MERRY CHRISTMAS!	26 Office Closed	27	28 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM Den 2, FH 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM Den 3, FH	29	30
31 Sunday After Christmas Day 10:00am Caroling Service						

If you would like to schedule an event or have a current event that needs updating, please contact Kelly Sunman-Davis at the church office **Phone:** 810-629-7801 **Email:** office@ffpc.org