

# Fenton First Presbyterian Church

*Living with Christ, Serving the World*

December 2019

HOPE

PEACE

JOY

LOVE



# Pastor's Article

I was in the ear doctor's office, sitting on the examination chair while I waited for the nurse to come back. I had forgotten to bring the magazine I was reading from the waiting room and my eyes were drawn to all of the detailed posters and informational flyers that plastered the walls and were arranged in document holders on the counter. Funny how much you can learn about the world when you have nothing better to do than read the writing on the wall.

## Mark Your Calendars

**December 1st**  
**1st Sunday in Advent (Hope)**  
**Youth Group Soup & Talk**

**December 2nd**  
**Outreach Communion**

**December 7th**  
**Jinglefest**  
**One Starry Night**

**December 6th**  
**Deacons Christmas Party**

**December 8**  
**2nd Sunday in Advent (Peace)**  
**Confirmation Class & Youth**  
**Mission Event**  
**Linden First Presbyterian**  
**Church**

**December 15**  
**3rd Sunday in Advent (Joy)**

**December 22nd**  
**4th Sunday in Advent (Love)**  
**Christmas joy Offering**

**December 24th**  
**Christmas Eve**  
**Office Open 9-12:30**  
**7:00pm Family Service**  
**11:00pm Lessons & Carols**

**December 25th**  
**Merry Christmas**

**December 27th**  
**Office Open 12pm-4pm**

**December 29th**  
**One Worship Service 10:00am**

Did you know there is a ear condition called Presbycusis? This is a condition in which higher frequency sounds (and as it develops, lower frequencies) become harder to hear and thus make deciphering speech difficult.

People with Presbycusis often notice that speech is loud enough, but not clear – as if the talker is mumbling. Having Presbycusis can result in higher-pitched sounds of speech, such as/s/and/th/, sounding unclear and indistinct to the listener. This can lead to confusion (e.g. not being able to tell the difference between the words soot and foot), which can impact an individual's ability to understand conversations, particularly in noisy situations. This can make communication in bars, cafés, clubs and restaurants extremely difficult if not impossible. (<https://hearnet.org.au/hearing-problems/presbycusis>)

You might experience some of these symptoms, and the Michigan Ear Institute includes symptoms such as the loss of sound sensitivity, having to ask people to repeat themselves, not being able to hear women's voices or children's voices as easily as male voices, finding the TV volume is too loud, tinnitus or "head noise", which produces buzzing or ringing in the ear.

The attentive reader will notice the similarity between the words Presbyterian and Presbycusis. This is due to the Greek root 'Presby' that mean 'elder' or 'aged'. However, no matter what age you are you can suffer from Spiritual Presbycusis. As we learn about who God is, we might think we have learned it all, and the sensitivity of our heart's ear becomes dull. Having grown aged in our relationship with God, we might find ourselves not as readily engaging with those around us and needing to ask them to repeat themselves because we are not really present with them.

We might find our hearts tuning out certain frequencies. We no longer care to listen to children, or women, or men, or democrats, or republicans, or...

We have blocked certain voices from our ears. It might be that our spirituality is aged to such a degree that we can no longer participate with others in learning, fun or fellowship, and our heads are filled with self-fabricated noise of our own perspective.

In times of chaos and stress we may feel unmoored. Unable to

clearly hear and decipher what is being said around us, we hesitate making decisions. It is as if there is too much noise in our hearts and we become deaf to everything rather than being able to hear the still small voice of our Savior.

If these are the symptoms of your heart, I urge you to consider how the Advent season might bring you to a place of healing. Just as you should listen to the ear doctor if you are experiencing the physical symptoms, if you are experiencing these spiritual symptoms you should listen in the little room where Gabriel spoke to Mary. You should ponder how Joseph risked public shame in order to be obedient to God. You should consider Zechariah's silence until his son was born. You should contemplate how the Shepherds were transformed from the marginalized into the announcers of the promise coming true.

As we dwell on the story of God's promise coming true, our hearts turn attentive to God's work in the world. Our spiritual ears become cleaned out and we develop sensitivity to the Spirit's voice. As we wonder at the birth of the Christ-child, our hearts learn to become younger and we find ourselves transformed.

May the fragrance of His peace, Soar through your heart  
And may His love poured out, flow to the depths of your deepest sigh,  
And may the hope that will not deceive, ease every pain,  
And may His joy rush over you and cause you to Delight in the path He has called you to,  
And may your ears tingle as you hear anew, the great things our God has done and will do!

~based on a Keith and Kristyn Getty song "Irish Christmas Blessing"

Pastor Robbie Carnes

I'M GOING TO  
**BRING HEALING TO**  
YOUR HURTING HEART.  
**- GOD**





*As a church we have sent Pastor Lindsey to serve as an Interim Pastor at Trinity United Presbyterian Church for a season. In this column you will find sermons, articles and stories about her Interim work.*

The following are excerpts from a sermon that Pastor Lindsey Carnes gave at Trinity United Presbyterian Church.

## **“At Home in the Wilderness--A Time of New Beginnings,”**

**2 Cor 5:14-19, Deut 8:1-20**

**Pastor Lindsey Carnes**

This is our last sermon in this Wilderness series. We celebrate that the wilderness is a time of new beginnings. Another way to think of it is that wilderness times are temporary. A retired pastor was once asked, what was his favorite phrase in scripture. He replied that “It came to pass” occurred 453 times in the King James Version of the Bible. That is very good news, if you’re contemplating wilderness time. Wilderness times come, but they don’t stay. They are not permanent. They pass. Wilderness time always comes to an end and is always followed by a new beginning.

According to Dante, written over the gates of hell are the words, “All hope abandon, ye who enter here!” Sometimes we imagine that those words are written over the gate to the wilderness and we are tempted to abandon hope. The good news of our Christian faith, however, is that the wilderness is never the final destination and hope is alive even in that desolate territory.

Wilderness times generally mark the end of one phase and the beginning of a new phase of our lives. Jesus’ difficult and lonely time of testing in the Judean wilderness gave way to a new beginning—the beginning of His public ministry. It prepared Him and strengthened Him for it in a way that perhaps nothing else could.

New beginnings stand at the heart of the gospel message. No matter who we are or what we’ve done, no matter if the wilderness is of our own making, God is always present in the wilderness with us and can lead us through it and out of it. When we find ourselves in the wilderness of sin, guilt, and separation from God and from others, there is a way out of the wilderness and a new beginning. God provides that way in Christ.

The apostle Paul was an expert in new beginnings. He knew well the spiritual territory we call “the wilderness” because he spent a great deal of time there! Paul also knew the power of being made new and set free from the wilderness of a broken relationship with God and with others. Paul wrote, “So if anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us” (2 Corinthians 5:17-19). The good news of Christ is, that no matter who you are or what you have done, there is always the chance for a new beginning. In Christ, we are new creations: “Everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!”

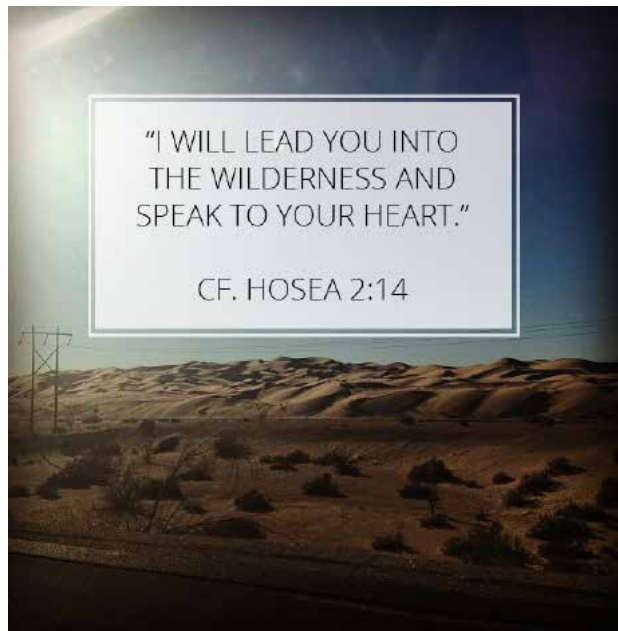




in so many words, said, "I wish you were dead." He asked for his inheritance—not at all appropriate, since his father was very much alive! The father gave his younger son his share of the inheritance and the son ran away to a distant country, where he squandered it all. All that money his father had worked hard to earn and set aside for his son was just thrown away satisfying the son's every whim and desire and trying to buy friends. It was awful!

It didn't take him long to blow his inheritance and he found himself homeless and hungry. This young boy found himself doing the unthinkable. He wound up feeding pigs and was so hungry he even wanted to eat the pig slop. He was in the wilderness! When he came to his senses, he said, "How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death!" (Luke 15:17 NIV). So he decided to go home and beg his father for forgiveness. As he was approaching the familiar place that once had been his home, his father saw him. His father was so overjoyed and excited that he ran to his son, threw his arms around him, and kissed him.

Jesus taught us that God is like that loving father. If you're in the wilderness, feeling separated from God—and perhaps you even ran into that wilderness yourself—it may be difficult to believe, but God is like that father and will run to meet you and welcome you home with open arms, ready to give you a new beginning. Ultimately, the wilderness never has the last word!



But, what about the greatest wilderness? What about death? The good news of our faith is that even the wilderness of death comes to pass. In Christ, Paul observed, "Death has been swallowed up in victory" (1 Corinthians 15:54). The good news of our faith is that even out of the wilderness of suffering and death, and even out of the wilderness of the death of someone we love, there is a new beginning. Death is swallowed up in victory through Jesus Christ. Death never has the final word.

Betsy and Woody Stover, were raising their children here in Michigan when their youngest daughter Ele died at only 11 months old. The Stovers saw that their three children, ages 3-7, were grieving the death of their sister, but not in the same way as adults. Out of that experience, they founded an organization to help children and teens who are grieving the loss of a someone close to them. Ele's Place was founded to provide peer support and counseling to ensure that no child grieves alone. Out of that terrible wilderness came a new beginning for that family and for many other families suffering the pain of losing a child in death.

The good news of our faith is that the wilderness never has the last word. When Jesus was on the cross, He was in the darkest wilderness of His life. Jesus was nailed to that cross to die as a criminal by that cruel Roman means of execution. As Jesus hung there, the life draining from Him, He experienced the rejection, the anguish, and the loneliness of the darkest wilderness. Jesus cried out, quoting Psalm 22, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" But, we know that the cross was not the end. We, who will walk the wilderness way with Christ, know what we celebrate each Sunday. We know that death will never have the final word. We know that the wilderness "comes to pass."

# MISSION AND STEWARDSHIP

## Mission Update.....

### Food Bank of Eastern Michigan November 16, 2019

Over 19% of the people in eastern Michigan are food insecure! The Food Bank of Eastern Michigan provides food to over 400 partner agencies in 22 counties. A hungry person or family could be your child's friend from school, your co-worker or even your neighbor.

Here is just one neighbor's story from the Food Bank clients:

Daniel supports his wife and two children by working long hours, six days a week, as a painter. In the past, Daniel's family had to make some tough choices between paying for their bills and buying food. The family found assistance through their local food pantry, which distributes healthy food at his daughter's school. "By helping [us] provide for our children now, they are helping us give our children a chance at a better future."

On Saturday, November 16th, fifteen volunteers from our church performed a mission outreach at the Food Bank on Howard Avenue in Flint. They worked together to review, clean and sort through pallets of food. The group carpooled together from church.

Through your pledges to our church's program, the mission committee makes donations to the Food Bank: \$1= 6 meals; \$20 can feed a family of four for 10 days. 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. The Mission committee wants to thank our members for their numerous methods of supporting the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan!







God, you saw  
the great needs of the  
world and you gave us  
the perfect gift in your son,  
Jesus Christ.

Help us open our doors  
to those in need  
in our Church and the  
world with our own gifts.



**CHRISTMAS JOY**  
**SPECIAL OFFERINGS**

LEADERSHIP: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

# Consider Giving on December 22nd, 2019



**CHRISTMAS JOY**  
**SPECIAL OFFERINGS**

LEADERSHIP: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE



**CHRISTMAS JOY**  
**SPECIAL OFFERINGS**

LEADERSHIP: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

**50%**  
of your gifts provide assistance for current  
and retired church workers and their families  
with critical financial needs.

**50%**  
of your gifts to Christmas Joy make it possible for students  
to learn and grow in faith at Presbyterian-related  
schools and colleges equipping communities of color.



## THE GIFT OF GIVING DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

When Jesus was asked which commandment is the greatest, He provided us all with the essential answer to our daily lives:

*“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”*  
Matthew 22: 37-39

Life provides us with an infinite variety of ways to be a good neighbor to all those around us. Just a few “easy” ways that we are (or can be) a good neighbor through our church are:

- Donate clothes to the Carriage Town Ministries via our collection box in fellowship hall.
- Donate food to the United Methodist Food Pantry in Fenton via our collection box in fellowship hall.
- Donate welcome home supplies to Samaritas refugees being settled in the Southeast Michigan area via our collection box in fellowship hall.
- Donate your time to sort food at the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan. This food provides a very low-cost food supply to those who are “food insecure”.
- Donate your time to a local animal shelter.
- Donate your time and supplies to the various deacon projects.
- Donate to the Book Binder’s Giving Tree, located in the new Narthex
- Donate your time to provide transportation to various members via the Helping Hands program.
- Donate to the Toys for Tot’s program box located in the church entryway by December 16th.
- See the Presbyterian Giving Catalog to give to a cause that is close to your heart.

[Visit https://presbyteriangifts.org/](https://presbyteriangifts.org/)



# FINANCIALS

## Stewardship.....

### Treasurer Report - 2019 Financials

Profit/ Loss	October	Profit/Loss YTD Actual	Budget
Income:	\$27,335.46	\$309,086.49	\$234,341.00
Expense: *	\$23,816.05	\$251,605.91	\$251,666.00
Net Income:	\$3,519.41*	\$57,480.58*	(\$17,325.00)



\*this does not include additional obligations such as restricted funds or mortgage payments. These obligations result in a cash decrease for the year (\$1,894.31)

\*A restricted fund is funds we can't spend because they are being set aside for future use of expensive repairs or replacement of HVAC or organ, Deacons money, etc.

### Building Fund Report – October 31, 2019

Building Account Balance: \$18,044  
 Mortgage Remaining: \$219,914

Our monthly mortgage payment will be paid using (1) designated building fund contributions as they are received and, if needed to make the payment, (2) money from the operating budget. If more designated money is received than is needed to make the required mortgage payment, overpayments will be made to reduce interest costs and retire the mortgage as soon as we can.

### 2020 Pledge Update

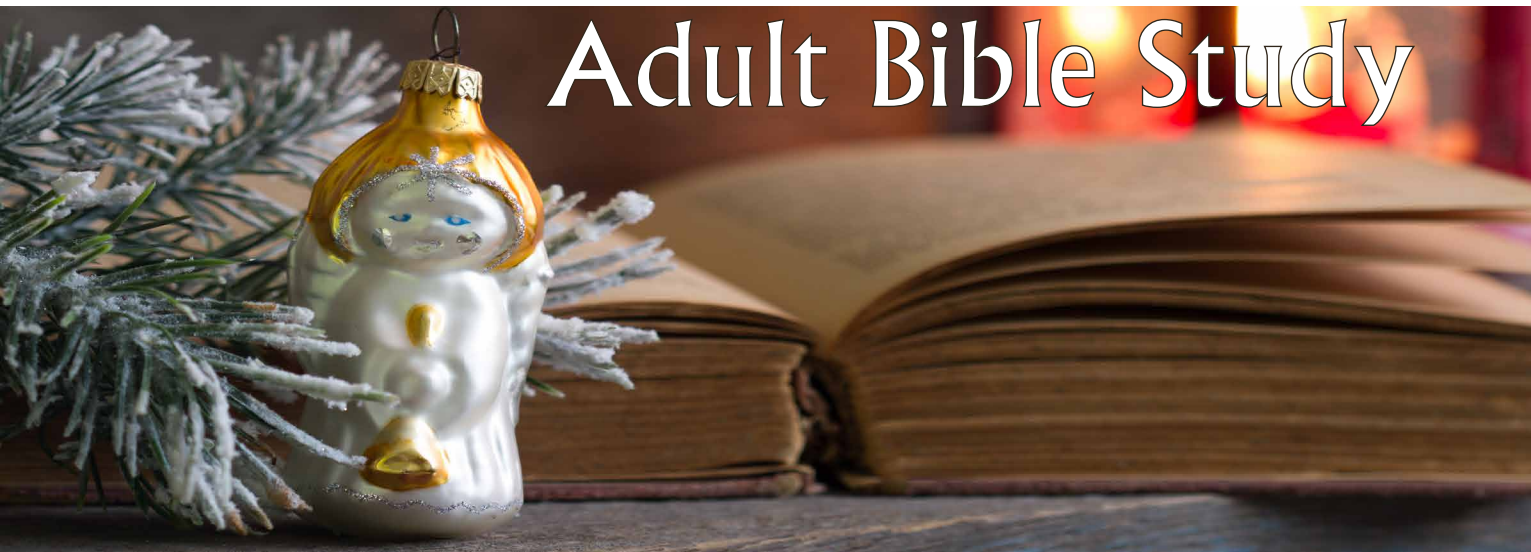
Currently we have 71 households that have pledged to the 2020 budget. We are deeply grateful for your commitment to the ministries of FFPC. If you have not already pledged to the 2020 budget please prayerfully consider how you might contribute in 2020.

# THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!



# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

## Adult Bible Study



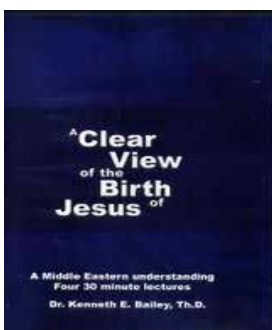
### MONDAY EVENING WOMEN'S STUDY:

#### **UNGLUED by Lysa TerKeurst**

Meets through December 16 from 6:15 – 8pm in the Video Room

For more information, see Tina Ritchie.

January 6 begins a new study - Watch for details mid-December!



### TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY:

#### **Meets through December 10th discussing Dr. Kenneth Bailey's Nativity video series "A Clear View of the Birth of Jesus-A Middle Eastern Understanding."**

Why didn't Mary & Joseph go to Elizabeth's house for the birth of Jesus? She lived nearby! Why was the town of Bethlehem so hard hearted that no private home would take them in if there was "no room at the inn?" If the Holy family was in a dirty stable, why didn't the shepherds move them at once to their own homes? The wise men came to "the house." What's going on?

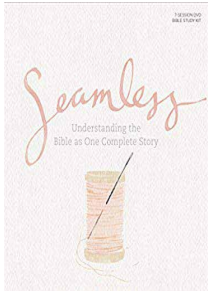
In four half-hour lectures Dr. Bailey answers these and many other questions regarding the Christmas story. These studies provide fresh understandings of the well-known Biblical stories of Christmas in a way that everyone can follow:

1. Where was the manger and what was the Inn?
2. Three Surprises: His Ancestors, Joseph and Herod
3. Salvation and the Wise Men
4. Herod's Atrocities and Simeon's Welcome

Led by Pastor Lindsey, this class meets from 11:00-12:15 in the Conference Room. Newcomers welcome! Watch for information coming soon on the January study.



## WEDNESDAY WOMEN'S COVENANT:



“Seamless” by Angie Smith

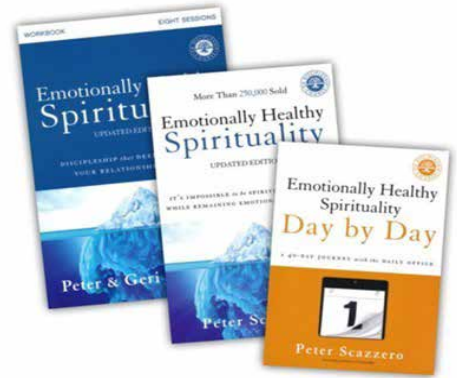
Meets through December 11 from 10am – Noon in Fellowship Hall  
See Tina Ritchie for more information

**Emotionally Healthy Spirituality Course by Peter Scazzero will be offered in the new year  
January 8 – February 26.**

The EHS Course is a serious course offered in a safe, comfortable environment that respects each person’s journey.

It asks people to:

1. Leave a superficial, shallow spirituality.
2. Open up their interior world so Christ can transform it.
3. Develop their own personal relationship with Jesus and not live off other people’s spirituality.
4. Read the Emotionally Healthy Spirituality book and meet with Jesus twice a day for 8 weeks through EHS Day by Day.



**Sign-up in Fellowship Hall by December 22 to order your participant pack. Cost \$27 includes book, workbook, and Day by Day devotion journey.**

## From the Library Committee

This is a review of the book that the Deacons purchased in celebration of Dean Moore’s life. The book is “A Bouquet of Favorite Psalms to Inspire Your Soul”. It is filled with beautiful artwork and comfort and peace that can be found in the Psalms.



*This is the day which  
the LORD hath made;  
we will rejoice and  
be glad in it.*

PSALM 118:24, KJV

Enter his gates with thanksgiving; go into his courts with praise. Give thanks to him and praise his name. For the LORD is good. His unfailing love continues forever, and his faithfulness continues to each generation.

PSALM 100:4-5



# One Starry Night

## A Savior is Born

### **One Starry Night A Savior is Born – a Bible-times Christmas Family Event**

Join us during Jinglefest on Saturday, December 7 between 1pm and 4pm!

Ready to take your family back in time? Come to One Starry Night and experience Christmas like never before! By walking through the little town Bethlehem, you'll taste, see, and even smell what life was like when Jesus was born. Travel through the City Gate, the Inn, Stargazer Hill, the Census Taker's Office, the Stable, the Fields, and the Marketplace. You'll find stations and activities for all ages—so bring the whole family!

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!** We need roughly 40 people to play various character roles, help at the different stations including the marketplace, and direct traffic flow. See the sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall or contact Gretchen Coles for more information.





## BOUNDARIES CORNER

### How to feel better about change happening in your life

from Dr. Henry Cloud, co-author of the Boundaries books.

#### Henry says:

I want to share with you 12 principles to make change happen. These little tidbits are easy to digest and will help you shift your mindset in a positive direction to help realistic change seem more tangible to you.

1. **Strive for progress, not perfection.** Make it your goal to get better, rather than to be perfect. Change is a process. Take setbacks in stride and continue going forward.
2. **Be honest with yourself.** Come out of denial and acknowledge there is a problem. Be honest with yourself about what these destructive patterns are doing to your life.
3. **Realize you are not the entire solution.** Sometimes you cannot change these patterns on your own. Sometimes change must be empowered by others. Reach outside of yourself and ask for help.
4. **See today's actions in a different time zone.** To help you take ownership of a pattern in your life, look at what you are doing today and play it forward... see it in a future time zone.
5. **Believe and have vision.** To make change happen, believe it is possible and have a clear vision of where you want to be.
6. **Utilize external gauges and limits.** Invest in the changes you want to make. Track and monitor your progress.
7. **Set up reminders.** Set up triggers or cues to remind you to follow through on new patterns you want to incorporate into your life.
8. **Stay connected with your personal belief system.** We were designed to be connected to a spiritual power greater than ourselves. Stay connected to this power.
9. **Fire the bad boss inside.** There is a voice in your head that guides you. Listen to the talk that encourages you to change for the better – and eliminate the negative voices that will hold you back.
10. **Do it before you know how.** Sometimes the only way to be confident that you can do something is to just do it, even if you aren't sure you are ready. Believe in yourself and take that step.
11. **Fill the vacuum.** Fill your heart with love and your mind with wisdom. Don't leave room for fear and self-doubt.
12. **Do the right things, at the right time, for the right amount of time.** Positive changes take time. Do the right things at the right time and give them time to take root.

When I think of people who take action to see change happen for themselves, I think of the word "courage." The way that we have done things before, and the patterns and behaviors are very familiar. But.....there is a reason why something new is needed. Even so, it is SO tempting to just try again. Emotional ties, false hope, denial, and even our strengths we have once used can fuel that temptation. And, the resistance to facing the reality of the hard questions: "Why do I think it will be different this time?" But, creating tomorrow is going to require doing some things new and different, and that takes courage. And courage comes from getting together and supporting each other to reach the vision, the goal.

If you'd like to learn more about how to handle change and set good boundaries, subscribe to Boundaries.me, check out a Boundaries book from our library, or see Tina Ritchie with any questions.

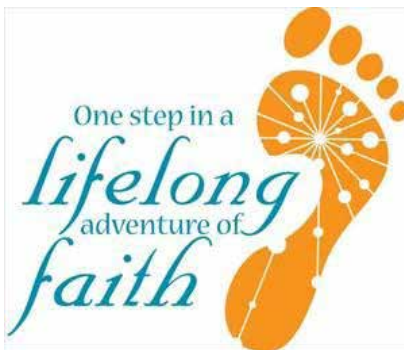


# YOUTH MINISTRY

Thank you so much for the thoughtful college care package. I was so excited to receive this box. Reading your kind words on the posters and cards meant so much to me, and I can't wait to dig into all the yummy treats! I am so blessed to be apart of this church. Thanks again!  
-Aubrey Howieson

## COLLEGE CARE PACKAGES

Youth group packaged and sent 11 care packages to our folks in college. Thank you to the congregation for all of the wonderful donations. Nothing says we love you like a goody package from home!



## UPCOMING CONFIRMATION CLASS INFORMATION:

Classes meet on Sunday afternoons from 3:00-4:30p.m. and are led by Pastors Lindsey & Robbie Carnes, and Pastor Dawn Russell.

**December 8:** Linden First Presbyterian Church \*\*\* 2:00-3:30pm  
NOTE TIME CHANGE!

**January 10-12:** Retreat at Camp Skyline in Almont, Mi Cost: \$100 for the weekend. Please see Tina Ritchie if you need scholarship assistance.

**January 19:** Fenton First Presbyterian Church

\*Please note that if you miss a class you will need to schedule a make-up class before the next scheduled meeting date. Contact Pastor Lindsey or Tina Ritchie with any questions.



## YOUTH GROUP SCHEDULE

For 6th-12th graders and friends at church from 5-7pm unless otherwise noted.

RSVP for events on the youth bulletin board, and let Tina know if you need a ride!

To get on the youth email list, contact [tina@ffpc.org](mailto:tina@ffpc.org) or text 810-701-4136.

**December 1:** Group, Soup & Talk Location: Terrie Fisher's Home 5-7pm

**December 8:** Caretel Mission Event at Linden Presbyterian church 2-3:30pm. Youth Group and Club 45 will be participating with the confirmation class!

**December 15:** Christmas Party noon – 5pm Cost: \$20

We'll start with lunch in the youth room, have our White Elephant Gift Exchange, and then go Bowling! Bring a gently used or entirely ugly wrapped gift to pass on. RSVP on the youth bulletin board by December 12th!

**Youth Sunday planning lock-in:** 6pm Saturday 1/4 – 10am Sunday 1/5



# Oh What Fun!





# CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



## CLUB 45

Club 45 for 4th and 5th graders and friends are now meeting once a month joining in on youth group mission or fun activities. Club 45 and youth group members will continue the ministry of fostering relationships with other members of the congregation.

Upcoming meeting are:

**December 8:** 2:00pm-3:30pm Caretel Mission Event at Linden Presbyterian Church

**January 19:** We're going to the movies after church! Time and cost TBD

Please see Cathy Hollopeter or Tina Ritchie if you would like more information.



## GOSPEL PROJECT SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR NURSERY CHILDREN THROUGH 5TH GRADE

Gospel Project Sunday School

**Nursery through kindergarten classes offered during 9am worship.**

**Nursery through 5th grade classes offered during 11am worship.**

Why this curriculum? Because every lesson points to Jesus, and children are learning stories from the entire Bible – even the tough ones – in age appropriate ways. This allows children to very simply experience the full breadth of the Gospel message. As they grow into youth group, these lessons will be familiar, allowing them to further unpack and understand the challenges that all of humanity faces even today. Biblical relevancy and faith formation starts early and is a great gift!

Please see Tina Ritchie with any questions, or if you would like to be added to the weekly email lessons and family talking points.

**“A Nation Divided” topics are:**

**Unit 15 – The Southern Kingdom of Judah (Isaiah, 2 Chronicles, Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Ezekiel)**

**11/24** Jeremiah, Prophet to Judah

**12/1** Habakkuk the Prophet

**12/8** Judah Taken Captive

**12/15**

**12/22** Ezekiel Gave Hope

**Big Picture Question:** How did God plan to fix what sin broke? Before God created the world, God planned to send Jesus to save us from our sins.

**Unit Key Verse:** *“if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” ~ 2 Chronicles 7:14 NIV*

**“A People Restored” topics are:**

**Unit 16 – Hope in Exile (Daniel)**

**12/29** The Fiery Furnace (10am worship only)

**1/5** Nebuchanezzar's Dream

**1/12** Daniel in the lion's Den

**1/19** Daniel's Dream

**Big Picture Question:** Why do we pray? We pray because we trust God, and we know God hears us.

**Unit Key Verse:** *Pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. ~ 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18 NIV*

# WORSHIP

FFPC Families,

Because we have done a children's Christmas Pageant for the past few years, and because many families now go on vacation during the holiday break, Christian Education felt it would be good to this year explore other ways to engage children of all ages, families, and adults during the 7pm Christmas Eve family worship service. Below are some of the things we will be doing, and anyone who would like to take part is welcome.

1. Upon entering the service, children will have the opportunity to choose a nativity costume to wear and then tell what part their character played in the Christmas story during the "time with children".
2. Gretchen Coles has been our piano accompanist for the 7pm service the past few years. This year she will also lead any child or youth, preschool – high school, in singing and playing instruments for The Little Drummer Boy. Rehearsals take place 10am on Sunday, Dec. 8, and either Dec. 15 or 22 in the kid's music room. Additional dates to be determined.
3. Children and youth will be needed to read the Christmas story in Luke and help with the readings and lighting of the Advent and Christ candles.

Please let me know if your child is available to take part in this family Christmas service.

In Christ, Tina





# WORSHIP CALENDAR

## December 1st, 1st Sunday in Advent (Hope), Saint Andrew's Day

**"Transformations: Mary, from Questioning to Trust", Luke 1:26-37**

So any of us have questions. Much of the world is not the way we would like it and many of us are tasked with challenges we might not desire. It is easy to find ourselves asking God how can this be? The most difficult part is that for many reasons we rarely receive clear answers. At some point our faith calls us to trust God rather than demand answers. Let us learn from young Mary how to make the switch from Questioning to Trusting.

**Preaching:** Pastor Robbie Carnes

**Communion:** 9:00am- Jeff & PJ Collier

11:00am-Janet Stork, Julie Grams, Mike Hussar, Ken Wenzel, John Wenzel, Jenn Wenzel,  
Chris Anderson and Deb Bard

**Ushers:** 9am-Dennis & Jo Beardslee/11am-Team #3

**Banker:** Janet Stork

**Coffee Hour:** Orange Team

**Counters:** Shirley Israel & Dennis Beardslee

**Nursery & Preschool:** 9:00am Heidi Howieson & PJ Collier

11:00am Heidi Howieson & Audrey Maclean

**Gospel Project:** K-2nd: Julie & Tony Grams

3rd-5th: Jan Foster & Lorraine Eshleman

**MONDAY, December 2nd, 2019, 1st Monday Communion:** Join us at 1:00pm in the Sanctuary for a shorter Communion and Sunday service. This "barrier free" worship experience features large print bulletins, amplified speaking, and energetic hymn singing. Bread and juice/wine will be served in the pews. Helpers will be present to assist with walkers, wheelchairs, or to just lend a hand. Come for worship, stay for fellowship. For questions or rides, please call Dave Eshleman or the Church Office.

## December 8th, 2nd Sunday in Advent (Peace)

**"Transformations: Zechariah, From Incredulous to Submissive", Luke 1:5-25**

Mary wasn't the only one with questions. But sometimes we ask incredulous questions. We aren't looking for answers, we are saying no with our questions. Where we should be submissive, we are incredulous. Zechariah was taught to be submissive to the Lord's plans by becoming silent. How might we learn from this story?

**Preaching:** Pastor Robbie Carnes

**Ushers:** 9am-Dennis & Jo Beardslee/11am-Team #4

**Acolytes:** Mason & Bella Skaff

**Banker:** Ken Wenzel

**Coffee Hour:** Yellow Team

**Counters:** Martha Smith & Sara Wrage

**Nursery & Preschool:** 9:00am Heidi Howieson & PJ Collier/11:00am Heidi Howieson & Lindsey Maclean

**Gospel Project:** K-2nd: Sherry Rourke & Deb Bard

3rd-5th: Janet Stork & Lorraine Eshleman

## December 15th, 3rd Sunday in Advent, Joy Sunday

**"Transformations: Joseph, Self-directed to Obedient", Matthew 1:18-25**

Joseph was a man who made plans. Facing the personal tragedy of a pregnant fiancé he planned to 'put her away quietly'. But this was not God's plan. God's plan didn't protect Joseph or Mary's honor or adhere to their plans. God's plan was for the redemption of all creation. How do we learn to give up our plans for God's marvelous mission in the world?

**Preaching:** Pastor Robbie Carnes

**Ushers:** 9am-Sherry Hunt & Ellen Horton/11am-Team #5

**Acolytes:** Adlin & Bowen Moore

**Banker:** Debera Bard

**Coffee Hour:** Green Team

**Counters:** Lin Savage & Jennifer MacLean

**Nursery & Preschool:** 9:00am Heidi Howieson & Ina Golden/11:00am Heidi Howieson & Kelly Sunman-Davis

**Gospel Project:** 11:00am Tina Ritchie

### December 22nd, 4th Sunday in Advent (Love), Joy Offering

**“Transformations: Shepherds, From Quiet to OutSpoken”, Luke 2:8-20**

Shepherds were not leaders in the community. They did not have political power or much esteem. Nor did they have much of a voice. Then the angels descended from heaven and they had a profound story to share with everyone they came across. What is your story? How does it fit in with God’s story? Who do you tell it to?

**Preaching:** Pastor Robbie Carnes

**Ushers:** 9am-Harry Clark & Jim Lindsay/11am-Team #6

**Acolytes:** Emily Hollopeter & Avannah Thompson

**Coffee Hour:** Blue Team

**Counters:** Jon O’Connell & Ken Wensel

**Nursery & Preschool:** 9:00am Heidi Howieson & PJ Collier

11:00am Heidi Howieson & Lindsey MacClean

**Gospel Project:** K-2nd: Cheryl Kopplin & Roy Fetzer

3rd-5th: Jeanne Cupp & Tony Grams

### December 24th, Christmas Eve

**“Transformations: From Guilt to Wonder”, Luke 2:1-20**

7pm Family Service                      11pm Lessons & Carols

All of us have sinned and fallen short of the Glory of God. None of us is perfect and we all have hurt ourselves and each other. We are guilty and our world convulses with pain. God’s answer to this evil is love out poured. What a wonder that we see this mystery most clearly in the infant Christ! That God would send a defenseless child to be the answer to hate, selfishness and sin is a wonder indeed.

### December 29th, 1st Sunday of Christmas, One Worship Service at 10:00am

**“Transformations: From Old to New Life”, Isaiah 43:18-21**

Look! God is doing a new thing. So many times God surprises us with what God is doing in the world and in the lives of others. So many times we are amazed at who God is. What would you say if I told you that God might surprise you with what God is doing in your life? Could God be doing a new thing in you? Are you being changed by the Spirit?

**Preaching:** Pastor Robbie Carnes

**Ushers:** 11am-Team #1

**Acolytes:** Annabeth & Sammy Carnes

**Coffee Hour:** Violet Team

**Counters:** Shirley Israel & Maureen Utt

**Nursery & Preschool:** Howie Howieson & Tina Ritchie

**Gospel Project:** K-5: Janet Stork & Deb Bard





# ANNOUNCEMENTS



## DEACON'S CHRISTMAS PROJECT:

Thank you to everyone who signed up to help a family. The final date for item collection is December 8th and distribution day is December 14th. We look forward to sharing the Good News about the goodness of God this Christmas.



**POINTSETTIA TIME IS FAST APPROACHING!** All poinsettias are \$18.50 each. Order forms are available in Fellowship Hall. Make checks payable to the First Presbyterian Church Fenton. The form and check must be returned to the church office no later than December 13th, 2019.



**BOOK BINDERS** Book Binders will be meeting December 10th at the home of Barb LaPointe, 104 Glenwood Ave. at 6:00 pm. We will not be reading a book for December instead we will be sharing devotions and enjoying a meal. Please bring a devotion and a dish to share. If you have questions please call Barb at 810-845-6755 or call the church.



**ON DECEMBER 3RD, 8:30AM-3:30PM, FFPC HAS THE HONOR OF HOSTING A MEETING OF THE PRESBYTERY OF LAKE HURON.** This gathering will see Pastors and Elders from across the Presbytery come to worship, pray and learn together, as well as conduct business of the Presbytery.

We need your help! We will need greeters, musicians, and folks to help make and serve lunch. We will also need people to help clean up. Sign up sheets are in Fellowship Hall.

The Presbytery extends as far south as Tyrone Township and as far north as Tawas and Houghton Lake and we expect about 100 people. During this meeting the Rev. Dr. Clifton Kirkpatrick, former Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, will be our guest preacher and lead us in a discussion from the Being Reformed curriculum: "Race and Reconciliation." All are invited to the meeting.

**COMMITTEE CHAIR PERSONS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS!** Please be thinking about what should go into the 2019 Annual Report.

**JANUARY NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION DEADLINE** is December 6th. Please have all submissions for the December Newsletter in by this time. Thank you.



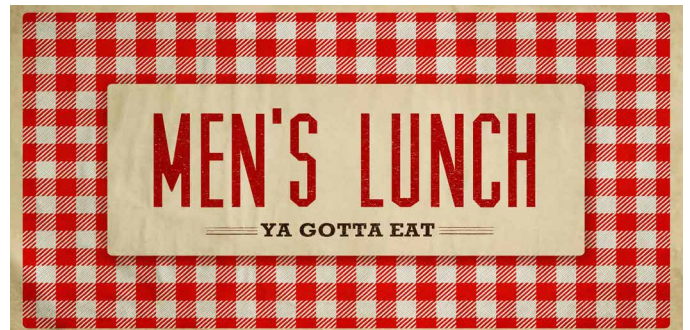
**MEN OF FENTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH WE'RE HAVING BREAKFAST.**

**DATE** 1st Saturday of EACH month  
**TIME** 8:00am  
**WHERE** Shirley's Cafe and Grill, 522 W Broad St, Linden, MI 48451

**YOU'RE INVITED. BRING A FRIEND.**

**PLEASE** Email Pastor Robbie if you plan to come..

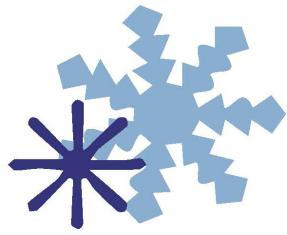
See you there!



**MEN'S LUNCH:** All men are invited to our men's lunch program four times each year. Our next men's lunch will be held at John's Pizzeria on North Leroy in Fenton: Thursday, January 9th, at 11:30 am. We will again order off their menu and everyone will pay for their own meal.

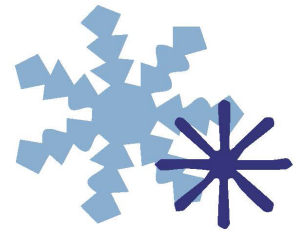
Please plan to come, enjoy the fellowship, and make new friends! If you have any questions, please ask Jon O'Connell, Ed Schwarz, Bill Black or Robbie Carnes. If you plan to attend, please let one of these men know so that we have an approximate number for the restaurant to plan around.





# WINTER

## BUCKET LIST



**Make a sparkly ornament**

Drink hot cocoa with marshmallows

Spend a whole day baking cookies

**MAKE HOMEMADE PEPPERMINT BARK**

Snuggle up for a holiday movie marathon

**Make a snow angel**

**LISTEN TO CAROLERS ON YOUR DOORSTEP**

Build your own sled run

Fold and cut out paper snowflakes

**MAKE INDOOR S'MORES**

Sit by the fire and read a good book

**Have an icicle sword fight**

**Make a gingerbread house**

**STAY IN YOUR PJS ALL DAY**

Look at Christmas lights

Watch a play or musical

**VOLUNTEER AT A SHELTER**

Give a "secret" gift to someone

**Go ice skating**

**BAKE YOUR FAVORITE COOKIES**

Cross stitch a picture

**Make a snowman**

Have an indoor picnic with your friends

Decorate your house for winter

**MAKE CARAMEL CORN**

**Breathe onto cold glass and draw a picture**

Take pictures in the snow



# BIRTHDAY'S

Carey Muntin	Dec 2
Doug Jacobs	Dec 8
Karen Wensel	Dec 8
Larry Zimbler	Dec 10
Jim Murray	Dec 13
Nancy Berger	Dec 19
Barbara Hungerford	Dec 19
Mike Hussar	Dec 19
Jon O'Connell	Dec 19
Mary Zimbler	Dec 19
Melissa Browne	Dec 21
Amber Danules	Dec 21
Dennis Beardslee	Dec 25
Brandon McLive	Dec 27
Scott Rourke	Dec 27
Tracy Williams	Dec 29
John Foguth	Dec 31
Don Kutchey	Dec 31



# ANNIVERSARIES

Dick & Nancy Berger	December 7
Jerry & Bev Welch	December 7
Bob & Nessie Brownlee	December 23
Spencer & Sharon Sutherby	December 24
Paula & Henry Glomski	December 29



# 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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