## FENTON FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

January 2023 Newsletter

Certainly the faithful love of the Lord hasn't ended; certainly God's compassion isn't through! They are renewed every morning. Great is your faithfulness."

# HELLO & WELCOME

The Church is not a building. It is a gathering of people brought together to experience God's love and purpose.

**God designed the church for YOU** – you belong here. Are you ready to experience a community of people doing life together? To find out, come worship with us on Sunday mornings.

**Our Mission:** To be a loving community of faith dedicated to helping people know Jesus Christ and grow, share, and serve as his disciples.

**Our Vision:** To provide an inviting and welcoming church home that attracts people of all ages and encourages positive growth, while creating an exciting and dynamic approach as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Thank you for worshipping with us! We are happy to welcome you into this household of God.

## PASTOR'S LETTER Our Goblin Selves

#### Pastor Robbie Carnes

The Oxford word of the year, for the first time ever, has been chosen by public vote. The 2022 word of the year is....'Goblin Mode'. This phrase has been around since 2009, I must have missed it somehow.

According to the Oxford Dictionary, "goblin mode", is a slang term describing "unapologetically, self-indulgent, lazy, slovenly, or greedy" behavior, typically in a way that rejects social norms or expectations". It is often used in the expressions such as "I am in goblin mode", "to go goblin mode" or to "embrace my inner goblin".

While older than the COVID pandemic, it is clear that Goblin Mode sheds light on an emerging aspect of our culture that a mixture of the internet, social media, quarantine isolation, and new standards of social interaction have produced. Dave McNamee, quoted in the Guardian, said he sees it as a state of mind. "Goblin mode is like when you wake up at 2 a.m. and shuffle into the kitchen wearing nothing but a long T-shirt to make a weird snack, like melted cheese on saltines," he said. "It's about a complete lack of aesthetic."

In one sense, it is a reaction to the necessity to constantly present a 'curated self' to the outside world. Wearing pajamas to the grocery store is one example of this. Casper Grathwohl, president of Oxford Languages: "Given the year we've just experienced, 'goblin mode' resonates with all of us who are feeling a little overwhelmed at this point. It's a relief to acknowledge that we're not always the idealized, curated selves, that we're encouraged to present on our Instagram and TikTok feeds." A desire to cut loose and not have to be on show is a prevalent one. There is a sense of streamlining our life so that we resist performing in order to be comfortably genuine.

TV Word expert Susie Dent said: "It seems in some ways quite a frivolous choice but actually the more you dig into it the more you realize it is actually a kind of reaction to the existing state of affairs. We're sort of retreating and no longer want our life to be curated by filters."

All in all, this sounds pretty good. It is the first few steps of a 12 step Recovery Process. Recognize denial and come clean with who you really are. Jesus said to his followers, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." There is a refreshing desire for truth and a restful approach to life that avoids the crushing work of living out the lies. However, there is a darker side to this that is a bit disturbing.

Mia Mercado writes on 'The Cut' website, "Goblin mode is who we are when no one's around to see. In a yucky way, not a deep way." This resonates with my understanding of a goblin as a mythical creature. Based in a Tolkien universe, a goblin is an ugly creature, who does ugly, destructive and selfish things. Related to orcs, goblins are not able to manage well in sunlight. They are creatures that symbolize selfish, sinful desires that are allowed to fully play out and cannot stand to be scrutinized by the full sunlight of truth.

Paul speaks about this in Romans 7. There is the good that he wants to do, but he finds "It happens so regularly that it's predictable. The moment I decide to do good, sin is there to trip me up. I truly delight in God's commands, but it's pretty obvious that not all of me joins in that delight. Parts of me covertly rebel, and just when I least expect it, they take charge." Goblin mode is not just about not wanting to adhere to cultural standards of cleanliness or aesthetic. It is also about allowing the part of us that is covertly rebelling to fully express itself. If there is a sense of freedom it is that of debauchery. Mia Mercado continues, "[Goblin Mode] has a distinct ferality mixed with all our morbid curiosities. It's the sudden itch to get on top of a table, rip your clothes off, and screech. You know how dogs get zoomies? Goblin mode is sort of like the human equivalent. It's more silly than sinister, like Gollum's personality in Mike Wazowski's body. Mercado lightens the mood a bit, however the point is that each of us experience a tug between what we know is good for us (and others) and what is not and is simply an expression of our baser qualities. Ephesians 4:27 (NIV) says do not give the Devil a foothold. It would seem that goblin mode is providing license to do just that.

"In goblin mode, an individual will do anything not to feel. Instead, they will escape by binge-watching Bravo or Netflix in bed all day while mindlessly scrolling on social media eating snacks rather than actual food to allow them to lose track of reality altogether," licensed psychotherapist and founder of Westside Counseling Center in Los Angeles Susan Zinn says. Who among us hasn't engaged in this kind of behavior in the past 2-3 years? We have all certainly had plenty of excuses. Depression, anxiety and a feeling of being overwhelmed to name a few. There is even a Saturday Night Live skit about purposely getting COVID so that you can have 8-10 days away from children, work and other responsibilities. Pay extra and they will cut your internet connection so that you can't attend work zoom meetings from home.

While this is all kind of funny, this isn't what Jesus would have for us. As Christians we don't have license to be a goblin. Nor is it healthy to co-exist in a world of apathy toward cultural norms and personal hygiene and a world of curated beach pictures and filtered selfies. Jesus calls us to be integrated people, consistently living our lives as a witness to his love and goodness (Romans 12:2). Certainly we will struggle to take our goblins selves out of the picture and remove the varnished facades that we constantly present to each other. What Jesus is calling us to is a place of honesty. If you are social media faker, be genuine. If you are a goblin, be better and live worthy of the Gospel (Phil 1:27).

If you are considering making a New Year Resolution this year why not consider not going into goblin mode and instead, walk in the light as Jesus is in the light, having fellowship with one another, and trusting in the blood of Jesus that cleanses us from all sin (1 John 1:7).

- 2 https://www.today.com/health/health/mean-goblin-mode-rcna20381 3 https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-63857329
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<sup>1</sup> https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-63857329

<sup>4</sup> Ibid 5 John 8:31-32

<sup>6</sup> https://www.thecut.com/2022/12/what-does-going-goblin-mode-mean.html 7 Romans 7:22-23 The Message

<sup>8</sup> https://www.thecut.com/2022/12/what-does-going-goblin-mode-mean.html 9 https://www.today.com/health/health/mean-goblin-mode-rcna20381

# WORSHIP

## How to Worship with Us

Join us online as well as in person Sunday's at 10am

Masks are optional. Paper masks will remain available for those who might need one, and hand sanitizer stations are available throughout the building. <u>If you feel ill or have been</u> <u>exposed, be considerate and stay home.</u>

Here is how to join us Online Facebook Live: <u>https://www.facebook.com/fentonfpc</u>

**YouTube:** https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCkBa-DrcqSECxjAyeaiC4bg Zoom <u>https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8309142301?pwd=RHJ4dDBPdEhMN25yKzFzSzZNeUVPQT09</u>

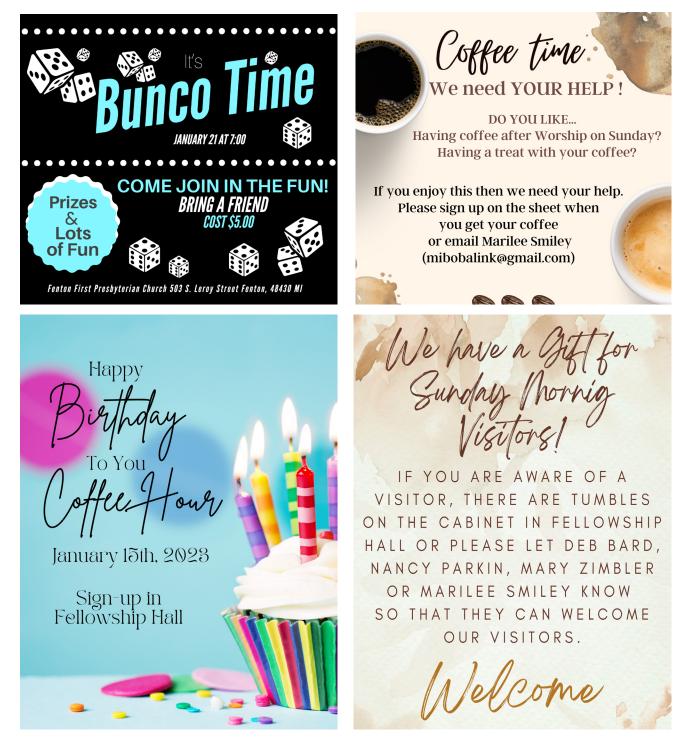
**Use the Zoom app** and use this Meeting ID **Meeting ID:** 830 914 2301 **Meeting Password:** 5013 Use your telephone line to listen in: Call +19292056099 and dial 8309142301# at the prompt US (New York) Or Call +13126266799 and dial 8309142301# at the prompt US (Chicago)

## Worship Schedule

Jan 1 Epiphany, Communion	The Reality of Fear	Matt 6:33-34; Psalm 56
Jan 8 Baptism of the Lord	Fear of a Changing World	Mal 3:6; Matt 7:9-11
Jan 15 2nd Sunday after Ephiphany	Fear of Financial Loss	Proverbs 23:4-5; Luke 12:22-34
Jan 23 3rd Sunday after Ephiphany	The Fear of Not being a Christian	
Jan 30 4th Sunday of Epiphany	The Fear of begin a bad Parent	Isalali 49:15-10

# **CONGREGATIONAL LIFE**

The Congregational Outreach Committee (even though we are a small group) has been busy working to bring back some events to involve the congregation and community. Please note that we welcome you to join us. If you are interested on serving on the committee, please contact Marilee Smiley (mibobalink@gmail.com).



## **STEWARDSHIP**

## Financial Review - October 2022

Profit/ Loss	Nov	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Jan-Nov.</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>	<u>Annual Budget</u>
Income:	\$22,872.74	\$26,429.36	\$349,658.47	\$290,722.96	\$317,152.70
Expense:	<u>\$24,621.37</u>	<u>\$25,619.67</u>	<u>\$325,959.12</u>	<u>\$291,531.37</u>	<u>\$317,152.70</u>
	(1,748.63)*	\$809.69	\$23,699.35*	(\$808.41)	

\*This does not include additional obligations such as restricted funds or other payments such as: Board of Deacons, Faith & Femininity, Organ Fund, HVAC Fund, etc.

<b>Statement of Cash Flows</b>	Oct	YTD
Cash at Beginning of period:	\$43,803.66	\$125,208.38
Cash at End of Period:	<u>\$42,527.45</u>	<u>\$42,527.45</u>
Net Cash:	(1,276.21)	(82,680.93)

Balance in the Building Repair & Improvement account as of November30: \$2,069.59

Respectfully Submitted, December 8th, 2022 Debera J Bard, Treasurer

## Pledge Update

55 total households have turned in their pledge totaling \$185,935.00

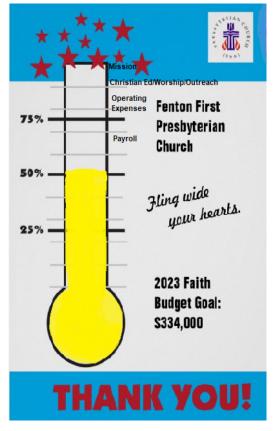
Fling wide the portals of your heart; make it a temple set a part, From earthly use for heaven's employ, adorned with

prayer and love and joy.

God is working through us and the things we do to accomplish positive change in our own lives and in

the world. However, we need to be open to God's working. Every time we give of who we are and what we have, we open up a bit more to what God is doing and that gift becomes ministry and mission. Please keep our congregation in prayer as we move together

toward discerning what gifts we will make in the coming year. Pledge cards are available in the office, online at <u>https://ffpc.org/donate/</u> or contact Kelly to give you pledge.



## DEACONS

The ministry of Deacons as set forth in scripture is one of compassion, witness, and service. We share in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, hungry, sick, lost, friendless, oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies of structure, or anyone else in distress.

How Can We Pray For You? Prayer requests and updates can be sent to Nancy Parkin by phone at 810-241-6497 or by email at prayerchain@ffpc.org



Helping Hands If you are shut-in and need some help, think about calling the church. The Deacons' Helping Hands program may be just what you need.

If you need someone to run an errand or pick up groceries or a prescription, maybe we can help. Call the church office at 810-629-7801 and leave your name, contact number and your need. We will always wear a mask and leave any deliveries at your doorstep.



## Non-Food Drive

The Deacon's are addressing a growing need in our community. Did you know that people on certain types of asssitance, such as food stamps, can't use it for everyday items like toothpaste, kleenex, toilet paepr? To that end, we are collecting non-food items. The care products we are collecting are; toilet paper, deodorant, bodywash/soap, shampoo,

toothpaste, toothbrush, laundry soap, band aids, antibiotic cream, dish soap, paper towels, and muti purpose cleaners. Bins are available in Fellowship Hall.



**BLOOD DRIVE:** Our church along with Red Cross will be hosting a blood drive on February 6, from 11am to 4:45pm in Fellowship Hall. The Red Cross blood supply has decreased and they need our help. Help to save lives with your donation. If you wish to schedule an appointment go online to www. redcross.org or call Red Cross @ 1-800-733-2767. Sign up sheets are in Fellowship Hall for anyone who wishes to volunteer that day to register donors or bake cookies for the donors. Any questions please contact Jo Beardslee (810)750-9768 or Sherry Hunt (810) 735-6428.



Snuggle Sacks: Join others from our congregation on Saturday, January 21 from 10am-11am at Snuggle Sacks in Linden. We'll be assisting them in assembling sacks containing a blanket, hygiene products, socks, gloves, and other items to be distributed to homeless individuals in the Fenton, Linden and Holly area.

For more information on this program visit <u>https://www.snugglesacks.org/</u>

### Samaritas Wishlist: The link below will take you to our newly created

**Amazon wishlist for refugees.** Purchases made from the list will ship directly to Sarah's home for delivery to families. You can share the list if you know anyone who might like to join our efforts. <u>https://www.amazon.com/registries/custom/2DEQ4NSYO42CL/guest-view</u>

If you would like to donate an item on the list, but prefer not to purchase on amazon you can let Sarah or the office know or mark the item as purchased elsewhere. I hope that this is a helpful way to share the current needs.

### 2022 Refugee Welcome Team Year in Review

## **Refugee Welcome Team**

МАКІМС МІСНІСАМ НОМЕ —

We had another extremely successful year as a Welcome Team! Together we helped 18 families and made 26 deliveries. We collected and distributed mountains of housewares and furniture. In addition, we received a small grant from the Presbytery of Detroit to augment our efforts. These funds allowed us to purchase some of the items that are not typically donated, but are in high demand (mattresses, bunk beds, tool kits, and pressure cookers). I am extremely grateful for our team and our supporters near and far!

I would like to share a few highlights from our year of service. One thing that I was not necessarily expecting was the long term relationships that we have built with the families. In the spring of this year and again in the fall we were able to provide furniture for friends and family of Angie and Jonathan M. This wonderful family from Colombia was introduced to us 3 years ago when they had recently arrived and needed help furnishing their home. Over the years they have taken in several families of refugees. Our visits this year were to deliver furniture and housewares for the new families that Angie and Jonathan are supporting. I am continually impressed by the generosity of this young couple.

We also collected items for our friend Rolly as

he prepared to travel to Malawi to visit his family. Many of you remember that Rolly was the very first refugee that our group worked with when we began our efforts 4 years ago. Over the past four years this group has helped to make it possible for Rolly to send his children, who are still living in a refugee camp in Malawi, to school. Private school fees are expensive, but as non-citizens, the two boys do not qualify for public school. I know that both Rolly and Sergine are grateful for the support that we have given over the years. In November Rolly was able to visit his family for the first time in four years! Every year we pray that this family will be reunited. It is my most fervent prayer that 2023 will be that year.

Of course I cannot forget to mention the marriage of two refugees who were welcomed by our team. Sayna and Salah were married in June and are living happily in Grand Blanc. They are both working full time jobs and attending Mott CC. Sayna was recently invited to join the National Honor Society at Mott! Theirs is truly a resettlement success story. Even though none of us could have anticipated this match, I am overjoyed that they found each other and that we were a part of this happy tale.

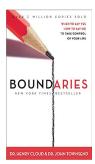
When this work group began I did not anticipate the long-term connections that we would form. It has truly been wonderful to meet and develop relationships with people from all over the globe. I am grateful for all the good that this group has done these past 4 years and am excitedly looking forward to continuing this important work in 2023.

Sincerely,

Sarah Martin-Fanone

## **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

#### Sunday Morning NEW January Study



Join Pastor Robbie and Tina Ritchie for a 9 week study on Boundaries January 8 – March 12 from 11:30AM – 12:30 PM in the Conference Room **Childcare provided!** 

A boundary is a personal property line that marks those things for which we are responsible. In other words, boundaries define who we are and who we are not. Sounds simple, yes? Then why do we often find ourselves forgetting our own limits and limitations, setting ourselves up for more difficulties than expected?

#### **Sunday Evening Small Group**

Book of Acts in the Bible, facilitated by Larry Zimbler 5-6PM in the conference room at 4Square Tax in Fenton

#### **Tuesday Morning Adult Study**

Class will resume January 10th from 11AM-12:15PM In the Conference Room. Led by Pastor Robbie Carnes, watch for topic information in the bulletin and weekly emails.

#### Celebrate Recovery - Every Wednesday from 7-9PM

Worship from 7-8PM in Fellowship Hall Men's and Women's Small Groups from 8-9PM in the Truth and Discipleship rooms



**New Year Women's Study:** Isaiah: Striving Less and Trusting More by Melissa Spoelstra

Isaiah communicated clearly that followers of God could trust in Him. In 7 weeks of group sessions, unpack Isaiah's words to reveal that you can trust God more than your own human effort or the counterfeits the world suggests.

You won't be striving harder, but instead trusting more deeply in the Faithful One who is so worthy of our utter dependence. In Him you'll find the comfort and peace you need to sustain you.

**Monday Evening** - January 2 – February 13 from 6:30-8:30 Via ZOOM only OR

Wednesday Morning - January 4 – February 15 from 10AM – noon in Fellowship Hall

Contact Tina Ritchie for more information tina@ffpc.org.

## YOUTH GROUP

CREATING SPACE FOR YOUTH TO ASK QUESTIONS, ENCOUNTER GOD, AND LEARN TO LIVE AS DISCIPLES OF CHRIST.

## Allow, Meet, and Go!



### Fall Youth Group Events - for 6 - 12 graders and friends

Watch your texts and email or contact Tina Ritchie tina@ffpc.org for more information. Friends always welcome with a current Parental Consent form on file!Adults seeking to be part of the program are asked to contact Tina Ritchie.

#### Youth Group Calendar Fall 2022

#### Meetings are generally Sundays unless noted

Sign up for events on the youth bulletin board or email tina@ffpc.org. Friends welcome with a current parental consent form on file.

#### <u>January</u>

- 1 Happy New Year no meeting
- 7-8 New Year's Lock-in 6pm 10am
- 15 Sledding All ages invited! 12-2pm
- 22 Movie Night with Scouts at Emagine Theater 2-5pm
- 29 Youth Group Soup & Talk 5-7pm, Location: TBD

#### **February**

- 5 Scout Sunday Worship 10am
- 12 Souper Bowl of Caring, mission project noon 2pm with families
- 19 No meeting- President's weekend
- 26 Youth Group 5-7pm

**SOUPER BOWL OF CARING!** This year Youth Group is collaborating with Scouts and we are collecting 2 specific items for 2 local charities:

- 1. Baby formula for Center for Hope-see collection bin in the main entryway
- 2. Monetary donations for the North End Soup Kitchen make check out to FFPC memo NESK

Collection ends Sunday, February 12! Thank you for your ongoing support.

## **CHILDREN & FAMILY**

#### **Children's Sunday School and Worship Information**

Sunday School will resume on New Year's Sunday with the normal schedule of class beginning at 10AM and children returning to worship after the sermon. Upon returning to worship, children are welcome to either sit with their parents or with Miss Tina; masks are optional at their parent's discretion. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Tina Ritchie or Kate Kirkey.



**Unit 17 – Return to the Land** (Ezra, Obadiah, Haggai, Zechariah)

After the Israelites' disobedience let to 70 years of exile in Babylon, God kept God's promise to bring God's people home to Judah. Prophets encouraged the people to rebuild the temple. The prophet Zechariah told of a future King who would come humbly on a donkey. God later kept God's promise to send King Jesus.

1/1 The Captives Came Home1/8 The Temple Was Rebuilt1/15 Zechariah the Prophet

**Big Picture Question:** How is Jesus the perfect Prophet? Jesus perfectly reveals God the Father and fulfills what the prophets spoke.

**Unit Key Verse:** For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. ~ Jeremiah 29:11

**Unit 18 – The People Restored** (Nehemiah, Esther, Malachi)

After years of living in sin, God's people were sent into exile. The Southern Kingdom of Judah was captured by Babylon. Daniel's visions of the future showed that God is in control at all times. God used faithful people to continue God's plan to provide salvation through Jesus.

1/22 Esther Saved Her People1/29 The Walls Rebuilt2/5 God's People Repented2/12 Malachi the Prophet

**Big Picture Question:** Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth.

**Unit Key Verse:** And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. ~ 1 Peter 5:10

#### **December Teachers**

**Elementary:** Preschool/Nursery: Peggy Fowler Jan Foster

#### Family Fellowship Group Events

Children with their parents are invited to participate once a month with Youth Group events. Please see Kelly Sunman-Davis or Tina Ritchie with any questions.

January 15 – Sledding 12-2pm February 12 – Souper Bowl of Caring Mission Event 12-2pm March 19 – Mission Event 12-2pm \*Saturday, April 8 – Easter Egg Hunt 11:30-12:30 April 16 – Earth Day Mission Project 12-2pm May 7 – Mission Event 12-2pm



#### Love and Logic Relationship Skills Work for Everyone - not just children!

With a flexible menu of skills available with our approach, as well as the use of common sense, adults using Love and Logic might take different approaches with similar situations. Nevertheless, the "Love and Logic" approach should always look like the following:

- A loving attitude toward the young person. A key principle of the Love and Logic approach is that we preserve the dignity—of the child AND the adult. Does yelling and threatening preserve kids' dignity? How about ours?
- Shared thinking and control. Adults using Love and Logic techniques resist the urge to come up with all the answers and solve all the problems. Instead, they give kids the gift of thinking about and solving problems. They ask lots of questions and give lots of choices, so kids stay in on the action.
- Empathy before consequences and bad news. We are sad for kids, and we hurt for them when they struggle. Our sadness (instead of our anger and frustration) helps them own problems and learn from the consequences. None of this works without empathy.
- Relationships are paramount. If we are not preserving or enhancing relationships, we are not really using Love and Logic techniques.

Take heart! This is a process, not an instant transformation— get started today by visiting loveandlogic.com or speaking with Tina Ritchie.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### Join the Saturday Facilities Work Group!

The long standing Wednesday work group has expanded in order to complete additional projects as well as provide those interested, who may not be available on Wednesdays, an opportunity to take part. This group meets once a month on the third Saturday at 9am.

### Live Nativity and Jinglefest Warming Station Recap



**THANK YOU to EVERYONE** of our cast of characters who braved the cold to be part of the Live Nativity, our craft helpers Hannah and Jennifer Hall, Kelly Sunman-Davis for the picture slide show in Fellowship Hall, Kevin Ratza for setting up the music videos in the Sanctuary, all who donated cookies and hot cocoa bar items, and to Congregational Outreach for your assistance with hospitality – it made all the difference! At least 150 people visited inside our church and 300 came to see the Nativity scene. There were many comments on what a lovely church we have, several folks sat in the sanctuary to listen to the music, and crafts, goodies, and

picture slide show were well received. Many appreciated use of bathrooms and took the opportunity to just hang out! It was a beautiful, memorable day, and it couldn't have been done without each of you!

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

John Hodgkin	Jan 1
Jim Lindsay	Jan 1
Mitchell Vogel	Jan 1
Marlo Howieson	Jan 3
Jeanne Cupp	Jan 4
Dick Berger	Jan 6
Jim Carter	Jan 6
Carolyn Post	Jan 8
Nancy Parkin	Jan 11
Pam Coffin	Jan 13
Gregory Bradley	Jan 18
Sarah Collier	Jan 18
Vicky Graham	Jan 19
Greg Ruppert	Jan 19
David Fisher	Jan 24
Terrie Fisher	Jan 24
Paula Glomski	Jan 28

Joyce Guilbault	Jan 29
Heidi Roberts	Jan 29
Toni Ward	Jan 29

### HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Rog & Sherry Zollars	January 8
Bruce & Pam Coffin	January 25
Jack & Pat Allen	January 27

#### If your birthday or anniversary is not listed, please contact the church office so that we may update your information. Thank You!

## 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 convienent 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

**<u>Church Giving</u>**. 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.

<u>Automatic Bank Pay:</u> 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!!



back.

Non-Cash Giving: Assets or Planned Gifts

Mail offering to Church:

Fenton First Presbyterian Church 503 S. Leroy Fenton, MI 48430

### THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF OUR MISSION!

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