DECEMBER 2016—JANUARY 2017

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF MINERAL RIDGE

VOL. 44 NO. 9

CHECK US OUT ON FACEBOOK

Beloved Partners in Ministry,

We have entered into that wonderful time of year where we know Christmas is near, but we are told to wait, to slowly count down the days, to sing Advent hymns, instead of Christmas carols, and find some sense of calm and peace in the midst of one of the busiest times of year. It's confusing. Trust me, I love Christmas carols as much as anyone, but like a kid on Christmas morning who can't sleep because they want to run to the Christmas tree and tear open the packages, I find that one of the most important aspects of Advent is that period of waiting, that time of anticipation, and the expectation of hearing the Christmas Story on Christmas Eve and singing "Silent Night."

If nothing else, honoring the season of Advent offers us space to be reflective, a place where we can reconnect with the stories of the prophets who call us to be on the lookout for Christ in the world. We are invited to remember the words of Isaiah, "prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God (40:3)." We can let ourselves get caught up in Isaiah's vision of the day when "The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them," and hope for the day when it becomes a reality.

Above all else, Advent prepares us for the miracle, the blessing, the glorious gift that we are given from God on Christmas Day, the birth of Jesus, our Savior, Emmanuel, God-with-us. Without the time spent reflecting and waiting for this momentous day, without time spent with the prophets and John the Baptist telling us to repent and to prepare a way for the Lord, we cannot begin to understand just how wonderful a gift we have received.

So friends as hard as it might be, slow down and wait, spend time thinking about what Advent means and what it prepares us for.

In Christ's peace,
Pastor Jamie

December & January Responsibilities

Elder:
December: Diane Reinhart
January: Carole Rummell

Deacon:
12/4 Caleb Reese
12/11 Melissa Keeley
12/18 Rusty Garland
12/25 Deacons
January: Valerie Meyers

Liturgists:
12/4 Sherry Gleason
12/11 Tim Gleason
12/18 Adrianna Reese

Greeters:
12/4 Suzie Merz & Marlene Tincher
12/11 Paul & Debby Wasilewski
12/18 Chuck Hudzik & Marty O'Neill
12/24—5:30 Craver Family
11:00 Ken & Jan Rambo
12/25 TBA

Story Circle:
12/4 Brooke Kaschak & Abbie Postlethwait
12/11 Diane Reinhart
12/18 Jill Fabian & Caleb Reese
12/25—no Story Circle
1/1 Michelle Meyers & Bryce Brendlinger
1/8 Bethany Glidewell & Jaclyn Craver
1/15 Melissa & Dillan Keeley
1/22 Sue McCabe & Caleb Reese
1/29 Muffin Rummell

NEWS ABOUT OUR FOLKS

Share your news with your church family.
E-mail your news to the church office: Jane.fpc@sbcglobal.net or call: 330-652-5712

Congratulations to Pastor Jamie. He was installed as Moderator of Eastminster Presbytery on December 6 at Champion Presbyterian Church. Please keep him in prayer this coming year.

Mason Meyers is on the wrestling team at Howland Schools! Go Mason!

The Deacons sent all our college kids a "get through finals care package." They want the kids to know that even though they aren't around we still think of Them, pray for them and want them to do well at school. Hope to see them all sometime during the holidays.

Our sympathy to the family and friends of Margie DiRienzo who entered into life eternal on Tuesday, November 29. Margie joined our church November 2002. She was an ordained Deacon and Elder. She also filled the duties of our Clerk of Session beginning in 2015 and led the choir. A short celebration of her life was held for her church family after worship on December 11. A memorial service will be held at a date to be announced.

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

December 18, 10:30am: Join us for our **children's Christmas program**. During the course of the service our children (and those adults who wish to join in!) will be re-creating the nativity scene as we hear the stories of Christmas and sing some of our favorite Christmas carols.

December 18, 5pm: Contemplative Christmas Service—Recognizing that the holiday season is not always joyous and happy for all, we will be holding a special service of prayer, Scripture readings, music, and candle lighting for those who may need a more quiet and reflective space this Advent and Christmas. Light refreshments will be served following this service which will be held in the Fellowship Hall.

December 24, 5:30 and 11pm: Join us Christmas Eve at one of our Candlelight services where we will hear the Nativity Story, sing our favorite Christmas carols, light candles as we celebrate the birth of Jesus, the light of the world! There will be special vocalists at each service.

December 25, 10:30am: On Christmas morning, we will gather in the Fellowship Hall for coloring, Christmas carols, Communion, and cake! Once Santa has come and gone, join us for this joyful celebration of Christ's birth.

January 1, 10:30am: Be sure to join us the Sunday after Christmas, for a **Service of Lessons and Carols**, as we reflect on the story of Christ's birth and share in singing the many hymns and carols that make this time of year so special for us all.

PRAYER LIST

Members to Remember

Jim Sewell Dorothy Hood Bob Bowskill
June Keeley Katie Postlethwait

Health Concerns

Joan Williams Andria Crawford Samara Fabian
Katie Postlethwait Helen Lang Joe Shoemaker
Pauline Trapp Terrie Rios
Sean Reilly (Cindy Garris' nephew)
Bob Hibler (Chelsa's father)
Alan Jones (Dorothy's son)
Kathy Jones (Dorothy's daughter-in-law)
Paula Griffiths (Glenn's sister)
Colby Simmons (Cravers' friend)
Gordon Coombs (Suzie Merz's friend)
John Myers (Bev's husband)
Bruce Garland (Betty's nephew)
Jerry Bianco (Shoemakers' friend)
Jason Fick (Emily (Pugh) Fick's husband)
Herb Gillespie (Postlethwaits' friend)
Paul Rider (Marty O'Neill's friend)
Amanda Popovnak (Kathy Graham's daughter)
Andy Skelley (Brooke Kaschak & McKenzie Shaffer's uncle)
Laura & Brad Haines (Cravers' friends)
Maria Andrade (Billie Moore's friend)
Baby girl Enslee (Postlethwaits' friend)
Ron Frey (Debbie Rendes' neighbor)
Jo Ann Thompson (Griffiths' friend)
Fabian Rinaldo (friend of Garlands)
Cheyenne Urbach & Jessica Fox (Rummells' friends)
Ransell Miller (Patty O'Malia's brother-in-law)
Julie Rentz (Sue & Paul's daughter-in-law)
Tom Hoffman (Paul Rentz' cousin)
Bruce Hawkins (Muffin Rummell & Kelli's Wieser's father)
Greg Dominic, Jr. (Gayle Hollowell's relative)

Sympathy, Concern, Nurture, & Support

Rev. Jamie Milton, Minister
Eastminster Presbytery and staff Needle's Eye
Someplace Safe Niles Community Services
Warren & Youngstown Rescue Missions
Refugees World Leaders
Our PC(USA) coworkers Revs. Scott & Elmarie Parker
Those in the Military: Bret Warrick

PRAYER LIST

Names will be kept on the prayer list for approximately six weeks unless the office hears otherwise.

Christmas Caroling at Humility House—If you are available on Wednesday, December 14th at 10am, We hope you can join Pastor Jamie and the residents of Humility House in Austintown for a Christmas Sing-a-long. Here is your chance to sing your favorite hymns, carols, and songs that mark this wonderful holiday season!

I am often struck by the generosity and loving, family spirit of this congregation. My family and I are grateful to be a part of such a wonderful community. ***THANK YOU*** *for the gift cards that were given in honor of Pastor Appreciation Month! Someone must know food speaks to my heart best!*

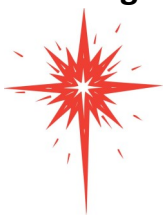
The Christmas Joy Offering is one of the special offerings of our denomination. It has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930's.

The Offering distributes gifts 50/50 to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges.

The **Assistance Program** provides essential financial support to church workers and their families.

Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and spiritual development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage. This has been a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years.

Christmas Joy Offering



MISSION CENTRAL—PIANO IN FELLOWSHIP HALL

Mission: Around the world
—
Across the street

MISSION PROJECTS

Our food cupboard is very depleted from the Thanksgiving and Christmas distributions. Please remember to pick up a few staples for the cupboard when you are doing your shopping.

We thank you all so much for your donations to our many causes during December. Your generosity has helped many people.

Thank you for helping us help others!

UPCOMING DATES

January 4 at 6:30pm

All of our incoming officers are required to attend **Officer Training** on Wednesday, January 4 at 6:30. During this time, officers will be reminded of the duties of their office and go over the important vows that they will take upon their ordination and/or installation into office. Please pray for these officers as they prepare to begin their service to the church: Ruling Elders Chuck Hudzik and Jill Fabian; Deacons Debbie Rendes, Lori Brendlinger, Martha O'Neill, and Ken Wilson.

ALL ANNUAL REPORTS ARE DUE IN THE OFFICE BY JANUARY 9, 2017

ANNUAL TRAINING & ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

January 14 at 8:30am

Please make plans to attend the Annual Training and Organizational Meeting of the church. On **Saturday, January 14th,** Rev. Bill Quigley, will be here to lead us in a time of discussion and reflection on some of the ministry we do and how to make sure we are engaging with the community in ways that are beneficial and meet our congregations passions and skills. Everyone is invited to attend. We will begin at 8:30am with a lite breakfast and be done by 11:00am. Following the workshop, we will organize our committee leadership for the year and our incoming officers will be examined.

ANNUAL
CONGREGATIONAL
MEETING

January 22 after worship

Mark your calendars for **January 22** which will be the day of our Annual Congregational Meeting. During our worship service we will lift up the work that our church did in 2016 as we look together into what 2017 might hold for us. We will also remember those church members who have died and joined the Church Triumphant in the last year.

We are still collecting:
Greeting cards
Clean plastic bags
Box Tops for Education
JoAnne Fabric coupons
Ink & toner cartridges
Hair care packaging
Skin care packaging
Cosmetics packaging
Tooth brushes
Toothpaste tubes
Drink pouches
Laptops, Net-books
Notebooks
E-readers, Tablets
I-Pads, I-Pods
Cell phones

TERRACYCLE
OUTSMART WASTE™

SESSION NOTES FROM THE NOVEMBER 29, 2016 MEETING

The meeting opened with prayer especially remembering Ruling Elder Margie DiRienzo, who passed away that morning

Minutes were approved as was use of Fellowship Hall and Kitchen on Dec. 22, 6-8

The budget for 2017 was approved noting that Per Capita (General Assembly, Synod and Presbytery) for 2017 will be $32 for each member on the active role of the church.

Noted that membership is now 164

Approved Terms of Call for Pastor Jamie Milton to be presented to the congregation at the January Annual Meeting on January 22 for the congregation's approval

Approved Marsha Brozier as Treasurer and Sherri Craver as Financial Secretary for 2017. Personnel will be seeking a person to replace Margie DiRienzo as Clerk

Approved Pastor's vacation days – December 8 and December 26-January 1

Heard that Christian Education Committee will be seeking a teacher for the Adult Class in lounge, that the Session/ Deacon organization meeting will be on Saturday, January 14 beginning at 8:30 with breakfast, and that incoming officer training will be Wednesday, January 4 at 6:30

Heard that Building and Property Committee has been busy with maintenance of our building

Heard that the pictorial Church Directory is being finalized

Heard of the projects for extra giving presented by the Mission Committee

Heard that Communion will be celebrated on Christmas Day and again on January 8

Noted that all reports for the Annual Report must be in the office by Monday, January 9

Heard that Deacons sent "care packages" to 14 of our church family that are in college

Pastor's report consisted of his activities with our congregation, community, and Presbytery. He also reported on his attendance at the Board of Pension CREDO event

Agreed to send letters to members who have not been active to ask their wishes regarding their membership

Researching Emergency Defibrillator

Appointed Financial Review Task Force to review 2016 financial records

Issued call for the Annual Congregational Meeting on January 22, 2016 during worship

Heard that Pastor Jamie Milton will be installed as Moderator of Presbytery at the December 6 Presbytery meeting at the Champion Presbyterian Church which meeting begins at 9:30 am. The installation is scheduled for 12:45. congregational members are welcome to attend

Plans for a Session Dinner in January were put in place

Ordination/Installation – January 15, Committees meet – January 17, Session Stated meeting – January 24

In Memoriam

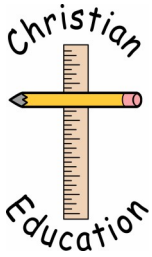
Marjorie DiRienzo

United with First Presbyterian Church
November 3, 2002

Joined the Church Triumphant
November 29, 2016

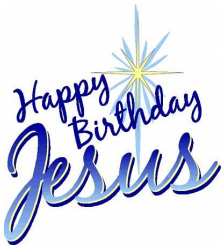
"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord henceforth . . .
that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them."
- Revelation 14:13

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NOTES



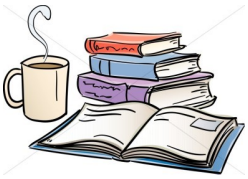
CHRISTMAS PROGRAM & BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR BABY JESUS

Our church school children will present a short presentation in worship on December 18 after which the congregation is invited to Fellowship Hall where we will share in a Jesus Birthday cake. All are invited.



NO CHURCH SCHOOL ON 12/25 & 1/1

There will be no church school classes on Christmas Day or New Year's Day. **Classes will resume on January 8.**



BOOK STUDY

If you would like to join together with others to read chapter by chapter the book "Traveling Light" by Max Lucado just come to the lounge at 3:30 on most Wednesdays. We meet for an hour and a half. Carole Rummell is leading this time of sharing. The Twenty Third Psalm will be our guide as we learn / experience releasing the burdens you were never meant to bear. If you want to know more about the author you can google his name and you will learn of the many books he has authored. In fact there are several in our library.

NTERPRETATION & STEWARDSHIP

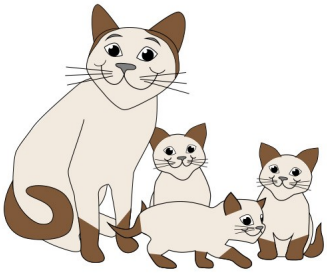
The Interpretation and Stewardship Committee worked with our treasurer on the 2017 budget which was approved by Session at the November Session Meeting. Overall, the budgeted expenses were reduced by 1.1% for 2017. *Remember, you can still turn in your Celebration of Giving Cards if you are so inclined.* The Celebration of Giving Cards are used to help session plan its spending for the upcoming year. We recognize that not everyone makes an annual pledge; instead, they support the church throughout the year financially as they are able and with other non-monetary gifts bestowed upon them. Your non-monetary contributions are equally as valuable! Thank you all for your continued support of the church's mission.

We received information from the Eastminster Presbytery regarding the 2017 Per Capita giving. The amount due is reduced to $32.00 per active member based on the December 2015 roll. Our active roll at that time was 166 individuals. The I&S Committee is planning a minute for stewardship in the new year to help everyone understand this obligation and how it is used by the General Assembly, Synod and the Presbytery throughout the region and the world. Please consider making a special offering to help offset this expense to the First Presbyterian Church of Mineral Ridge.

Many of us were present for our last Minute for Stewardship flawlessly delivered by Margie DiRienzo. The Interpretation and Stewardship Committee would like to take this opportunity to recognize the invaluable contribution that Margie made to our church. Whether through generously giving her time as the Session Clerk, her singing, or just being present for fellowship on Sunday mornings; Margie was a cornerstone of the church and a great lover of God. Although her untimely passing brings great sorrow to us all, her last message as an active member of the church can be carried with all of us year round - This is your church. We are obligated to ensure its viability for all the years to come. We must treasure the place that brings our church family together and not take it for granted. Like Margie, it can be here today and gone tomorrow. You will always be remembered, Margie. Thank you for your steady hand and considerate heart. As we continue through this spectacular holiday season, with all the hustle and bustle, please take time to remember that ***JESUS IS THE REASON FOR THE SEASON*!** Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

All that we have and all that we are ultimately belongs to God!

DID YOU KNOW?



When Margie DiRienzo passed away she left her beloved pet cats. One of the cats was a 13 year old and she had been with Margie her whole life. The other one came to Margie just a few weeks before she passed. Margie fell in love with her as soon as she saw her. For several weeks Kathy Graham faithfully stopped by Margie's home to feed them and take care of them. Then she and Betty began looking for a place to take them. Finding places that Margie would approve of was a difficult task. Ken Rambo gave her the name and other information on a cat sanctuary in Girard that a friend of his gave to him. Talk about networking!

The kitten was taken to Animal Welfare League. They were excited to get her as people usually want kittens. The older cat was taken to the Small World Rescue Shelter in Girard. We want to spread the word about this wonderful caring place.

It is a labor of love for Veronica Caruso and Edna Bailey who opened the shelter in 2013. They found a suitable building that they could afford. It is located at 945 State Street in Girard. The place is very well taken care of – just ask Betty and Kathy. The animals are taken very good care of as is the house. All the animals are vetted and spayed, neutered and have shots. It is a constant project to meet expenses. They need donations for food, litter, washing products, electricity, and garbage pickup. If you are looking for a cat, do stop in. If you are looking for a good place to make a charitable donation, they can really use it.

Veronica is there every day, but if you want to stop in you should probably call to make sure of this – 330-727-1878.

We hope Margie would be happy with our choice for placement of her babies.

We wish you a Merry Christmas

We wish you a Merry Christmas

We wish you a Merry Christmas

And a Happy New Year!

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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PastorJMilton@gmail.com
Jane.FPC@sbcglobal.net

The *Church Mouse* is the monthly (except in July & August) newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church. All visitors are welcome to worship with us each Sunday at 10:30 a.m. (except Memorial Day through Labor Day when worship is at 10:00 a.m.)

DECEMBER 2016—JANUARY 2017

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Return Service Requested

THIS IS GOD'S HOUSE ALL ARE WELCOME!

MISSION STATEMENT

Guided by the teachings of Jesus Christ, we joyfully strive to create a community of faith that welcomes and nurtures all who seek to experience God's love and grace. With this as our mission, we willingly choose to develop a fellowship through which we will no longer e strangers, but friends in Christ.

Christmas Eve Worship Services

5:30pm

Special Music by Aubrey Reese

11:00pm

Special Music by Larry Harris