



## Gabriel's Horn Newsletter

...Heralding the Good News to our neighbors...

**Website:**

[www.eastbloomfieldcongregationalchurch.org](http://www.eastbloomfieldcongregationalchurch.org)

**E-mail:** [1st.Cong.Church@gmail.com](mailto:1st.Cong.Church@gmail.com)

**November/December 2024**

**\* Our Sunday worship service begins at 10:00 a.m. \***

### CHURCH STAFF

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(716) 983-5760

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### ✦ From the Pastor ✦

*"Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."*  
*Philippians 4:6*



We read these words and our initial thought might be: Come on, Paul, really? In *everything* by prayer and supplication give thanks to God?? That's not possible!!!

It doesn't seem possible. There are things in life that we are definitely NOT thankful for! A sudden death, where we didn't get the chance to

say goodbye. A severe illness that struck out of the blue. A life changing loss of a job. A hurricane or two.... It is almost impossible to be thankful for any of these things. I say almost, because thankfulness may come in hindsight. I was just helping two siblings deal with the unexpected death of their father. The first day I met with them they had just arrived in town. I met them at the funeral home, where I prayed over their father's body. They were weeping quite openly, and saying their goodbyes. We then went to their father's home, where he had been found dead by the police. This was the first time anyone had been in the house since. They approached it apprehensively, unsure what to expect. They found their father's meal set out on the kitchen table ready to eat. His medications were next to the food. There were obviously more tears and we prayed over the spot where his body was found.

I met with them again a few days later. They were in an entirely different frame of mind. They had been contacted by many people, all of whom told them stories about their father. They heard how he had spent his last day; not knowing that it would be. His daughter played a voicemail to me, where he told her he had been to a new church. They were able to see God at work in their father's life, and reflected on how his strength had been passed on to them.

Would I say these children were thankful for their father's death? I don't know that they would go that far. They were able to see that he had not suffered. They heard from people who had appreciated him. They were able to see some of his characteristics in themselves. As events unfold, we may not be in the right space to be thankful for them. It may only be in looking back that we can see God present in them. Was God there? Of course. Did God act? Yes, although we may not still be able to see it. Can we give thanks to God in everything? It may take a while, but the answer is always yes.

Blessings,

*Sue*

### ✦ **Upcoming Events** ✦

- **Stewardship Drive:** Stewardship is about being grateful, responsible stewards of the gifts we receive from God. The tradition of giving back to God and to the church comes from the Biblical practice of "tithing," which means to give back a tenth of our earnings to God (Numbers 18:26). We see stewardship as more than simply contributing money to the church; it's also about contributing time and talents, and volunteering for ministry and mission. It's about reaching out to build relationships from a perspective of abundance instead of scarcity.

We have begun our annual stewardship drive. If you are a church member or a friend of the church, you should have received a mailing asking for a contribution to the church, whether it be monetary or with your time. Please consider supporting the church in its mission.

While we will accept your pledge from now until the end of the year, we announce **Sunday, November 10** as the official Sunday for receiving pledges. They will be gathered up with the week's collection. Thank you in advance for your support.

- **Christian Education Sponsored Fellowship & Game Day:** The Christian Education Committee will host a Fellowship and Games event after the worship service on **Sunday, November 17th**. The committee will bring in snacks and treats and they encourage the congregation to bring in their favorite tabletop games. All are invited, so make plans to come enjoy some good treats and fun fellowship. See you there!

- **Caroling at the ARC:** We will gather to sing carols at the Ontario ARC - Bloomfield Community Residence (147 Main Street, Bloomfield) on **Saturday, December 21, at 2 p.m.** We will sing all the familiar carols as we celebrate Christmas with our friends at the ARC. Please join us - there will be cookies!

### ✦ Church News & Updates ✦

- **New Church Clerk:** Phyllis Rehtin is retiring as Church Clerk following the January 2025 Annual Meeting. The council will need to select a new Church Clerk beginning February 2025. The following excerpt describes the responsibilities of the Church Clerk:

The clerk shall be appointed by the church council to keep a faithful record of the proceedings of the church; keep a register of addresses of church members, with dates and modes of their reception and removal; keep a record of baptisms and marriages [and deaths] (added); issue letters of transfer notifying the churches to which they are addressed; preserve on file all communications and written official reports; notify all persons elected to offices and committees; give legal notice of all meetings when such notices are necessary; conduct all correspondence so far as this is not otherwise provided for, and perform such other duties as are described by law or as usually pertain to the office of a clerk or secretary of an assembly.

If anyone is interested in becoming the next Church Clerk, please contact Will Tyler, our church council moderator, for consideration. Thank you.

- **Trustee News:** Thanks to the trustees, we have new lighting in the Fellowship Hall. Really perked the room up! Plus, we now have a new, upgraded color copier thanks to the trustees' coordination.

- **Decorating for Christmas:** We will decorate the church for the Christmas season on Sunday, November 24th. We will start after the worship service; all are invited to help prepare for the holiday.

## ✦ Birthdays ✦

These people are celebrating birthdays during these two months. When you see them, please wish them a Happy Birthday!



**November:**  
29 Noah Bartos

**December:**  
13 Jacquie Walters

## ✦ Reoccurring Calendar Events (Monthly) ✦

- **Special Offering:** An extra offering plate is passed on the first Sunday of every month. This special offering supports church outreach to the local community and local missions and is kept in the Benevolence Fund for future distributions. The offering basket will be available at our live service. For this period, the special offerings will be on **November 3rd**, and **December 1st**. If you are unable to attend, please contact Janice Kelly, our Benevolence Secretary, to make arrangements for your gift.

Please note that if you are unable to attend worship service yet wish to make a donation to the church (pledge, benevolence or faith), you can mail your donation to Marilyn Shafer at 12 Howard Avenue, Bloomfield, NY, 14469.

- **Council Meeting:** The church council has monthly meetings. These meetings are the first Sunday of the month. For this period, the council meetings are **November 3rd**, and **December 1st**.
- **Woman's Breakfast:** meets the first Monday of every month at **Brady J's** restaurant (24 Maple Avenue, Bloomfield) at **9:00 a.m.** All interested women are invited; being a member of the church is not a requirement. For this period, the breakfasts will be on **November 4th**, and **December 2nd**.

● **Choir Practice:** The choir has weekly Wednesday rehearsals at 7:30 p.m. For those who cannot make it Wednesday evenings, there is a short rehearsal at 9:15 a.m. on Sundays. As always, they are looking for singers and all are welcome.

● **Men's Breakfast:** The men meet the last Sunday of every month at **Brady J's** restaurant (24 Maple Avenue, Bloomfield) at **7:45 a.m.** All interested men are invited; being a member of the church isn't a requirement. For this period, the men will meet **November 24th**, and **December 29th**.

### ✦ **November and December Specific Calendar Events** ✦

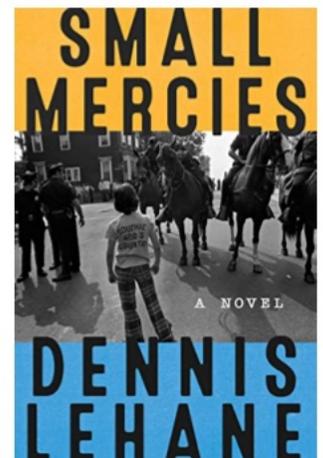
- **Friday, November 1:** All Saints Day
- **Sunday, November 3:** All Saints Day (observed)
- **Sunday, November 3:** Daylight Saving Time ends (turn your clocks 1 hour back)
- **Sunday, November 3 (11:30 a.m.):** Church Council meets. We will have Fellowship Hour prior to the meeting start
- **Monday, November 4 (9:00 a.m.):** Women's breakfast at Brady J's
- **Monday, November 11:** Veterans Day
- **Sunday, November 17 (after service):** Fellowship, treats & board games
- **Thursday, November 21 (9:30 a.m.):** The church book club meets in Pastor Sue's office; they will discuss the novel *Small Mercies* by Dennis Lehane.

#### **Amazon synopsis:**

In the summer of 1974 a heatwave blankets Boston and Mary Pat Fennessy is trying to stay one step ahead of the bill collectors. Mary Pat has lived her entire life in the housing projects of "Southie," the Irish American enclave that stubbornly adheres to old tradition and stands proudly apart.

One night Mary Pat's teenage daughter Jules stays out late and doesn't come home. That same evening, a young Black man is found dead, struck by a subway train under mysterious circumstances.

The two events seem unconnected. But Mary Pat, propelled by a desperate search for her missing daughter, begins turning over stones



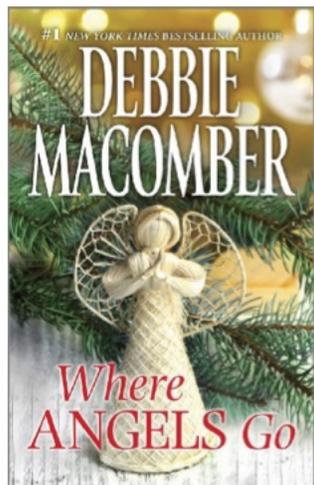
best left untouched—asking questions that bother Marty Butler, chieftain of the Irish mob, and the men who work for him, men who don't take kindly to any threat to their business. Set against the hot, tumultuous months when the city's desegregation of its public schools exploded in violence, *Small Mercies* is a superb thriller, a brutal depiction of criminality and power, and an unflinching portrait of the dark heart of American racism. It is a mesmerizing and wrenching work that only Dennis Lehane could write.

- **Sunday, November 24 (7:45 a.m.):** Men's breakfast at Brady J's
- **Sunday, November 24 (after service):** Christmas decorating
- **Thursday, November 28:** Thanksgiving Day
- **Sunday, December 1:** First Sunday in Advent
- **Sunday, December 1 (11:30 a.m.):** Church Council meets. We will have Fellowship Hour prior to the meeting start.
- **Monday, December 2 (9:00 a.m.):** Women's breakfast at Brady J's
- **Sunday, December 8:** Second Sunday in Advent
- **Sunday, December 15:** Third Sunday in Advent
- **Saturday, December 7:** Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
- **Thursday, December 19 (9:30 a.m.):** The church book club meets in Pastor Sue's office; they will discuss the novel *Where Angels Go* by Debbie Macomber.



### Amazon synopsis:

Shirley, Goodness and Mercy are back! These three irresistible angels love their assignments on Earth. They especially love helping people who send prayer requests to Heaven (even though the Archangel Gabriel, their boss, knows they're going to break his rules)!



This Christmas, Mercy is assigned to bring peace of mind to an elderly man who discovers an unexpected answer to his prayer.

Goodness is sent to oversee the love life of a young woman afraid to risk commitment a second time.

And Shirley has the task of granting a little boy's fondest Christmas wish.

Shirley, Goodness and Mercy go wherever they're needed. These three charming angels often find themselves in trouble, but somehow things always work out for the best, especially at Christmas.

- **Saturday, December 21 (7:45 a.m.)** : Caroling at the ARC
- **Sunday, December 22:** Fourth Sunday in Advent
- **Tuesday, December 24 (7:00 p.m.)** : Christmas Eve service
- **Wednesday, December 25:** Christmas Day
- **Sunday, November 29 (7:45 a.m.):** Men's breakfast at Brady J's
- **Tuesday, December 31:** New Year's Eve



### ✦ Picture Us ✦



- **Rally Day:** We celebrated ourselves as a congregation and kick-started the fall and the return from summer. The Christian Education committee hosted a potluck and the congregation played the “Ten Commandments Twelve Apostles Musical Hot Potato” game. This was a musical chairs-like game where a stuffed animal was passed person to person until the music stopped playing. At that point, the person left holding the toy had to name an apostle or one of the 10 commandments to stay in the game. It was a wonderful way to combine fellowship (and food!) with a fun game. Although, rumor has it that some people used internet search to aid their memory! 😊

## ✦ Miscellaneous ✦

- **Pastor Office Hours:** Pastor Sue has open door office hours every Thursday. She leads morning prayer from her office beginning at 9:00 a.m. which is streamed live on the church's Facebook page. Pastor Sue will remain in her office until 1:00 p.m. and, as always, drop-ins for a cup of coffee or tea are welcome. She is also available at other times by appointment; please call (716) 983-5760 to make arrangements.
- **Church Membership:** Please call Pastor Sue Walters at (716) 983-5760 or e-mail her at revst88@gmail.com for information on joining the First Congregational Church of East Bloomfield or to arrange Home Communion for a shut in.
- **Advertising A Church Event:** To advertise any church event, please contact Alice McConnell, 8291 Wesley Road, Bloomfield, 14469; (585) 402-5397 or e-mail her at beehive270@gmail.com. Please ensure you get the written details of the event to Alice 4 weeks before the date of the event.
- **Worship Services:** For those who cannot attend the in-person service, we continue to record and post portions of the worship service on our Facebook page. Please note the posts are audio only (similar to a podcast) and we are recording only the scripture readings and the sermon (and sometimes the song offering from the choir). The podcasts can be listened to at any time (along with all the other videos we've posted) by accessing the Video tab on our Facebook page (link: <https://www.facebook.com/First-Congregational-Church-Bloomfield-NY-357770224341588/>).
- **Food Cupboard:** As a continuing reminder, please keep the food cupboard's needs in your minds and hearts. We collect/deliver for the cupboard on a monthly basis, however, donations are welcome at any time.

*O Holy One,  
heavenly angels spoke to earthly shepherds  
and eternity entered time in the child of Bethlehem.  
Through the telling of the Christmas story,  
let our temporal lives be caught up in the eternal  
in that same child,  
that we might join shepherds and all the heavenly host  
in praising the coming of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.*

## ✦ November/December Lectionary Reading ✦

	First reading	Psalm	Second reading	Gospel
<b>1-Nov-24</b> All Saints Day <i>(Sometimes observed on first Sunday in November)</i>	Wisdom of Solomon 3:1-9  Psalm 24  <b>or</b> <i>Isaiah 25:6-9</i>		Revelation 21:1-6a	John 11:32-44
<b>3-Nov-24</b> All Saints Day (observed)  <i>(If All Saints not observed on this day)</i>	Ruth 1:1-18  Psalm 146	Deuteronomy 6:1-9  Psalm 119:1-8	Hebrews 9:11-14	Mark 12:28-34
<b>10-Nov-24</b>	Ruth 3:1-5; 4:13-17  Psalm 127	1 Kings 17:8-16  Psalm 146	Hebrews 9:24-28	Mark 12:38-44
<b>17-Nov-24</b>	1 Samuel 1:4-20  1 Samuel 2:1-10	Daniel 12:1-3  Psalm 16	Hebrews 10:11-14, (15-18), 19-25	Mark 13:1-8
<b>24-Nov-24</b>	2 Samuel 23:1-7  Psalm 132:1-12, (13-18)	Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14  Psalm 93	Revelation 1:4b-8	John 18:33-37
<b>28-Nov-24</b> Thanksgiving Day	Joel 2:21-27		1 Timothy 2:1-7	Matthew 6:25-33
<b>1-Dec-24</b> First Sunday of Advent	Jeremiah 33:14-16	Psalm 25:1-10	1 Thessalonians 3:9-13	Luke 21:25-36
<b>8-Dec-24</b> Second Sunday of Advent	Baruch 5:1-9  <b>or</b> <i>Malachi 3:1-4</i>	Luke 1:68-79	Philippians 1:3-11	Luke 3:1-6
<b>15-Dec-24</b> Third Sunday of Advent	Zephaniah 3:14-20	Isaiah 12:2-6	Philippians 4:4-7	Luke 3:7-18
<b>22-Dec-24</b> Fourth Sunday of Advent	Micah 5:2-5a	Luke 1:46b-55  <b>or</b> <i>Psalm 80:1-7</i>	Hebrews 10:5-10	Luke 1:39-45, (46-55)

\* "First" OT readings, read semi-continuously, follow major stories/themes, beginning in Year A with Genesis and ending in Year C with the later prophets.

\* "Alternate First" OT readings follow the complementary historical tradition of thematically pairing the OT reading with the Gospel reading.

*Italicized readings, complementary to the standard reading, may be used with, or in place of it.*

*Source of all being, beginning and end,  
 we praise you for those who have served you faithfully.  
 For the sake of Jesus Christ,  
 replenish our hope in your eternal kingdom,  
 that we may have life in all its fullness,  
 unfettered by the fear of death. Amen.*

First Congregational Church  
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