

# The Presbyterian

## A Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church

March 2024

Exalting Christ. Denying Ourselves. Loving our Neighbors.

### Move Forward, Together

As most of you know, I will be transitioning to a new call in Great Falls, Montana at the end of March. God has called us to begin a new work of planting a church in that city, and that comes with both sorrow for leaving you all, and excitement for what God has in store for both of us. This time of transition is not just a waiting period, however. And so, I want to encourage all of you to take this time seriously as you prepare for what is next for this wonderful church family, and as you prepare for your next pastor.

The first thing I would encourage you to do is to only speak towards what you know. Speaking negatively about what is to come, or speaking about what the EPC will or will not do when you aren't certain, will only cause more confusion and gossip and will not be helpful in moving forward. Your elders will be the first ones to get information. If you have questions, ask them. If they don't know, chances are other people don't know either. Honesty and transparency will be crucial moving forward. If you don't know, that's ok. But I can assure you that I, your session, and your presbytery want to see First Presbyterian Church of Bucyrus grow and flourish.

Here are some common questions that I have been asked so far, that hopefully will clear up any questions you might have:

1. Will the presbytery assign a transitional pastor to our church?
  - No, the presbytery does not *assign* them. The presbytery has pastors (usually retired from ordinary ministry) who have been trained to be intentional transitional pastors for a church between pastors. They are focused on church health, outreach, and creating healthy systems and culture within the church as you prepare for the next pastor. The church will be able to interview and talk to the transitional pastors who are available and hire on the one they feel is the best fit.
  -
2. Will it take a long time to find a pastor?
  - There is no clear answer on this. In the American church in general, roughly 35% of pastors will be retiring in the next 5 years, and many other pastors are leaving the ministry due to financial hardship or burn-out. So, there is a pastor shortage in general, but any length of search is not due to our denomination. Also, with a transitional pastor in place, that search will not begin immediately. They will walk the church through how to be a place that will be healthy for a pastor and their family to come and feel supported and cared for.
3. Could a woman be ordained to be our pastor?
  - Yes. In the EPC, women's ordination is considered a non-essential, and it is therefore left up to the local congregation to decide if they want to ordain women or not. That has been the case from the founding of the denomination.

On top of these things, there must be unity in love. Each of you who are members of this church have made vows to serve the Body of Christ to the best of your ability, to promote the peace and purity of the church, and to join yourselves together. As Elder Tom Britton said on Sunday, "This was never Pastor Jeremy's church. It was here 200 years before he got here, and by God's grace it will be here 200 more years." This is Christ's church, and you are his flock, his people, his bride, and his emissaries. You have a mission and a purpose, and no one gets to opt out. Fight together and for each other, not with each other. We already have an enemy who is prowling like a lion seeking someone to destroy. There's nothing he delights in more than seeing a church at each other's throats: he doesn't have to do anything if we are already doing his job for him. Love and serve each other in radical ways. Step out of your comfort zones and say with the Prophet Isaiah, "Here am I, Lord. Send me."

Support your elders: the burden of this transitional phase will rest heavily on them. Pray for them, speak kind words of encouragement, and volunteer when they ask the congregation to step up. As we have said numerous times before, the ministry belongs to the *saints*. And YOU are the saints. Step up and step in to what God has for you and this church.

Lastly, I want to remind you all of how much I love you, and how dear this place is to me. I will be your biggest cheerleader. And I can't wait to check in and see the amazing work God is doing through this beautiful body of believers. As I have prayed for you all for these past six years, so will I continue to pray.

"Therefore, my beloved brothers and sisters, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain." – 1 Corinthians 15:58

For His Kingdom,  
Jeremy W McNeill  
Pastor, First Presbyterian Church  
Bucyrus, OH



Please check with the  
Committee Chairperson for information

#### Session Meeting

The Elders will meet on **Thursday, March 21, @ 6:00 PM** in the Welcome Center.

#### Gamma Delta

The Gamma Delta group will meet on Thursday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, at 12:30 pm at Lulu's.

#### Discipleship Group

The Discipleship groups will meet March 5 and 19 at 6:30 pm. Please see schedule in the newsletter.

#### Table Toppers

The Table Toppers meet **Wednesday afternoons at 2:30 until 5:00**. All ages are welcome to join in for an afternoon of board games and card games. Bring your snacks and beverage.

#### Presbyterian Men

The Presbyterian Men's group meets each **Friday @ 7:00 AM, at the Pelican**. All men of FPC are invited to attend.

#### Deacon's Meeting

The Deacon's meetings are to be announced.

#### Finance Committee

The next Finance Committee meeting will be announced.

### Holy Week Services

03/24 - Palm Sunday 10:30 AM

03/28 - Maundy Thursday 6:30 PM

03/29 - Good Friday 6:30 PM

03/30 - Holy Saturday 10:00 AM

03/31 - Easter Sunday 10:30 AM



## Happy Birthday

- 2 Kaitlyn Bardon,  
Chance Hablitzel
- 5 Danny Nickler
- 11 Kathy Thompson
- 24 Sandy Britton
- 25 Cindy Inscho
- 31 Davi McNeill

## Anniversary

- 31 Dave and Deb Hablitzel

## Liturgist

- 03 – Tom Britton
- 10 – Marcia Stout
- 17 – Carrie Diebler
- 24 - Tami Robinson
- 31 - Tami Robinson

## Ushers/Greeters

- 03 – Tami Robinson & Lori Rager
- 10 – Carrie Diebler
- 17 –
- 24 – Gary Irwin
- 31 – Duane & Connie Watts

## Flowers

- 03 – Kathy Bardon
- 10 –
- 17 – Tami Robinson
- 24 – Tasha Nickler
- 31 – Easter Flowers

## **Shut-Ins:**

Mary Lou Hastings, Sue Headley, JoeAnn Johns

## **Cancer**

Melody Fagan, friend of Sandy Britton  
Annette Cheney, a friend of Kathy Bardon  
Ellen Andrews, Kathy Bardon's cousin  
Bruce Price, Dan's brother

## **Surgery**

### **Members, Family and Friends of Members:**

Judy Eichhorn, waiting on MRI for pain in head, neck & shoulders  
Kathy Hildebrand, Courtney's Mother, waiting on liver transplant  
Ben Hubble, Jan's nephew, back & knee pain  
Dan Price  
Dave Hablitzel  
Lou Ross, recovering from a stroke, Lori Rager's Dad  
Judy Diederich, Recovering from heart surgery  
Whitney Hildebrand, Courtney Posey's sister  
Abigail Sutherland, recovering from heart surgery, Dishon's granddaughter  
Mike McKee, Heart problem. Friend of Kathy Bardon  
Becky Bellamy, Parkinson's, sister of Kathy Bardon  
Mary Dunham, Kathy Byrne's friend

## **Military:**

Keagan Rios, Gennie Rios grandson  
Levi Diebler, member and Carrie Diebler's son  
Grayson Robinson, Tami Robinson's grandnephew



**Elder of the Month:** Carrie Diebler  
**Deacon of the Month:** Jan Fulton

# First Presbyterian News



## Kudos & Updates from Jan



**Kudos to the deacons** for the delicious luncheon they prepared and served for the REFOCUS meeting on Saturday, February 24th. Many thanks to Carrie for making our favorite chocolate éclair dessert. Over 25 members and friends made the effort to learn more about how we will move forward in the days to come.

More interior renovations will begin on Wednesday, February 28th. Michelle's office is first on the list and then we will tackle the bathroom renovation. Pitts Home Improvement will be continuing to do the work for us.



As you know we continue to have a prayer list in our weekly bulletins. Also, the deacons have a very active prayer chain with more detailed prayer needs. They will be using this column in the monthly newsletter to keep you aware of more prayer needs. Feel free to let me know if you would like to add anything to our list. We ask for prayers for the following: continued prayers for **Dave Hablitzel** as he battles a leg infection and tries to gain weight and strength, and for **Debbie** who is his main caregiver; prayers of gratefulness for **Gennie Rios** and how well she has recovered from surgery; continued prayers for our friend **Melodie Fagan** and her family –Melodie has fought the good fight against cancer and has made a life decision to choose quality over quantity... to enjoy the time she has left with her family and friends; prayers for the family of **Eric Sparks** who succumbed to his battle with cancer; continued prayers for **Tim Mutchler** as he heals from surgery; continued prayers for **Dan and Barb Price** as they navigate the many stages of Parkinson's Disease; prayers for **Sam and Joe Rager** as they spread their wings and grow as young men outside of our

community; prayers of compassion for **Gary Hess and others** who suffer depression AND live alone; **prayers for the McNeill family** as they begin a new chapter in their life AND **prayers for our congregation as we grieve the loss of our Pastor Jeremy**, refocus our energy and talents to strengthen our congregation, begin the search for our new pastor and increase our outreach outside of our doors... all for the glory of God!

The Deacons will host a punch reception after worship on Sunday, March 10th, for the McNeill family. This is Jeremy's last Sunday in the pulpit at our church. We will have a basket on the punch table for members to place cards, notes and mementos for the McNeill's. Pull those cell phones out... it will be a great time for pics!

Jan Fulton – 419/561-0263

## First Presbyterian Church

### Women's Discipleship Spring Schedule 2024

#### 12 Extraordinary Women

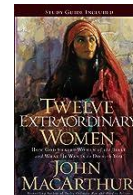
by John MacArthur

**Tuesday, March 5** Meet to pray, pass out books, receive schedule 6:30 p.m. at the church

**Tuesday, March 19** Ch. 1 "Eve: Mother of all Living"

**Tuesday, April 16** Ch. 2 "Sarah: Hope Against Hope" Tuesday,

**May 14** Ch. 3 "Rahab: A Horrible Life Redeemed"



There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns. Psalm 46:4-5



## Snickers Brownies

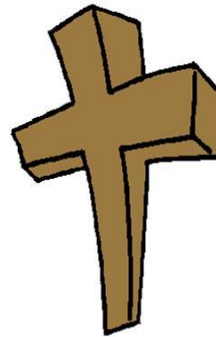
1-1/2 cups white sugar 3/4 cup (12 T.) butter, melted  
 3/4 cup all-purpose flour 3 eggs  
 1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder 1 tea-  
 spoon vanilla extract  
 1/2 teaspoon salt 1 cup Snickers, chopped  
 1/4 teaspoon baking powder

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 9" square baking pan. Mix sugar, flour, cocoa powder, salt and baking powder in a large mixing bowl. Mix butter, eggs and vanilla extract together in a separate bowl; add butter-mixture to the large bowl with flour mixture and stir batter until well blended. Pour the batter into the prepared baking pan. Bake in the preheated oven until edges are brown and center is set, about 25 minutes. Remove brownies from the oven and sprinkle the chopped candy bar pieces on top, lightly pressing them in while the brownies are still hot. Let the brownies cool completely before cutting, about 30 minutes.

## Easter Word Search

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

APOSTLES  
 CHRIST  
 CROSS  
 CROWN  
 CRUCIFIXION  
 HOLY  
 JESUS  
 KING  
 LAMB  
 LOVE



MARY  
 REDEMPTION  
 RESURRECTION  
 RISEN  
 ROMANS  
 ROOSTER  
 SACRIFICE  
 SALVATION  
 SAVIOR  
 THORNS

