

From the Pastor

Our lives change over time, and sometimes they change suddenly. Our congregation changes over time, and sometimes unexpectedly and quickly. Surely, in the past few years we have seen the way the world changes around us, affecting us. If we as a congregation and session continue to be committed to growth, we will be going through lots of changes as God leads us.

And we're already committed to that! Here's our vision statement:

We are a Presbyterian church responding to new mission frontiers presented by our changing culture. Guided by our Lord Jesus Christ, we love, serve and embrace all people.



The thing about a lot of change – maybe most – is that it is not easy. It is often full of grief and anxiety. God's love clearly shines through, sometimes. (Sometimes it's not so clear.) Even in the midst of struggle or loss, let alone the joyful surprises that can come with change, God leads us to hope and helps us become who God created us to be.

We don't know what we will face in the coming years. Will God lead us away from things that have been precious to us in the past? Will God lead us toward things that will bring us new joy? Most likely it will be both, and our path forward to God's future for us will be hard, even if it is also beautiful.

As we move forward let's take to heart that God is present with us now. The verses below proclaim God's goodness. Let us also remember the words that Jesus left us with in Matthew 28:

**"Have I not commanded you?
Be strong and courageous.
Do not be frightened, and do
not be dismayed, for the
Lord your God is with you
wherever you go."**

Joshua 1:9

**"And remember, I am with you always, to the
end of the age."**

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Michelle

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Romans 12:1-2

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven... I know that whatever God does endures forever; nothing can be added to it nor anything taken from it; God has done this so that all should stand in awe before him. That which is already has been, that which is to be already is, and God seeks out what has gone by.

Ecclesiastes 3:1, 14-15

"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope."

Jeremiah 29:11



*Chili
Supper
And
Cookie
Walk
Kitchen
Crew*



**LAFAYETTE
URBAN
MINISTRY**
420 N 4TH STREET
LAFAYETTE, IN 47901

December 31, 2023

First Presbyterian Church
220 N Cullen St
Rensselaer IN 47978

Dear Friends,

Your compassionate action uplifted people in Greater Lafayette in 2023. Because of your generosity, LUM was able to assist those in need 39,361 times this past year. Meals, shelter, tutoring, legal immigration help, financial assistance with rent and utilities – all of this and more made a tremendous positive impact on the lives of others.

Because of you and your partnership with LUM, people from 3,920 different households were given hope through your genuine empathy and practical help. Just look at the smiles on these girls' faces. These are two (of the thousands) who were encouraged by your kindness. Thank you.



We anticipate this coming year to be another year of significant need for many of our most vulnerable neighbors. Will you please continue to support LUM through your prayers, volunteerism, advocacy, and financial gifts?

Thank you again for your partnership in this "faith-based, community-wide effort to tackle basic human needs and uplift the people of Greater Lafayette." Your generosity fuels our mission and empowers us to bring hope, encouragement, and transformation to those in need. We are grateful for YOU.

In 2023, you made the following financial contribution(s) to Lafayette Urban Ministry:

TOTAL \$300

I, the undersigned representative, declare (or certify, verify, or state) under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America, that there were no goods or services provided as part of this/these donation(s). Furthermore, as of the date of this receipt, the above-mentioned organization is a current and valid 501(c)(3) non-profit organization in accordance with the standards and regulations of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

With sincere thanks,

Wesley Tillet

Wesley Tillet
Executive Director

LUMserve.org | lum@LUMserve.org | (765) 423-2691

**WE NEED
LITURGISTS**

**FOR
SUNDAY WORSHIP
AT 9:30 A.M.!!**

**No experience
necessary. Sign-up
sheets are on the
back table in the
Sanctuary or
contact the
church office at
219-866-7005.**

**HAPPY
VALENTINE'S
DAY**

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

January 11, 2024

The meeting was called to order in the pastor's study at 4:00 p.m. CST. The moderator opened the meeting with prayer and devotion. Suzanne Jordan, Kristi Slaby, Julie Williams, and Donna Wood were present. Linda Comingore and Kathy O'Neill were absent. Clerk declared a quorum.

Items discussed and actions taken by Session included:

- ◆ Pastor Bartel reported on Officer training for Elders; e-mail voting procedures; January 21st Manse Open House; update on 2024 committee schedules; congregational meeting agenda; and Personnel Committee search. The weather cancellation policy was reviewed.
- ◆ Correspondence received: Thank You from Presbyterian Ministry Engagement and Support, Disaster Relief for donation.
- ◆ The Treasurer's report was accepted.
- ◆ A request from Prairie Arts Council for use of church for art awards programs on 1/28, 2/18, and 3/10 was voted on and accepted.
- ◆ Chili Supper/Cookie Walk monies were donated to the Jasper House in the amount of \$2,000.00.
- ◆ Continued discussion on Church Directory update.
- ◆ Voted to collect four special offerings in 2024: One Great Hour of Sharing (Easter), Pentecost (May 19, World Communion/Peace Offering (October 6), and Christmas Joy Offering (December).
- ◆ Property report included streaming problem solved; lamp bulb in sanctuary projector was replaced; committee helped Worship and Music Committee decorate the sanctuary; and a leak in kitchen sink has been fixed.
- ◆ Voted to serve Communion the first Sunday of each month, Easter, and Christmas Eve.



Session agreed to hold the next meeting on Thursday, February 8 at 4:00 p.m. CDT. The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 5:31 p.m.



On the third Saturday of each month, Vanessa and Rob Jefferson open the Good Samaritan Food Pantry for any customers needing assistance. Volunteers to help serve the clients are always welcome! Food insecurity continues to be a problem in our area.

Vanessa reported four families were served, including five adults and eight children, on the third Saturday in January.

Your help is needed to supply the Food Pantry with necessary items, including:

Pancake mix, syrup, canned sloppy joe mix, and canned pastas, such as Spagettios, Chef Boyardee, etc., and

canned sloppy joe mix (i.e., Manwich, Hormel, etc.). Monetary donations are also welcomed. Thank you for your continued support!



PIED BEAUTY

Dear friends,

I wanted to share this poem with you this month as we anticipate spring.

Gerard Manley Hopkins was, to put it mildly, an interesting guy. He was raised in the high church tradition of Anglicans in the second half of the 19th century and eventually became a Jesuit priest. In addition to poetry, he was a trained visual artist, and he taught in various school settings. It's commonly believed that he dealt with depression.

What I so like about his poetry is the way he plays with words. If you read it out loud, you'll notice that the words he chooses create sounds that echo what he's writing about. This poem was the one that taught me the word "pied:" basically, multi-colored. (Bonus: "pied" is sometimes the answer for crossword clues.)

May beauty surround you today!

Michelle

Pied Beauty

Glory be to God for dappled things –
For skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pieced – fold, fallow, and plough;
And áll trádes, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
Praise him.



"Talent is God's gift to you. What you do with it is your gift back to God."

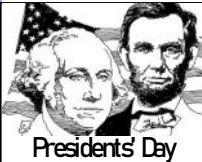
Leo Buscaglia

Committees are being formed for the new year. The Elders will be contacting members to fill committee seats and your input and help would be greatly appreciated. If you are interested in joining a particular committee, please contact an Elder or call the church office at (219) 866-7005.

"For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life."
Ephesians 2:10

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3 AA - Alcoholics Anonymous 7 pm
4 Communion 9:30 am Ordination and Installation of Elders	5 AAA-Abuse Awareness & Accountability 2:30 - 8 pm	6 Dance Magic 3:30 pm Bible Study 4 pm	7 Youth Group meets 5 - 6:30 pm	8 Session meeting 4 pm	9	10 AA - Alcoholics Anonymous 7 pm
11 Worship 9:30 am  TRANSFIGURATION of the Lord	12 AAA 2:30 - 8 pm	13 Dance Magic 3:30 pm Bible Study 4 pm	14 Youth Group meets 5 - 6:30 pm 	15	16	17 FOOD PANTRY 8 - 10 am AA-Alcoholics Anonymous 7 pm
18 Worship 9:30 am PAC Art Awards 1:30 - 3:00 pm	19 AAA 2:30 - 8 pm  Presidents' Day	20 Dance Magic 3:30 pm Bible Study 4 pm	21 Youth Group meets 5 - 6:30 pm	22	23	24 AA - Alcoholics Anonymous 7 pm
25 Worship 9:30 am	26	27 Dance Magic 3:30 pm Bible Study 4 pm	28 Youth Group meets 5 - 6:30 pm	29		

February 14

ASH WEDNESDAY

Beginning
40 Days of Lent

First Presbyterian Church
220 North Cullen Street
Rensselaer, Indiana 47978



Volunteer.
Advocate.
Donate.