

# The M E S S E N G E R

December  
2023  
January  
2024

In December, please plan to mark your calendars (or note in your smart phones) that this month is full of opportunities for worship, special Advent events, and fellowship together with members, frequent visitors, and those whom you'd like to become frequent visitors too.

We will have, by this time, heralded in the Christmas season with our carol singing during worship (10:30AM) on November 26 in the Church House.



On Saturday, December 9, our first Gingerbread House Contest, open to all, will be on display in the Church House between the hours of 11:00AM and 3:30PM. Even if baking is not your specialty, do stop in and admire the creativity. With any luck, our choir and instrumental guests may be tempted by the spicy aromas emanating from the Church House while they are rehearsing for their performance in the Sanctuary set for the next day.

Our much-loved Lessons and Carols service (with the abovementioned musicians) will be presented and celebrated together on Sunday, December 10, beginning at 10:30. Please invite a friend, a co-worker, or a new neighbor to join us. This service contains lovely Christmas music interspersed with Bible readings familiar to the Advent season.

Advent themes and Christmas music will continue through the month of December, notably including two services on Christmas Eve. Our morning worship begins at 10:30, and our beautiful evening service at 5pm offers a pause in the holiday whirlwind, with music and candlelight.

The twelve days of Christmas lead us to Epiphany Sunday, which we will observe on January 7. If you are counting days—yes, twelve days would take us by the calendar to January 6,—thus the one day delay. We will also celebrate the Lord's Supper on January 7.

Please watch for future announcements for worship plans in January as they are still in formative stages. We wish you the most blessed Christmas, and good health in the New Year.

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# *A Message from our Minister*

Frederick Buechner offers up these thoughts on the meaning of Christmas: "Those who believe in God can never in a way be sure of him again. Once they have seen him in a stable, they can never be sure where he will appear or to what lengths he will go or to what ludicrous depths of self-humiliation he will descend in his wild pursuit of humankind. If holiness and the awful power and majesty of God were present in this least auspicious of all events, this birth of a peasant's child, then there is no place or time so lowly and earthbound but that holiness can be present there too. And this means that we are never safe, that there is no place where we can hide from God, no place where we are safe from his power to break in two and recreate the human heart, because it is just where he seems most helpless that he is most strong, and just where we least expect him that he comes most fully.

For those who believe in God, it means, this birth, that God himself is never safe from us, and maybe that is the dark side of Christmas, the terror of the silence. He comes in such a way that we can always turn him down, as we could crack the baby's skull like an eggshell or nail him up when he gets too big for that. God comes to us in the

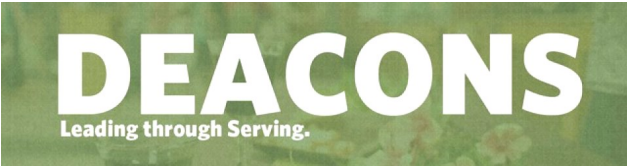
hungry people we do not have to feed, comes to us in the lonely people we do not have to comfort, comes to us in all the desperate human need of people everywhere that we are always free to turn our backs upon. ...

The child is born in the night — the mother's exhausted flesh, the father's face clenched like a fist — and nothing is ever the same again. Nothing is ever the same again for those who believe in God, and nothing is ever the same again for those who do not believe in God either, because once the birth has happened, it is no longer just God whom they have to deny, but it is also this event that they have to deny. Those who do not believe must also fall silent in the presence of the newborn child, but their silence can have only tears at its heart because for them this can only be another child born to die as every child is born to die, and no matter how bravely and well he lives it, his life can have no meaning beyond the meaning that he gives it, and then like all life it must be like a dream once it has been dreamed. For those who do not believe, all the great poetry of the birth — the angels, the star, the three Kings coming out of the night to lay their gifts in the straw — can be only like words that for all their beauty are written on the sand, not poetry that points beyond itself to the very heart of reality, which is beyond the power of time and change to touch." (1) The implications of Christmas hinge on the transcendent entering the mundane, and eternity intersecting with time. All that we call God, we see enter the human condition and experience in Bethlehem.

Harry R. Boer explains that: "The Point of Christmas is that the simplest soul [is told] that God understands him. It tells him that God identifies with his problems, sorrows, hopes, frustrations, joys. God knows them not because God made him, not because God is all-knowing, but because God became a simple soul. God became a human being. God who is the ever-blest second Person of the Trinity, became what we call a person."

It is not a theological concept or philosophical postulate, neither an impersonal force or abstract value that comes to share the human condition at Christmas, but the One who

(continued on page 10)



The Deacons offer prayer, companionship, rides, or meals, but don't always know where care is needed. If you know of a need (your own or another's), call the church office or any of our Deacons: Susan A, Marianna B, Jane J, and Susy S (moderator).



and prayers to the family of Missy B, who died suddenly on November 5.



- Mike B
- William B
- Levi C
- Susan G
- Gene M
- Linda S
- baby Michael
- Brenda C
- Katie W

the people of Israel  
the people of Palestine  
the people of Lewiston, Maine

September 2023

	<i>Month ending</i>	<i>Year to Date</i>	<i>Budget Year To Date</i>
Income	\$15,001.00	\$42,091.00	\$23,106.44
Expense	\$13,572.46	\$55,606.42	\$66,171.48
Net Income	\$1,428.54	-\$13,515.42	-\$43,065.04



Meet the Staff  
the Rev. Jeffrey Lang

- Amy  
Director of Music and Organist
- Kate  
Choir Director and Vocalist
- Paisley  
Videographer

- Clara  
Vocalist
- Deborah  
Administrative Assistant
- Logan  
Vocalist

Items for the combined **February 2024** edition of this newsletter are accepted in the church office through **9:00AM, Monday, January 22.**



Early submissions are joyfully accepted!  
*Submitted information will be edited for clarity, accuracy, and length.*

# Mission in Motion...



Dave C delivered your October food offering of 56 pounds of goods to Valley Interfaith Community Resource Center (VICRC) in early-October. This brings your 2023 contributions to 1845 pounds. Keep up the good work!



The Mission committee recently provided support totaling \$3,470.91. Recipients were VICRC\*, Fisher House\*, William Breidenstein Fund\*, Andy Caress Melanoma Foundation\*, GLAD House, Mary Magdalen House, FreeStore FoodBank, PLAN of S.W. Ohio, and First Step Home.

They also purchased bankers boxes used for Thanksgiving Boxes.

\*Golf Outing proceeds

## Remember ...

...the monthly food offerings are now accepted any day of the month, not just on the third Sunday.

Dave will delivery your generous donations to VICRC early in the next month, and then new items will appear in the basket in the Narthex and on the table in the Church House.

Every day is a day to 'reach out'. Thank you to everyone who continues to help our neighbors in need!



Twenty-eight Operation Christmas Child shoe boxes were delivered to a local collection center the week of November 19, and the Glendale Police Officer gathered up our 25 Thanksgiving boxes the same week. Thank you for providing gifts for children around the world, and for providing food for our Glendale neighbors who need a helping hand.

# Mission in Motion...

There are many opportunities to share with our neighbors during the holidays. We know that it may be difficult or impossible to contribute to all the needs in our community and in the world. Instead, *we ask you to give as you are able to the opportunities that speak to your heart.*

Every gift—large or small—is used to create a better world for all of God’s children.



VICRC is asking for \$25.00 Target or Wal-Mart gift cards instead of gifts for the children they serve.

You will find a clearly marked basket to accept your donations in the Narthex November 19 and 26, and December 3.



The Mitten Tree will be in the Narthex to collect hats, gloves, mittens, and scarves for the children served by GLAD House.

GLAD House is also accepting gift cards of any value from Target or Wal-Mart so the staff may purchase gifts for the children.

You will find a clearly marked basket to accept your donations in the Narthex November 26, and December 3 and 10.



If you would like the Mission committee to purchase a gift card or cards for you, please drop cash or a check in the offering basket any time before December 3.

*Be sure to note which 'tree' you would like your gift to benefit.*

You will have an opportunity to contribute to the **Christmas Joy Offering**, a church-wide Special Offering of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Special offering envelopes will be available in the Narthex to accept your offering on December 17 and 24.

50% of your gifts make it possible for students to learn and grow in faith at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color, and 50% of your gifts assist current and retired church workers and their families with critical financial needs.





# Women's Book Club

*All women* are invited to bring your favorite morning beverage and gather in the church library at 10:00AM each month.



**Wednesday, December 13**

Organizational meeting to choose books beginning with March 2024.



**Wednesday, January 10, 2024**

*The Lost Apothecary*, by Sarah Penner



Women across 18th Century London whisper of a mysterious figure named Nella who sells well-disguised poisons from a secret apothecary shop to use against the oppressive men in their lives. But the apothecary's fate is jeopardized when her newest patron, a precious 12-year-old, makes a fatal mistake which sparks a string of consequences that echo through the centuries. Meanwhile, in present-day London, an aspiring historian stumbles upon a clue to the unsolved apothecary murders that haunted London 200 years ago. *The Lost Apothecary* is a debut novel of secrets, vengeance, and the remarkable ways women can save each other despite the barrier of time.

**Wednesday, February 14, 2024**

*A Gentleman in Moscow*, by Amor Rowles



This often humorous fictional book has an interesting cast of characters. A Russian aristocrat, Count Alexander Rostov, is sentenced in 1922 after the Russian Revolution to spend the rest of his life inside Moscow's grand Metropol Hotel, across from the Kremlin. Rostov, an indomitable man of erudition and wit, has never worked a day in his life and must now live in an attic room while some of the most tumultuous decades in Russian history are unfolding outside the hotel's doors. Even though his personal interactions are limited to employees and guests of the hotel, unexpectedly, his reduced circumstances provide him entry into a larger world of emotional discovery as the Count endeavors to gain a deeper understanding of what it means to be a man of purpose.



## Gentle Yoga 10:00AM

*All women* are invited to gather in the church library on Thursdays, December 7, 14, and 21, 2023 and Thursdays, January 18 and 25, 2024.



Leslie M.....	1
Tim V .....	5
Ken C .....	10
Pat C .....	11
John C.....	13
Jane and Bob J .....	16
Susy S.....	19
Gary M .....	20
Susy and Rich S.....	27
Dawn and Tim V .....	28



## Men's Lunch

*All men* are invited to gather for lunch at Gold Star on Springfield Pike in Springdale, Wednesdays, December 13, 2023, and January 10, 2024.

Fellowship begins when you arrive; lunch begins at 12:30PM.



The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be celebrated Sundays, December 3, 2023 and January 7, 2024.  
*All are welcome to the table.*



The church office will be *closed* November 30, December 7, 14, 21, 25, 26, and 28.

The office will be *open* 9:00AM-3:00PM\* Monday—Wednesday, December 4-6, 11-13, and 18-20, Tuesday, December 27 and Friday, December 29.



Mary S .....	7
Gene M .....	12
Diane B .....	13
Mark B .....	16
Frank L.....	18
Leslie and Gary M .....	18
Diane S.....	30
Bill F .....	31



## Sunday, December 10 10:30AM

Gather for worship and to enjoy the familiar scripture and music of the Advent Season.

Coffee Fellowship in the Manse follows this meaningful worship service.



This calendar is a living document subject to frequent changes.

Check the website ([firstpresbyterianglendale.org](http://firstpresbyterianglendale.org)) for the most accurate calendar.

Please contact the church office with calendar updates.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
<b>3</b>   <b>10:30AM -</b> <b>Worship</b>	<b>4</b> <b>2:00PM-</b> <b>Squirrely</b> <b>Stitchers</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> <b>Office</b> <b>CLOSED</b> <b>10:00AM-</b> <b>Gentle Yoga</b> <b>6:30PM -</b> <b>Choir</b> <b>Rehearsal</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> <b>11:00AM thru</b> <b>3:00PM-</b> <b>Gingerbread</b> <b>House</b> <b>Competition</b>
<b>10</b>  <b>10:30AM -</b> <b>Worship</b> 	<b>11</b> <b>9:00AM-</b> <b>Session</b> <b>reports due</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> <b>10:00AM-</b> <b>Women's</b> <b>Book Club</b> <b>12:30PM-</b> <b>Men's Lunch</b> <b>(Gold Star)</b> <b>6:00PM-</b> <b>Session mtg.</b>	<b>14</b> <b>Office</b> <b>CLOSED</b> <b>10:00AM-</b> <b>Gentle Yoga</b> <b>6:30PM -</b> <b>Choir</b> <b>Rehearsal</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b>  <b>10:30AM -</b> <b>Worship</b>	<b>18</b> <b>2:00PM-</b> <b>Squirrely</b> <b>Stitchers</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> <b>Office</b> <b>CLOSED</b> <b>10:00AM-</b> <b>Gentle Yoga</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b>  <b>10:30AM -</b> <b>Worship</b>  <b>5:00PM</b>	<b>25</b> <b>Office</b> <b>CLOSED</b> 	<b>26</b> <b>Office</b> <b>CLOSED</b>	<b>27</b> <b>Office</b> <b>OPEN</b> <b>9:00AM-???</b>	<b>28</b> <b>Office</b> <b>CLOSED</b>	<b>29</b> <b>Office</b> <b>OPEN</b> <b>9:00AM-???</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b> <b>10:30AM -</b> <b>Worship</b>						



# JANUARY

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
	<b>1</b>   <b>Office CLOSED</b>	<b>2</b>  <b>3:00PM-</b> Mission mtg.	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>  <b>6:30PM -</b> Choir Rehearsal	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>  Officer Training
<b>7</b>   <b>10:30AM -</b> Worship	<b>8</b>  <b>9:00AM-</b> Session reports due	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> <b>10:00AM-</b> Women's Book Club  <b>12:30PM-</b> Men's Lunch (Gold Star)  <b>6:00PM-</b> Session mtg.	<b>11</b>  <b>6:30PM -</b> Choir Rehearsal	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b>  <b>10:30AM -</b> Worship <i>Congregation- al Meeting</i>	<b>15</b> <b>10:30AM-</b> Deacon mtg.  <b>2:00PM-</b> Squirrely Stitchers	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> <b>10:00AM-</b> Gentle Yoga  <b>6:30PM -</b> Choir Rehearsal	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> <b>10:30AM -</b> Worship <i>Officer Ordination and Installation</i>	<b>22</b> <b>9:00AM-</b> February newsletter items due	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> <b>10:00AM-</b> Gentle Yoga  <b>6:30PM -</b> Choir Rehearsal	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> <b>10:30AM -</b> Worship	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	This calendar is a living document subject to frequent changes.  Check the website ( <a href="http://firstpresbyterianglendale.org">firstpresbyterianglendale.org</a> ) for the most accurate calendar.  Please contact the church office with calendar updates.		



### *Calling all Coffee Fellowship hostesses and hosts ...*

The church is now supplying Half and Half individual creamer cups. They do not require refrigeration's, so you'll find them on the counter under the china cabinets for now.

No more fretting with bringing creamer or guessing if what is left in the refrigerator is too old to use!



## *A Message from our Minister,* continued

is met in a manger, by the lakeside, on the street, in a home, on a cross, and outside an empty tomb. Because of the incarnation, as someone has said, every Christmas tree, each ornament, every wreath, Christmas gift, and creche whispers, "God loves you."

Footnote:

Frederick Buechner, "A Face in the Sky: Christmas Day," *Day1.org*, December 24, 2019.

### *Meet Dave*



Dave, shown here with his Seeds of Hope External Volunteer of the Year Award, just turned 93 and he is a blessing!

Dave was to be recognized at our Seeds of Hope Awards dinner for his selfless service to Valley and so many people in need. However, at 93, Dave has earned the right to not want to go out late and he is NOT someone that wants public accolades.

We wanted all of our recipients to be surprised when announced and we know that Dave would be uncomfortable with the attention. So, I had the pleasure at dropping in on him at home and presenting him his award just a few days after his 93rd birthday.

Dave is such a joy, and when he visits you just can't help but feel good. Since he missed his applause at the dinner - we are sending it to him now. By the way, his son Jeff is a weekly volunteer at Valley!

from Valley Interfaith Community Resource Center  
CEO/Board Member,  
John R. Keuffer, III

### *Breaking News!*



Dave delivered 350, 18oz jars of grape jelly to Valley Interfaith Community Resource

for their Holiday Sharing program. Thanks to your generous donations, \$705.00 was raised to pay for the jelly. Thank you for your continued support of VICRC programs!



The manse chimney received some maintenance and repair to the brickwork.



Thank you to everyone who packed a Thanksgiving Box for our Glendale neighbors who need a helping hand.

The Glendale Police officers were grateful for the boxes, and made quick work of loading them into their truck.

Our thanks to the officers for their genuine care for the community they serve.



*Do you recognize these handsome fellas?*

These are the men who gathered at Gold Star for the Men's Lunch in October.

Going around the table from bottom left are Snowden A, Rich S, Jerry K, Dave C, Ken C, Tim V, and Tom S.

There is always room for more around the table. Won't you join them?





**First Presbyterian Church  
of Glendale**

155 East Fountain Avenue  
Glendale, OH 45246

513-771-6195  
glenpres@fuse.net  
firstpresbyterianglendale.org

the Reverend Jeffrey Lang

Worship begins at 10:30AM  
Sunday, September 10, 2023 through  
Sunday, June 2, 2024.

Worship begins at 10:00AM  
Sunday, June 9, 2024 through  
Sunday, September 8, 2024.

***Church Office Hours***

Monday, 9AM-3PM, Tuesday, 9AM-1PM  
Wednesday, 9AM-1PM, Thursday, 9AM-3PM  
The office is *closed* every Friday.

Shared with you in Christian love



***Sunday, December 10; 10:30AM***

You are invited to gather for worship  
and to enjoy the familiar scripture and  
music of the Advent Season.



***Sunday, December 24; 5:00pm***

Gather in the Sanctuary for a  
traditional, candlelight  
Christmas Eve worship service.