

## PASTOR'S CORNER

By the time you read this Advent season will be upon us. December is a busy, busy time of year. A really, really overwhelmingly busy time of year.

Presents to purchase for family and friends.

Decorations to get up.

Meals to prepare.

Celebrations and parties to attend.

Band and choral concerts, the *Messiah*, and other performances to enjoy.

Basketball games or wrestling meets to go to.

Did I mention it was a really busy time of the year!!!

Please take a moment and promise God and yourself that this year you will make time available to celebrate the birth of Jesus, our incarnate God.

The manger, the shepherds, the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes: each of these give us a scene to ponder and for which we give thanks.

Advent, also, is a time to reflect on Christ's promise to return and rule over a new heaven and a new earth.

December is a busy time.

Make every effort to make sure that worshipping God is on your to do list.

Maybe even at the very top!

Peace and Grace

through our Lord and Savior,  
Jesus Christ.

Merry Christmas!!

Pastor Ray Lantz

Please don't forget to pick up your copy of *Straw for the Manger*, a 2019 Advent Devotional creating a Matthew 25 Advent Season. The booklet is found on the back pew in the sanctuary.



WE WISH to share our sincere sympathy with Doris Gerber upon the passing of her sister.



**Head Start News:** We just finished thanksgiving and gave thanks for all the blessings in our lives. Not it is time to think about Christmas and how we can make Christmas a bit brighter for our Head Start Kids. As in the past, there will be an Angel tree with names for each child and a list of gifts they would like. Please pick up a name and sign your name next to the child's name so we can make sure all kids get a gift. (There will be a sheet on a nearby table on which to list your name.) Some of us may need to take two in order to make sure all children will receive a gift. If you can do this it would be great. Also we are asking for new or gently used books (unwrapped) to be brought to the church. They will be gift wrapped and distributed along with our angel tree gifts at their Christmas party at 9:30 a.m. on Friday, December 20th. All are welcome to attend in the fellowship hall.

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOUR ANGEL TREE GIFT AND BOOKS ARE AT THE CHURCH NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 15TH.

As you can imagine all the children are super excited and the staff appreciate all we do for them. This mission project has been a blessing to our church.

Miss Linda told me that the children are really enjoying Pastor Ray reading to them once a week. She stated that "they love it!"

Our monthly "Random Acts of Kindness" went to a family in Gibson City due to a recent job loss. The congregation gave \$145 and that was matched by our Session.

Session also decided to send \$100 to "Toys for Tots."

**Poinsettias** will once again be

available through the church at a price of \$8.99 each. Each will be wrapped in gold foil with a red bow. Please let Meladee know in the church office if you are interested in purchasing one. Thank you!



Session has approved a 3-month trial period of providing free **Transformation Services** to our Sunday services on the First and Third Sunday of each month. We have contacted the Illinois Central Bus Services to pick up at Villas of Hollybrook, School House Apartments and Gibson Garden. This service will start on Sunday, December 1st. This was one of the requests that came from our survey.

## PRESBYTIDINGS December 2019

Pastor Ray Lantz

Worship: 10:30 a.m. Cookies and Coffee: 11:30ish

This Newsletter is a publication of First Presbyterian Church of Gibson City IL.

Website: [www.firstpresbygc.org](http://www.firstpresbygc.org)

Article below is continued from the November Newsletter . . . The service of thanksgiving and praise included thanks for God's creation; for deliverance from sin; for the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus the Christ; and for the privilege of participating in the promised fullness of the kingdom.

The term Communion is derived from the practice of early Christians. Paul wrote to the church in Corinth: "The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a koinonia in the blood of Christ?" (1 Corinthians 10:16). The Greek word koinonia is translated "communion" in the King James Version and "sharing" in the New Revised Standard Version.

It is also translated "fellowship" or "partnership," referring to a common sharing or a sense of communion with Christ and with one another. Communion is understood as a common participation in a divine Christian life that a person lives in Christ, because it is initiated by Christ. Calvin contends that such a union is ultimately a mystery too great to explain.

Presbyterians believe that the Word of God should be read, proclaimed and enacted in the Lord's Supper as an integral part of worship. The relationship of Word and sacrament can be under-

stood in the context of the Emmaus Road narrative (Luke 24:13ff).

While there are various interpretations of this account, it has long been recognized that the "breaking of bread" is a reference to the Lord's Supper.

The Directory for Worship in the Presbyterian Book of Order encourages the "appropriateness" of frequent celebrations of the Lord's Supper. A few congregations have begun celebrations of the sacrament as often as each Lord's Day and on other occasions of special significance in the life of the Christian community. But frequency alone is not the basic issue. Some believe we need to restore the Biblical pattern of the Lord's Supper on each Lord's Day to provide a disciplined reminder of a divine act that will help centralize and "re-focus" the rhythm of our daily lives.

Our Directory for Worship reminds us of the wider meaning of Holy Communion (koinonia): "The church rises from the Table and is sent by the power of the Holy Spirit to participate in God's mission to the world." To limit our love, relationship and concerns to those who assemble with us at the Table is "fencing the table" so that it includes only the gathered

community. It blocks from our vision those who do not gather physically at "our" table, so that we do not see the people of God everywhere.

The One who invites us to the Table reminds us that we are to live as the divine host lived. We are empowered to remember to seek reconciliation with Christ, an act that compels reconciliation also with one another.

Accepting the invitation to come to the Lord's Feast demands that we actively seek reconciliation in every instance of conflict or division between ourselves and our neighbors.

To say we "trust in God . . ." who feeds us . . ." means we have faith in the Word of God — faith in the Word who became flesh, lived among us, and provided the model for our actions.

We are invited to the Table to be nurtured for Christlike living. We are called to commit ourselves anew to love and serve God and one another.


Melva Wilson Costen is Helmar Emil Nielsen Professor of Worship and Music at the Interdenominational Theological Center, Atlanta, Ga.

This article originally appeared in the May 1995 issue of the Presbyterian Survey (now Presbyterians Today).





# December 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1  <b>Matthew 24:36-44</b>	2  7 Messiah Practice	3	4 9:45 Pastor Ray reading to HS students	5 Chamber Luncheon	6	7 Recycle  9 am Bible reading at Holly Brook
8 10:30 a.m. Worship  3 Messiah at Bible Church  <b>Matthew 3:1-12</b>	9	10	11 9:45 Pastor Ray reading to HS students	12  5:30 Deacons Welcome new members	13	14  9 am Bible reading at Holly Brook
15 10:30 a.m. Worship <i>Please return books and gifts for Head Start Children to church.</i> <b>Matthew 11:2-11</b>	16	17	18 9:45 Pastor Ray reading to HS students	19  5:30 Session	20 9:30 Head Start Christmas Party and last day of school before Christmas vacation	21 Recycle  9 am Bible reading at Holly Brook
22 10:30 a.m. Worship  <b>Matthew 1:18-25</b>	23	24  <i>Christmas Eve Service 5 p.m.</i>	25 Church office closed  <i>Merry Christmas!</i>	26	27	28 9 am Bible reading at Holly Brook
29 10:30 a.m. Worship  <b>Matthew 2:13-23</b>	30  <i>Meladee will be taking a vacation day</i>	31  <i>Meladee will be taking a vacation day</i>				

Pastor Ray will be preaching on the scripture listed in bold on each Sunday.

## NEWS FROM OUR CHURCH...



### Church Fall Soup Supper and 148th Birthday Celebration

A great time was had by all church members working as a TEAM to put on an awesome Fall Soup Supper and 148th Church Birthday Celebration. Everyone wore their yellow shirts (aka: the Yellow Brigade) and six yummy soups were served along with various relish trays, homemade applesauce and fresh bread. Such a talented group of members we have!! Nine door prizes were awarded along with complimentary free strawberries and apples for anyone who wanted them. There was plenty of scrumptious cake for dessert. The evening ended with all members sitting down and enjoying dinner together before cleaning up. What a great

and loving Presbyterian Family we have here in Gibson City!



### Those winning prizes at our Soup Supper Drawing:

- Subway Gift Card:
  - Sharon Pearson
  - Karen Kummerow
  - Ray Lantz Senior
  - Linda Armstrong
  - Georgiana Johnson
- Angel: Betty Cole-Pruitt
- Home Sign: Sandra Shambrook
- Craftsman Tool Holder: Ron Clow Senior
- 2 in 1 Screwdriver: Pattie Schoolcraft

**Mary Clow's 2nd term as a Board Member for the Gibson Area Food Pantry is up at the end of 2019.** If you are interested in taking Mary's

place for a two-year term, please let Mary know as soon as possible. Meetings are held every other month on Tuesdays (to be announced) at 7:00 p.m.

**Church Entry Door**—A new video and audio door bell system has been installed at the East door. You will need to ring the bell on the wall to the right for audio and video assistance to gain entry.



Some of the food pantry workers from First Presbyterian Church on Saturday, October 26. Mary Clow, Jean Williams, Mary Jane Roth, and Trudy Lantz. Thank you!

<b>BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES</b>		<b>K. P. Duty</b>	<b>Communion Set-Up</b>
<b>December</b>	<b>January</b>	<b>Dec: Jeanette Hensley</b>	<b>Dec: Barb Kirkpatrick</b>
03: Jerry Wissmiller	01: John & Edith Kaufman (69th)	<b>Jan: Barb Kirkpatrick</b>	<b>Jan: Barb Kirkpatrick</b>
07: Charlie Schultz	02: David Stoltz	<b>Second Sunday Offering</b>	<b>Flowers</b>
07: Tim Shull	06: Rick & Aizza Kerchenfaut ((18th)	<b>Dec: Christmas Joy Offering—Carla Ashmore</b>	<b>Dec: Barb Kirkpatrick</b>
13: Ben Retherford	13: Danny & Vonna Heustis (21st)	<b>Jan: McCormick Tutoring—Sarah Meyer</b>	<b>Jan: Barb Kirkpatrick</b>
24: Ken Kyle	15: Ramie Lantz	<b>Ushers</b>	
26: Claire Retherford	23: Edith Kaufman	<b>Dec: Ron and Mary Clow</b>	
27: Elinor Nelson		<b>Jan: Rick &amp; Aizza Kerchenfaut</b>	
		<b>Communion Servers</b>	
		<b>Dec ember 24: Ron and Mary Clow</b>	
		<b>Jan: TBA</b>	

