

PASTOR'S CORNER

On Sunday, November 21st, Tim Swanson, Mary Clow, Jean Williams and Sharla Williams were installed as Elders and Danny Heustis was installed as a Deacon.



On Sunday, December 5th, Wesley James and Theodore Joseph Lantz will be baptized at First Presbyterian Church during the 10:30 service. They are the twin sons of Ramie and Jennifer Lantz, grandsons of Pastor Ray and Trudy Lantz and great grandsons of Ted Swanson.



PRESBYTIDINGS

December 2021

Pastor Ray Lantz



Worship: 10:30 a.m.
This Newsletter is a publication of First Presbyterian Church of Gibson City IL.
Website: www.firstpresbygibson.org
Meladee Ferguson: Administrative Assistant
Mary Clow: Ministry Coordinator



EXPERIENCE FAITH, FUN- AND A DEEPER MEANING OF CHRIST'S BIRTH by Traci Smith/Presbyterian Today . . . I will never understand why poinsettias are 50% off in the store on December 26. Why have we decided that their red and green glory is only half as valuable on that day as the day before? I've long had a soft spot for these poinsettias, throwing them in the cart after Christmas Day and rescuing them from church dumpsters. I keep them around as long as I can. The same is true of the Christmas lights, the tree and all the decorations. Christmas isn't over on December 26th.

In the Christian liturgical calendar, Christmas is celebrated from December 25th until January 6th, the day of Epiphany. The days in between are what we call the 12 days of Christmas. For many Presbyterians, though, the only connection we have to the 12 days of Christmas is the song about all of the things "my true love gave to me," including the drummers drumming, the pipers piping, the golden rings and, of course, the partridge in a pair pear tree. "The Twelve Days of Christmas"

song has a long and complicated history, with some historians citing that each "gift" represents some aspect of the Christian faith. Many, though, think the song was designed as a sort of game for singers to test memory and recall. It's a fun song, to be sure, but what if the 12 days of Christmas meant much more than a song? What if we could allow these days of Christmas to be holy time to celebrate after the rest of society has decided to pack it up, discount it and move on to something else?

As a pastor and a parent, I've come to relish the 12 days of Christmas. Teaching my children that there are 12 days of Christmas allows me precious time to create and build family traditions after the hustle and bustle of Christmas Day. The busiest season of the church year is over, and now we have time and space to continue to celebrate Christ's birth as a family-not late, but right on time. It's during the 12 days of Christmas that we drive around and look at the lights, enjoy the nativity scene and sit around in our pajamas drinking hot chocolate.

If you've never had a "12 days of Christmas" practice before, I encourage you to give it a try this year. Consider Christmas Day to be the beginning of your celebration. Spend time not cleaning up and moving on, but lingering for a while in the holiness of Christ's birth.

One of the things we do as a family is to hold back some of the gifts and give them to each other on the days

between December 25th and January 6th. Nobody has been given a turtle-dove or a French hen yet, but my children have been delighted to unwrap boxes of chocolate and Matchbox cars on those days. I daresay they've appreciated them more than they might have if they has been thrown under the tree with all the rest on Christmas morning.

Little trinkets sprinkled throughout the 12 days of Christmas are reminders that each gift we give is precious. Most precious, of course, are the nonmaterial gifts we share during these days-time to enjoy God's blessing of family and friendship, and the Advent gifts of hope, peace, joy and love. Making Christmas a season will give yourself and your family the gift of time and reflection. You might even find a poinsettia or two, discarded by others, to bring Christmas joy into your home.

Traci Smith is PC (USA) pastor and author of three books on faith and family. Her latest book is "Faithful Families for Advent and Christmas: 100 Ways to Make the Season Sacred."



December 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4 Recycle 9 Bible Study At HB
5 10:30 a.m. Worship Luke 3:1-6	6	7	8	9	10	11 9 a.m. Bible Study at Holly Brook
12 10:30 a.m. Worship Luke 3:7-18	13	14	15	16	17 5:30 Session	18 Recycle 9 a.m. Bible Study at Holy Brook
19 10:30 a.m. Worship Luke 1:39-55	20 <i>Meladee is taking a vacation day</i>	21	22	23	24 Church office will be closed 4 p.m. Christmas Eve Service—Communion	25 MERRY CHRISTMAS!
26 10:30 a.m. Worship	27	28	29	30	31 Church office will be closed	1 HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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

NEWS FROM OUR CHURCH . . .

Please note: The previous week's sermon will broadcast at 7:45 a.m. every Sunday morning on WGCY.

Please note: Online Live Sunday Services will be available on our Facebook Page noted below:

First Presbyterian Church of Gibson City

https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=142499619134911&ref=br_rs

Meladee's working hours: Meladee will be in the church office from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

New Email Addresses: As part of the hardware and software upgrade for our church's technology, there are email addresses as noted below:

Pastor Ray:
Ray@firstpresbygibson.org
Meladee
Office@firstpresbygibson.org

The church office will be closed on Monday, December 20th, as Meladee is taking a vacation day. Thank you!

The church office will be closed on Friday, December 24th, in observance of Christmas.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE will be held at 4:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 25th: HAPPY BIRTHDAY JESUS AND MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL!!!!

The church office will be closed on Friday, December 31st, in observance of the new year!

Saturday, January 1, 2022: HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL. MAY YOUR NEW YEAR BE BLESSED BY GOD ABOVE!

Sunday, February 6th: Annual Congregational Meeting



BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES		K. P. Duty	
December		Communion Set-Up	
03: Jerry Wissmiller		Dec: Jeanette Hensley	Meladee Ferguson
07: Charlie Schultz		Jan: Carla Ashmore	
24: Ken Kyle		Second Sunday Offering	
27: Elinor Nelson		Dec 12: Christmas Joy Offering	
		Jan 9: McCormick Tutoring	
January		Ushers	
02: David Stolz		Dec: Ron and Mary Clow	
06: Rick and Aizza Kerchenfaut		Jan: Rick and Aizza Kerchenfaut	
13: Danny and Vonna Heustis		Communion Server	
15: Ramie Lantz		Dec 24: Ron and Mary Clow	
23: Edith Kaufman		Jan 9: Rick Kerchenfaut and Jean Williams	



THANK YOU!

Session Members: Thank you for your continued support from the flooding in August. Thank you so very much for your kindness and generosity. It means so much and is greatly appreciated. Thank you again, Sharla Williams

First Presbyterian Church: You were very generous with your check to help with my flood damage. I had insurance that paid for my damage so thanks to you I am able to pass your check on to someone here in Gibson City that needs the money much more than I. Thank you, Presbyterian Church, Ted Swanson

To All Members, Thank you for including us in the wonderful celebration of the church's 150th anniversary. The food and fellowship were much appreciated, as were the generous and useful gifts to mark the occasion. We also appreciate the scarecrow contest winnings, which we will celebrate and share with others. Sincerely, Phil and Jean Noellsch

To All Session Members: Thank you so very much for the monetary support for me because of the flood damage on August 12th. I had insurance, but it did not pay for all the replacement items and repair I needed and your gift has lifted a huge weight from my shoulders. This church is amazing, doing just what Jesus asks of each of us: Share what you can with whom you can. I love being a part of your church family for so many reasons. Thank you again for all you do for so many, me included! Meladee Ferguson

Mary, WOW! I don't know what to say other than thank you. This will be incredibly helpful with the holidays coming up. I am very grateful for your church's compassion. Bless you and the members of the First Presbyterian Church. Regina Luparell, Mother of Ryder Luparell

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ: Thank you so much for the kind words and monetary gift. It is very much appreciated. I will enjoy the glasses and going through the anniversary book was awesome. Thanks again, God Bless, Sharon Heavilin

Judy Jo Hunt Arbour has been experiencing some complications from her Diabetes. If you would like to send her a card here is her address: 1203 West Station Street, Kankakee, IL 60901



Addison Kerchenfaut with her GCMS Volleyball team.

GOD IS GOOD, ALL THE TIME! ALL THE TIME, GOD IS GOOD!



Ryder Luparell



Charlie Kerchenfaut, a seventh grader at GCMS, made the high honor roll for the first semester of the 2021-2022 school year. Congrats



Anneliese Kerchenfaut made National Honor Society! Congrats!!!



Congratulations to Sharon Heavilin on her retirement from the Moyer District Library after 28 years on the job!



On a cold and windy day, State Trooper Nick Retherford was more than happy to change a motorist's tire.



Ron, Mary and Greg Clow decorated the sanctuary and the fellowship hall for Christmas.



LONG SLEEVE POLO SHIRTS – Mary Clow will be ordering all members long sleeve blue polo shirts with our logo on them. Please let her know if you had any changes in the size that was ordered for you when the short sleeve yellow shirts were ordered.



Ted Swanson, who has worked as an usher for 49 years hands a butterscotch candy to a UI police officer during the Illinois men's basketball team's exhibition game against Indiana of Pennsylvania at State Farm Center. "To be around me, you have to be sweet," he said with a smile.

Showing fellow ushers and other arena personnel the ropes is especially important this year. Last year, of course, games were played in front of empty arenas. Those ushers that were around before the one-year hiatus had to shake off some rust and plenty of them had never worked the job before at all. Nearly a half century ago, Swanson was one of those young ushers.

In 1972, Swanson simply wanted to see his friend, sharp-shooting Denny Graff, from his hometown of Gibson City, play in the state tournament.

"I was young and couldn't afford to buy a ticket," he said, "so I had to find a way to get in to watch him play. And I volunteered one weekend, got in and watched the high school basketball, and the guy over me was getting paid, and I thought, I wonder how you get a job like that? I've been on the payroll ever since."

Aside from a break each year when he heads for Florida to stay with his sister, Swanson still works consistently, and the diehard Illini fan, who records every game to watch uninterrupted, did not take last year's hiatus kindly. "When I had to watch it on TV. It was for the birds," he said.

MISSION COMMITTEE SUGGESTIONS 11-18-21

Starting Balance approved 10-21-21.....	\$133,515.00
Toys for Tots.....	\$ 500.00
American Legion.....	\$ 500.00
VFW.....	\$ 500.00
GAH Auxiliary for a Holiday tree to be lighted.....	\$ 1,000.00
Kemmerer Village- tree planted forever commemorating our church.	\$ 1,000.00
GC Chamber of Commerce for Christmas Parade.....	\$ 500.00
Presbyterian Historical Society.....	\$ 100.00
Head Start 3 teachers @\$200 each.....	\$ 600.00
Head Start students presents and books.....	\$ 400.00
Retirement Gift for Sharon Heavilin after 28 years.....	\$ 280.00
Holiday Gibson Bucks \$50 each Meladee, Phil, Beverly, and Sharla...	\$ 200.00
Random Acts - Christmas Gifts four individuals.....	\$ 200.00
Random Acts of Kindness Ramie Lantz.....	\$ 1,000.00
Random Acts of Kindness/Scholarship Greg Clow.....	\$ 500.00
Shepherd's Closet.....	\$ 1,000.00
Telecare.....	\$ 1,000.00
Christmas Trees /Decorations for Flood Victim Families.....	\$ 1,705.00
Gibson Area Food Pantry.....(Paper Products).....	\$ 500.00
	\$ 11,485.00
Subtotal as of November 18, 2021.....	\$145,000.00

MISSION COMMITTEE SUGGESTIONS – Flood Victims 11-18-21

Meladee Ferguson.....	\$1,000.00
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**2021 Synopsis of those Assisted
By Mission Dollars**

Organizations and Non-Profits	36
Youth Sports Groups	5
Youth Clubs	6
Scholarships	8
Businesses in Gibson City	29
Individual School Employees	194
Including GCMS/Central Bus/Head Start	
Families hurt by tragedy	3
Individuals or Families	61
(Garden/Scarecrow/Random Acts	
Individuals/Christmas Trees)	
Youth Direct – Head Start	16
Church Member Flood Victims	9
Large Donations	3
McCormick/GAHRF/City of GC	

Total **370**



**MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM
YOUR STAFF AT THE FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**





KNOW YOUR MEMBERS

RON CLOW

Ron Clow was born in Normal, Illinois in April of 1955. His parents are Ron and Carolyn Clow. They moved to Gibson City in 1959 and Ron's sister Sherri was born in 1960. Ron went to Gibson City High School and wrestled all four years graduating in 1973. Ron participated in the Diversified Occupation Program while in high school and worked in the Parts Department at Shaner Implement. In 1977 he moved to Salina, Kansas to organize a parts department for a General Motors truck dealer. In 1978, he went to work for American Parts System as a Store Manager and in 1980 became their Filter Sales Rep in St. Louis. In 1983, Ron was promoted to the General Manager of the Kansas City Store Group. In 1985, he decided to return to Gibson City

and opened his own store called Clow Auto Supply which he owned and ran for over 22 years closing in 2008 when he became the full time rural mail carrier in Melvin and Roberts. Ron decided to retire from the US Postal Service in December of 2017 to be able to travel. In 2018, Ron opened an on-line EBay Auto Parts store after buying out the inventory of a store in California and a store in Bloomington. Ron's son Greg was born in 1989 and lives in Chicago and is going to school to become a teacher. Ron met his wife Mary in 2007 via an on-line dating site and they were married in 2013. Ron was confirmed in the First Presbyterian Church in 1968 serving as a Deacon, Trustee and Elder off and on through the years. One of his most passionate projects as a Trustee was to have the window coverings on the stained glass windows redone. He first started coming to church with Tim Shull. Ron was a Boy Scout in his youth and served as an adult Troop Leader for 11 years for the same troop. In 2007, Ron

was chosen by the boys of the Prairie Land Council serving 5 counties to receive the Illini Order of the Arrow Ken Fredrick Top Leader Award for distinguished service. He earned the Order of the Arrow Vigil Honor in 2008. Ron bought a 1968 Camaro RS-SS when he was 20 and raced it off and on for several years. Ron still owns the car today and Mary jokes that when she holds a garage sale, there are more guys that stop wanting to know if he is going to sell it than people wanting to check out items she put out for the garage sale. Ron and Mary have camped in 15 states and heading out West is next on the top of their bucket list. They spend the month of January in a condo in South Padre Island, Texas.



KNOW YOUR MEMBERS

MARY CLOW

Mary Clow was born in Kankakee ten minutes before her twin sister Nancy in June of 1955. Mary's parents were Joseph and Evelyn DeLuca. Mary's twin sister Nancy and husband Randy live in Appleton, Wisconsin. Mary's older brother Mike and wife Donna live in Charleston. Mary's oldest sister Pam passed away from Hodgkin's disease when Mary was 13. Mary graduated from Eastridge High School in Kankakee in 1973 and from Kankakee Community College in 1975. Mary was a National Honor Society graduate and was on Student Council in high school and was Student Vice President and Zonta Club President at KCC. Mary was hired as an accountant in 1975 for Ra-Co Security Services (a

private detective and security company) and became the Vice President of Operations in 1980. The company sold out to Wells Fargo Security in 1990 at which time she was promoted to Business Unit Vice President. Mary found this job interesting and sometimes participated in undercover investigations. After 20 years in the Security field, Mary then went to work for the Kankakee School District in 1996 as their Assistant Director of Business. She wore several hats as their Purchasing Agent, Safety Director and Transportation Director. Mary retired in 2016 after 20 years in the Education field. She then worked for one year for Country Financial while waiting for Ron to retire. Mary has two stepsons from her previous marriage, Dr. Nicholas Tinsley and wife Kaitlynn of Champaign and Jarod Tinsley and wife Martha of Danville and step granddaughter Aubri Tinsley. And of course Mary has come to love Greg as a son as well. Mary met Ron on-line in 2007 already familiar with the town of Gibson City as

both her stepsons played football for the Salt Fork Storm and she had traveled to the town many times to watch their games parking in front of the house she now calls home with Ron. Ron and Mary were married in 2013. Mary has come to love Gibson City and the members of the First Presbyterian Church. She represents the Church on the Food Pantry Board and belongs to the Gibson Girls home extension unit and Loy Building Committee. She is an elder and the current Clerk of Session and was recently approved by Session to be the Ministry Coordinator. Serving as the Mission Director by far has been the most rewarding. Mary also loves traveling and camping with Ron and they have made some great memories. Spending the month of January in South Padre Island the last five years has been especially relaxing and a great way to avoid the cold Illinois winters.



