

PASTOR'S CORNER

In ancient Roman religion and myth, **Janus** is the god of beginnings, gates, transitions, time, duality, doorways,[2] passages, frames, and endings. He is usually depicted as having two faces. The month of January is named for Janus. January is a time to look backward to last year and forward to the coming year. These are things I am looking forward to this year.

January: Epiphany is celebrated January 6. Dannon will celebrate his 43rd birthday. Raymond T., will celebrate his 44th birthday.

February: Lent begins February 22nd. Ruth, will celebrate her 41st birthday.

March: Ramie and Jennifer will celebrate their 2nd wedding anniversary.

April: Easter is Sunday, April 9th. Mom will celebrate her 2nd heavenly birthday.

May: Ascension Day is May 18th. Pentecost is Sunday, May 28th. Trudy and I celebrate birthdays. Wesley and Theodore celebrate their 2nd birthdays on May 24th.

June: Trinity Sunday is June 4th. Raymond E. Jr., celebrates his 92nd birthday. Jo Swanson will celebrate her 12th heavenly birthday.

July: The United States will celebrate 247th birthday on July 4th.

August: Trudy and I celebrate our 47th wedding anniversary.

September: Ruth and Dannon celebrate their 11th wedding anniversary.

Ted Swanson celebrates his 88th birthday.

October: First Presby's 152nd birthday is October 28th.

November: Christ the King Sunday is November 26th. Thanksgiving Dinner will be November 23rd.

December: Advent begins Sunday, December 3rd.



Christmas Day is December 25th. Jennifer celebrates her ?? birthday.

My prayer for each of you-all is that the year is filled with church and family.

Happy 2023!!

Thank you for allowing me to be your pastor.

Pastor Ray Lantz

Mark your calendars for the Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, February 5th, 2023!

PRESBYTIDINGS

January 2023
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

HAPPY NEW YEAR -
Let us thank God for all the blessings he gave us in 2022 and ask him to bless us with new dreams, new goals and new journeys in 2023.

Here are some suggestions on Building a heart-healthy Congregation as provided in the Presbyterian Today Magazine.

“By taking care of your personal health, you will have more energy to accomplish the purposes God has for you.”

Physically

- Exercise at least 30 minutes a day, three or four days a week.
- Drink water. Most

dietitians recommend at least eight 6-ounce glasses of water a day, or preferably drinking half your body weight in ounces of water per day.

- Limit or eliminate fried foods.
- Limit eating out and/or make healthier choices when away from home (grilled options, veggies, fruits, salads).
- Reduce sodium intake.
- Cook your food so you can control ingredients and sodium content.
- Eat on a saucer to control portion sizes (8.5 inches or smaller). Limit sugar as it signals your body to store fat.



Spiritually

- Pray daily.
- Practice silence with God.
- Walk in nature in silence as you listen to and observe Creation.
- Make time for a daily devotion that feeds your soul.
- Journal daily or regularly.
- Practice meditation/deep breathing exercises to reduce stress and center the mind.
- At the end of the day, do a daily examen (a technique of prayerful reflection on the events of the day in order to detect God's presence). Where did you see and experience God in your day? What did you accomplish? Get enough sleep (eight hours).

January 2023

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---|
| 1 <i>10:30 a.m. Worship</i> Matthew 2:13-2 | 2 Church office will be closed. | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 RECYCLE <i>9 a.m. Bible Study at Holly Brook</i> |
| 8 <i>10:30 a.m. Worship</i> Matthew 3:13-17 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 <i>9 a.m. Bible Study at Holly Brook</i> |
| 15 <i>10:30 a.m. Worship</i> John 1:29-42 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 <i>9 a.m. Bible Study at Holly Brook</i> RECYCLE |
| 22 <i>10:30 a.m. Worship</i> Matthew 4:12-23 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 <i>9 a.m. Bible Study at Holly Brook</i> |
| 29 <i>10:30 a.m. Worship</i> Matthew 5:1- | 30 | 31 | | | | |

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 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.

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

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

THE NEW FLOWER CHART IS up on the bulletin board outside of the secretary’s office.

The Dead Period: In the Roman calendar only 10 months had formal names. Winter (January and February) was simply known as the “dead period”. This is because the government and military weren’t active in the coldest, darkest months. January, what we now consider the first month of the year, was actually the final month added to the 12-month calendar.

The dark red jewel of January: The birthstone for January is the garnet. This rare gem comes in a variety of different colors. However, the most popular and lucrative garnets are a deep shade of red. The word garnet is derived from the Middle English word, ‘gernet,’ which means dark red. This also shares its origin with the seed-filled fruit the pomegranate. Who knew!?

A discovery of epic (and cursed) proportions: On January 3rd 1924, over a year after his initial discovery, Howard Carter opened the doors to the last shrine, revealing the stone sarcophagus of the Pharaoh Tutankhamun. The shrine wall was then demolished and the tomb of King Tut was pillaged of its valuables. A curse is said to have come down on several people associated with the tomb, killing many. Scary, right? This is such an interesting fact about January!

Famous and historic January birthdays: According to numerology, people born in January are ruled by the number 1 for obvious reasons. January born people tend to be independent, high-spirited, analytical, and born leaders. Famous January birthdays include Muhammad Ali, Jeff Bezos, Elvis Presley and Michelle Obama, Ellen Degeneres and Oprah Winfrey. There are some serious high-earners on this list! That means if you have a child born in January, you could have a potential over-achiever on your hands there.



| BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES | | K. P. Duty <i>Dec: Jeanette Hensley Jan: Rick & Aizza K.</i> | What does <i>January</i> mean? <i>January</i> , as we know, is the first month of the year and contains 31 days. The term originated before the year 1000 from Middle English, ultimately deriving from the Latin noun use of <i>Jānuārius</i> , equivalent to <i>Jānus</i> . |
|---|--|--|---|
| January 02: David Stolz 06: Rick and Aizza Kerchenfaut 13: Danny & Vonna Heustis 15: Ramie Lantz 23: Edith Kaufman | February 03: Addison Kerchenfaut 11: Karen Mott 15: Charlie & Cheryl Schultz 16: Jean Williams 19: Annilease Kerchenfaut 23: Ruthie Lantz | <i>Second Sunday Offering</i> Dec 11: Christmas Joy Offering <i>Jan 8: McCormick Tutoring</i> <i>Ushers</i> Dec: Ron and Mary Clow <i>Jan: Rick & Aizza K.</i> <i>Communion Servers</i> Dec 24: Ron and Mary Clow <i>Jan 8: Jean Williams and Sharla Williams</i> | |

THANK YOUS AND MORE

Dear Friends at First Presbyterian Church: Thank you so much for your generous gift! Your support means we can continue to make needed improvements to the stores. This coming year we will be upgrading the façade of Closet, Too!! and the bathroom. We are truly grateful for your support. John and Annie Barnett, Shepherd's Closet/Closet, Too!!

Thank you just doesn't describe how "Blessed" Mom was by this church for so many years. Thank you, Ray, for a lovely service. Thank you for the wonderful lunch. Thank you for the plant at mom's service. Mom's light will continue to shine bright in each one of you at this very special place and church family! Thank you again!!! The family of Georgie Johnson, Sharon Pearson and Mary Davis

"A Simple Act of Kindness has a beauty all its own." Thank you for the cards and plant you sent my mom. She's struggling to adjust to her new environment, however, her broken hip has healed well. Thanks, too, for your continued prayers. Teresa Alexander and Jean Jardine

May Christ's birth among us give you light and hope throughout the new year. Dear Friends at First Presbyterian: Thank you so much for sharing some of the proceeds of your recent sale. Your gift of \$5,000 has been designated to the Blackhawk Pastor's Emergency Fund, where it will give light and hope to those in the midst of financial hardship. Many Blessings! Loreen, Eric and your friends at Blackhawk

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! May your heart be light as a snowflake, your troubles melt away like snow, and a drift of blessings surround you. Ford County Clerk and Recorder's Office: Amy, Denise, Tammy & Vicki

Dear Friends, Thank you for your generous contribution of \$500, which we appreciate more than ever in these challenging times. Your compassionate support is helping impoverished communities develop clean, reliable water sources. Working with farmers to continue to put food on their tables, even in the face of uncertainty. And providing food, water, shelter and other necessities to families struggling to rebuild their lives and livelihoods in times of crisis. I have seen the resilience and resolve of the people and communities we assist. And I have been deeply moved by the generosity of people like you, who give hope and opportunity to people in need, here in the U.S. and around the world. May God bless you for your kindness. Rick Santos, President and CEO, Church World Service

Thank you for your donation and continued support for the Hanley School Fund. It is very much appreciated. Merry Christmas! Bonnie Clark, Hanley School Fund.

Thank you for your generous donation to the American Legion Post 56B Christmas Baskets. Your donation helped your neighbors in need and once again reminded us of the caring community we live in. Thank you so much! The Christmas Basket Committee, American Legion Post 56B

Dear Session Members: Thank you so much for the Gibson Bucks for Christmas. The gift and the thought are greatly appreciated. With Christian love to you all, Meladee Ferguson

Thank you to my Presbyterian Church Family for their very generous gift. I have enjoyed being your Treasurer and being included in your activities and thoughtfulness. I wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Phil Noellsch



GIBSON AREA FOOD PANTRY NEWS: Mary Clow was selected to represent our church again on the Gibson Area Food Pantry Executive Board for 2023. Thank you, Mary. Mary is also happy to report that the Food Pantry reached a milestone of serving 500,000 meals at their December 10th distribution. The first distribution was in February 2015. It is estimated that one box of food handed out equals eight meals. Mary also noted that as of November 1st, the total amount of financial donations received since the start of the Food Pantry is \$434,000.00. That equates to about 86 cents per meal. We are fortunate to have such a giving community to help those in need! Hams will be given out for Christmas.

First Presbyterian Church Family: Thank you for the care and support shown to me and my family with the passing of my mom, Jean Jardine. The flowers were beautiful, Pastor Ray's service was personal and nice with good memories, and the luncheon was much appreciated. Special thanks to Meladee for her guidance and suggestions! Teresa Alexander and family.

Thank you very much for remembering me at Christmas. It is a pleasure playing for your services. Beverly Nagle

We are sad to announce the passing of Jean Jardine on Friday, December 2, 2022.



Mildred "Jean" Jardine, 89, of Bloomington (formerly of Gibson City) peacefully passed away on Friday, December 2, 2022 at 6:45 p.m. at Heritage Manor in Normal. Burial will be held at a later date. Memorial contributions can be made to the Alzheimer's Association or to the First Presbyterian Church.

Jean was born September 18, 1933, in Fairbury, the daughter of Halice and Lota (Rafferty) Mardis. She married Richard "Dick" Jardine on August 16, 1953 in Gibson City. Dick passed away August 22, 2010. She is survived by her daughter, Teresa (Randy Smith) Alexander of Bloomington. Two grandchildren Bradley (Ann) Alexander of Chicago and Blake (Leah) Alexander of Bloomington. Four great-grandchildren: Brennen Denault, Sophia, Maddox, and Bruce Alexander. Also surviving is a brother Ron (Lois) Mardis of Heyworth and a sister-in-law, Mary Sue Mardis of Bloomington. She was preceded in death by her husband, parents, two sisters Beulah Mardis and Opal (Dale) Zehr, and one brother Wayne Mardis. Jean graduated from Arrowsmith Community High School in 1952. She worked at Van's Insurance Agency for nearly 38 years retiring in 1996. She was a 50+ year

member of the First Presbyterian Church of Gibson City where she previously served as a deacon. She was a member of the Elliot Amvets Auxiliary #0276, the Gibson City VFW Auxiliary #6289, and was a charter member of the Gibson City Women of the Moose Chapter #88. Jean and her husband were heavily involved at the Moose helping plan and serve in many of the activities. She was an avid bowler, enjoyed supporting GCMS sports-especially when her grandsons were participating, and was well known for her homemade pies. Jean will be deeply missed by all who knew and loved her.

The congregation of the First Presbyterian Church would like to thank all of the readers and candle lighters for the Advent season:

November 27: Jean Williams and Sharla Williams

December 4: Danny and Vonna Heustis

December 11: Ron and Mary Clow

December 18: Tim and Janice Swanson

December 24: Charlie and Cherly Schultz



Janice and Tim Swanson read and light the Advent candles on Sunday, December 18th.

Dear Pastor Ray: First of all, thank you for your fine message at Mom's graveside service. She would have been happy knowing that her wishes were fulfilled appropriately. We also appreciated receiving the December issue of

the Presbytids and future ones as well. It helps us keep connected and to see the many good things you are doing in His Kingdom. Please keep up the efforts and results. As per our conservation in early November, enclosed is a check for \$10,000 per their Last Will and Testament to be used as you all see fit. Hank Brickman, Jr.

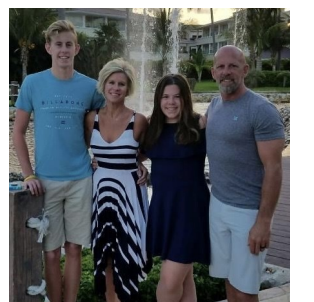


Jodi VanSwol, daughter of Meladee Ferguson, pictured above, is the winner of our Word Search Puzzle for the month of December. There were ten (10) entries this month (Janice Swanson, Jean Williams, Phil Noellsch, Val Hunt, Jodi VanSwol, Denise Birky, Sherry Tomlinson, Sharon Collings, Barb Williams and Danny Heustis). Anyone receiving this newsletter is eligible to win a \$20 gift card to County Market. Please see the **BLUE** colored card sheet in the center of this newsletter to play. Turn it in to the church office by January 25th! Not at the church: Mail it or place in the black box outside the east church door.

Be certain to read the Bible verses attached to the puzzle each month.

I FOUND EVERY WORD LISTED IN THE JANUARY PUZZLE.

Meladee



Jean Williams and her beautiful family gathered together to make cookies on December 11th - a tradition started by their Grandma King. Please see a picture later in the newsletter of all their goodies!



THANK YOU - Mary Clow, Danny & Vonna Heustis and Jean Williams for decorating the Church for Christmas.



Pastor Ray Lantz and Elder Jean Williams both did a reading at the Gibson Area Music Foundation "Celebrate the Season" Program held on December 4th at Gibson City Bible Church. They were one of ten clergy and community members who did readings to tell the story of Christ's birth.



Mary Clow discovered these six blocks upstairs in the old Sunday School room. They have these letters in different colors on each side of the cubes. Mary placed them in the sanctuary reminding us "the Reason for the Season" is Jesus Christ. If you know the history of these blocks like who made them and why they were made please let us know. Some members remember them from the past but not the specifics about them.

PICTURES WANTED: Mary and Meladee would love to have a Family Christmas Celebration page in the newsletter that will go out at the end of January showing pictures of your family as you celebrate the Holiday. If you can email us or bring in a Christmas family picture after the holidays. Thanks so much!

The Interact Group (pictured below) including Addison Kerchenfaut (4th from left) recently worked at the Gibson Area Food Pantry packing boxes and taking food out to the patrons on a very cold Saturday.



Some
Holiday
Fun!



Here is a picture of all the goodies Jean Williams and her family made for Christmas. If you look very closely it appears there has been a little mouse in some of the pans. Very understandable with looks of these goodies.



Elder Ron Clow presents a \$1000 check for the Toys for Tots drive to Anthony Price, the new manager at Napa Auto Parts.

Picture to the right: The Gibson City Wednesday afternoon bridge club recently enjoyed their annual Christmas party exchange at Biaggi's in Bloomington. Members from our church include Val Hunt, Trudy Lantz and Jean Williams.

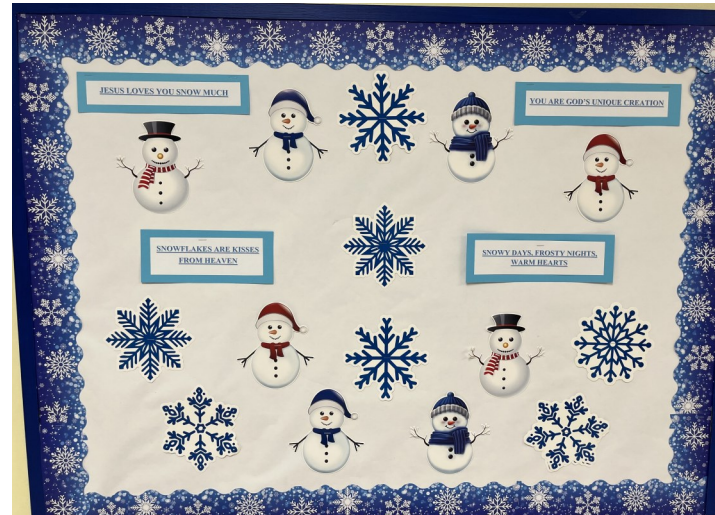
Charlie Schultz shown with Pastor Lantz and Clerk of Session Mary Clow was installed as an Elder at the December 11th church service.



Pastor Ray Lantz, Danny and Vonna Heustis and Clerk of Session, Mary Clow are shown during the installation of Danny and Vonna as Elders during the church service on December 4th.



Snowflakes and Snowmen decorate the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall created by Mary Clow. As noted: Snowflakes and Kisses are from Heaven and Jesus loves us SNOW much.



CONGRATULATIONS, PASTOR LANTZ! Pastor Lantz was nominated by the Blackhawk Presbytery Nominating Committee for a three-year appointment to a leadership position in the Presbytery Assembly. In September, he was then elected at the Presbytery Assembly meeting held at Stronghold and Commissioned to the position at the November Assembly meeting in Rockford. Pastor Lantz will begin attending Presbytery council meetings in December mainly by Zoom. The first year, he will serve as vice-moderator of the Assembly. The second year, he will serve as moderator of the Assembly. The third year he will serve as moderator of the Assembly council. The council acts as a Presbytery-wide session. He hopes to use the position to influence the payment of per capita levies by congregations that withhold their payments for various reasons. Their non-payment puts the mission of the whole Presbytery at risk.



Thank you so much Ted Swanson, Trudy Lantz, Danny and Vonna Heustis, Jean Williams, Tim Swanson Ron and Mary Clow and Gene and Mary Jane Roth for helping with the Jean Jardine funeral.



The Gibson Girls HCE group met at Poletti's on November 29th for a meeting that included a wonderful Italian meal. The members are shown with the 29 dresses that they made for the Hope4Women project that is now complete and will be sent off to their final destination. The dresses will be distributed through schools and missions in Africa, South America or Central America. Our church donated money to the Gibson Girls for the material for the dresses. All of the dresses have pockets in which a pair of underwear and a bracelet was included. It may be the first dress a girl receives and the "Dress-A-Girl" label is sewn on the front of each dress so they are visible to would be predators and to show these girls are under the care of the organization. The dresses were made in various sizes and an additional 113 pair of underwear was also sent along with the dresses.



Mary Clow and Sharon Heavilin are members.



The plans for the First Presbyterian Church in Mayfield Kentucky are reflected in this sign on the site where the church’s more than 100 year old building once stood. The building was destroyed in December of 2021 by a tornado. Our church sent \$5,000 to help them with their rebuild.

MISSION COMMITTEE SUGGESTIONS – DECEMBER, 2022

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Starting Balance November..... | \$125,365.00 |
| Monthly Puzzle Gift Cards..... | \$ 240.00 |
| Retiring Elder Gift Lanterns..... | \$ 80.00 |
| Presbyterian Historical Society..... | \$ 200.00 |
| Credit Medical Expenses Meladee Ferguson..... | \$ 400.00 |
| Blackhawk Staff ... 2 gift cards \$50 each..... | \$ 100.00 |
| Head Start Teacher/Student Christmas Gifts extra..... | \$ 300.00 |
| Credit on Second Sunday Donation Random Acts..... | \$ 815.00 |
| Boy Scout Troop 29..... | \$ 500.00 |
| Cub Scout Pack 185..... | \$ 500.00 |
| Girl Scouts..... | \$ 500.00 |
| Ford County Sheriff’s Department..... | \$ 500.00 |
| Gibson City Fire Department..... | \$ 500.00 |
| GCMS After Prom Event..... | \$ 500.00 |
| Heifer International Project....(one cow)..... | \$ 500.00 |
| Gibson Area Food Pantry..... | \$ 5,000.00 |
| Increase Toys for Tots Christmas Drive..... | \$ 500.00 |
| Increase American Legion Christmas Drive..... | \$ 1,000.00 |
| Credit on Second Sunday Donation..... | \$ 840.00 |
| Gibson Girls HCE – Extension Dress Girl to Dress Boy.. | \$ 300.00 |
| Jean Jardine Funeral Expenses..... | \$ 800.00 |
| Credit on donation from Family..... | \$ 300.00 |
| Gibson City Pool Project....(tentative approval)..... | \$ 10,000.00 |
| Presbyterian Giving Catalog....Livestock..... | \$ 2,500.00 |
| Total Year To Date December 2022 | \$147,530.00 |

JERRY WISSMILLER MEMORIAL FUND, December 2022

| | |
|--|--------------|
| November Balance..... | \$ 35,228.00 |
| Presbyterian Giving Catalog..... | -\$ 2,500.00 |
| Garden Well/Irrigation Water Pump/Water Filters/Jerry Cans | |
| Balance December 2022..... | \$ 32,728.00 |



HEAD START CHRISTMAS PARTY!

Pastor Lantz, Trudy Lantz, Jean Williams and Mary Clow attended the Head Start Christmas party on December 16th. The party included cookie decorating, crafts and, of course, presents. Teachers left to right include Sarah Allemond, Kayla Golden and Molly Ertel. The church gave each student a Magna Doodle drawing toy and a \$50 Walmart gift card. The church gave each teacher a wall cross, pocket coin and a \$100 Walmart gift card.

