



First Presbyterian Times

January 2023

Letter from the Pastor

Friends,

Time is such a strange thing. We mark it by seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years. We keep watches on our wrists, phones, and computers. We have calendars that mark the passage of time. And while my dad was fond of saying, "Everyone only has 24 hours in a day, Jason" I find that those days seem to go by more and more rapidly as I age and watch my children grow. How I wish, so many days, that I could slow down time or stretch it out to increase the amount of it with loved ones!

But it's not simply the **quantity** of time that we spend so much effort on, is it? We also long for the **quality** of time to be full, meaningful, worthwhile, pleasant.

The Greeks had two different words for what I write about today: (1) *chronos* – meaning the quantity of time; the accumulation and sequential order of those seconds, minutes, hours, days, etc. And then there is (2) *kairos* – which is more akin to the quality of time one experiences; it measures the moments, not seconds. One is fleeting, the other much more permanent, in nature. For example, if one takes a trip with friends or family to see the Great Smoky Mountains, ("We were away on a trip from June 1-5"), *chronos* is what's measured. But when speaking of the beauty and wonder of one's experience hiking in the mountains ("It was such a marvelous time hiking in the mountains"), it's *kairos* of which one speaks.

It's *kairos* of which the scriptures speak when referring to opportune times, seasons, or even the "time / age" that has presented itself with the revelation of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of Heaven that has come with him. This is the very word that is in Jesus' mouth in Mark's gospel when Jesus arrives in Galilee proclaiming, "The time is fulfilled. The kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news!" (Mark 1:15)

Indeed, time can be a very strange...and very wonderful thing.

As calendars turn the page from one year to another, and a new cycle of events begins to unfold in 2023, I invite you to take some *chronos* (some minutes) and ponder the *kairos* (the moment) we are part of as the church of Jesus Christ in and for the world. How is it that God has gifted you opportunity to love, to serve, to share, to comfort, to correct, to mature (not just in years, but in faith, knowledge, and wisdom)? How is it that God has gifted you opportunity to give witness to the Day of the Lord, as we know it in Jesus Christ, in a world that so much of the time only considers how rapidly it can mark the accumulation of minutes in a day? In this new year, how might God be equipping you to invite others into a qualitative experience where one's day wasn't simply 24 hours in length, but was "transformative," "heartening," "fulfilling," "meaningful," "hard but good," or quite simply "purposeful"?

Happy New Year, folks! I pray our time together with one another on our continued journey of faith is not only full of days, but full of hope, joy, and grace.

Peace,

Pastor Jason

What is Epiphany?

The word “epiphany” means “appearance” or “manifestation” of God, and has roots in the word for sunrise or dawn. In ancient times, an epiphany meant either a visible manifestation of a god or a solemn visit of a ruler venerated as a god.

For Christians, Christmas marks the coming of God to us; Epiphany celebrates the appearance of the Lord in the midst of humanity. The Christmas stories of the birth of Immanuel declare the divine entry into the world; Epiphany extols the revelation of God to the world in the person of Jesus.

In our celebrations of Christmas and Epiphany we rejoice in the dawning and arising of Light in darkness, stability amid chaos, assurance amid anxiety for the whole creation. Epiphany not only discloses the Savior to the world but also calls the world to show forth Christ, to be witnesses to God’s true Light...to show and tell of Christ as God’s gift of grace and salvation for all people. Some call this ongoing epiphany the work of Christmas.

Please join us as we give thanks for the “sun of righteousness” breaking into the world on Sunday, January 8!

Note: On Epiphany Sunday, we will receive what we call “Star-Gifts”—simple paper stars with a word, a thought, a notion to ponder throughout the coming year as to what gift, what talent, what blessing God has bestowed upon you or may be calling you to share with others in the new year. We invite you to come eager to find out what word you receive this year; what ways God will use you in the year as it unfolds.

Join us on Sunday, January 8, to receive your word, and to begin your journey of discovery for 2023!



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH INVITES YOU TO: LESSONS & CAROLS

What is a service of Lessons and Carols?

This service originates from a 1918 Christmas Eve service at King’s College Chapel, at the University of Cambridge, England. In Scripture and song, we will gather on the first Sunday of Christmas to recount the loving purpose of God from the time of our rebellion until our glorious redemption in Christ. We hope you find the service both meaningful and enjoyable as we celebrate the gift of Emmanuel! Come, and let us worship God!

Sunday, January 1, 2023 at 10:30 A.M.



Parents'

Night Out

Snow

Day

Friday, January 27: 6pm - 8pm

susana@firstpresmanhattan.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

Lessons & Carols | January 1st

Sanctuary | 10:30 a.m. (No Early Service)

Join us as we give thanks for the "sun of righteousness" breaking into the world on Sunday

Epiphany Sunday | January 8th

The two-service schedule resumes at 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Join us as we receive our Star-Gifts and begin our journey of discovery for 2023. This day will also mark our first observance of the Lord's Supper in the new year.

Congregational Meeting | January 8th

Following the 10:30am service of worship this day, the Session has called a congregational meeting for the purpose of electing elder and deacon nominees for the class of 2025, to elect persons to these roles for unexpired terms, and to elect a nominating committee for 2023. Please make every effort to attend and celebrate the calling and equipping of God for these roles in the Church of Jesus Christ!

Friday Fellowship | January 27th

Fisher Hall | 11:00 a.m.

This month's speaker is Jackie Hartman-Borck. Please make a reservation for attendance and the luncheon by Monday, January 23rd.

Parents' Night Out | January 27th

Fisher Hall | 6PM—8PM

Our theme this month is "Snow Day"! Drop your kids off for an evening of winter fun and games, crafts, a bible lesson, and a hot cocoa bar. Sign your child up by sending an email to susana@firstpresmanhattan.com or at (785) 537-0518.

CHRISTMAS COOKIES *From Troop 74: Doing a Good Turn Daily*

Scout Troop 74's cookie making event on December 12th conveyed the true spirit of holiday giving! It was so generous and kind of the young Scouts to make cookies for the First Presbyterian Church Food Pantry guests. The Food Pantry Volunteers distributed the cookies at the pantry check-in table and displayed pictures of the Scouts.

**Thank you to Troop 74 for your continued support of the FPC
Food Pantry!**



A Note from Faith Formation...

Happy New Year!

What do you think of when you hear "New Year"? Do you think of resolutions or exuberant parties? Maybe you just think of the dread of taking down and putting away all of your many Christmas decorations. What if we, this year, decide to think about how we can grow in our faith in the coming year. New Years is a time for reflecting on the past and using that to build a better future. Let's do that right here with our church family regarding our faith formation programs. Here are some statements you can decide if you agree or disagree with:

This past year...

I was involved in the church in groups where I felt belonging.

I learned something new regarding faith and my relationship with God.

I wished there were more opportunities for church fellowship, discipleship, service or mission.

Me and/or my child enjoys and finds meaning in the faith formation programs at First Presbyterian Church.

Try to reflect on your feelings about these statements. Feel free to share with us your thoughts and help us to build an even more vibrant ministry in the next year. I hope you all find the new year brings positivity and growth, but also reminds you to look towards God and let Him lead the way.

Blessings, *Susana Vick*

Faith Formation Ministries

Interested in joining a bible study, fellowship group, or learning more about Christian themes, beliefs, and practices? Take a look at what is regularly offered at FPC! Please direct all inquiries to our Faith Formation Director, Susana Vick.



Sunday Morning Groups | All at 9:30 a.m.

The Covenant Class | Chapel

The Questions Class | Library

Adult Sunday School | Large Group Room

Kids Sunday School | Owl Room

Weekly Studies

Youth Group | Presby Place | Sunday Evenings at 6:00 p.m.

Women's Bible Study | Library | Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m.

Back in the Word Bible Study | Chapel | Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m.

Presbyterian Women's Bible Study | Alternating Member Homes | 3rd Thursdays



Church Endowment Foundation

This past February, the Session approved the establishment of the First Presbyterian Church Endowment Fund. Income of the fund is to be directed to uses apart from the day-to-day operations of the congregation, thus allowing the income to enrich the program and mission of the congregation by supporting projects which would not otherwise be possible through other church funding. The fund enables the congregation to keep its vision future-focused and to dream, plan, and implement initiatives that share Christ's transforming love through relationship-building, outreach, care for neighbors in need, worship, education, and ministries of generosity, justice, and hospitality.

Restricting income from the Endowment to ministries apart from general operating expenses ensures a forward-thinking perspective and provides opportunities to consider how future generations might benefit from one's generosity in giving today. Additionally, this fund provides opportunities for estate gifts in memory of loved ones to be gifts that continue in perpetuity.

Oversight of the fund is provided by the Endowment Fund Committee, which is comprised of five members of our congregation. Administration of the fund is provided according to an agreement with the Greater Manhattan Community Foundation.

If you'd like to learn more about the Endowment Fund, please see committee members who would be happy to speak to you! They are Joan Burton, Maxine Coffee, Bob Haines, Marcia Hauck, and Bob Mullen.

A Special Letter from Business Affairs Committee

The Business Affairs Committee, along with the Stewardship Committee of the Session, would like to express deep appreciation to the congregation for financial support of the congregation's missions and programs. Currently, the effects of inflation and overall declining economic conditions has presented income challenges to meet budgeted projections during 2022. The decline began to impact church finances early in 2022, with relatively rapid and negative effects compounding during the year. Through November the building and grounds expenses are 15% above projected and utilities are 25% above budget. Coupled with membership changes resulting in decreased pledge receipts, and largely unrealized investment losses, we will likely end 2022 with nominal reserves.

The committee is currently drafting a 2023 budget for Session approval in January. Pledges for 2023 totaling \$495,000 are anticipated by end of 2022, as compared to \$557,000 upon which the 2022 budget was based. To provide reasonable guidance for 2023 expenditures, it is clear that careful thought must be given to budgeting so that the ministry, staff, music, and church programs are funded as best possible with the anticipated decreased income. It is noteworthy that \$170,000 alone is projected to cover routine building and grounds maintenance, and utilities, along with insurance and accounting services. Additionally, there are two capital projects to address: modernization of the elevator and roofing repair to Presby Place. Neither can be readily budgeted and there are currently insufficient reserves to cover a preliminary estimate of \$200,000-\$250,000.

Not unique to our church is decreasing membership spread over much time. The reasons are multifaceted, as are the factors driving an uncertain economy. Taken together, they highlight a critical need for strategic planning of finances and programs, ensuring paths forward for FPC in 2023 and beyond. With this in mind, a subcommittee has been formed to address this important task, reporting to Business Affairs with thoughts then taken to Session and the congregation for consideration. Lee Borck has agreed to chair this subcommittee with members Pastor Jason, Lyle Butler, Dana Hauck, Matt Paquette and Bill Varney, along with the church treasurer and chair of Business Affairs.

On behalf of the Business Affairs Committee, we welcome your questions and input, and appreciate your continuing support of FPC.

Jim Neill, Chair of BAC & Mike Meisenheimer, Treasurer

JANUARY CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
1 Nursery 9am-noon Lessons & Carols 10:30am NO Early Service & NO Sunday School 1st Sunday of Christmas	2 OFFICE CLOSED	3 Community Showers 5pm Community Meals 6pm	4 Community Breakfast 7am Staff Meeting 9am Women's Bible Study 10am Back in the Word Bible Study 6pm	5 Life's Journey with Grief 12pm	6 Food Pantry 9am
8 Nursery 9am-noon Sunday School 9:30am Early Service 8:30am Traditional Service 10:30am Congregational Meeting 11:30am Celebration of the Lord's Supper Epiphany Sunday	9 Faith Formation 1pm Boy Scouts Troop 74 6:30pm	10 Community Showers 5pm Community Meals 6pm	11 Community Breakfast 7am Women's Bible Study 10am Back in the Word Bible Study 6pm Newsletter Deadline	12 Life's Journey with Grief 12pm Business Affairs Meeting 5pm	13 Food Pantry 9am
15 Nursery 9am-noon Sunday School 9:30am Early Service 8:30am Traditional Service 10:30am 2nd Sunday after Epiphany	16 Men's Luncheon 12pm Boy Scouts Troop 74 6:30pm	17 Community Showers 5pm Community Meals 6pm	18 Community Breakfast 7am Staff Meeting 9am Women's Bible Study 10am Back in the Word Bible Study 6pm	19 Life's Journey with Grief 12pm	20 Food Pantry 9am
22 Nursery 9am-noon Sunday School 9:30am Early Service 8:30am Traditional Service 10:30am 3rd Sunday after Epiphany	23 Deacon's Meeting 5:30pm Boy Scouts Troop 74 6:30pm	24 Community Showers 5pm Community Meals 6pm Session Meeting 6:30pm	25 Community Breakfast 7am Women's Bible Study 10am Back in the Word Bible Study 6pm	26 Community Breakfast 7am Women's Bible Study 10am	27 Food Pantry 9am Friday Fellowship 11am Parents' Night Out 6pm
29 Nursery 9am-noon Sunday School 9:30am Early Service 8:30am Traditional Service 10:30am 4th Sunday after Epiphany	30 Boy Scouts Troop 74 6:30pm	31 Community Showers 5pm Community Meals 6pm			

January Birthdays

1/01	Marilyn Galle	1/13	Tim Manges
1/02	Stacey Montgomery	1/14	Cinda Vogel
1/03	Terry Davis	1/14	Brooke Newcomer
1/03	Jo Anne Call	1/14	Wayne Converse
1/03	David Davis	1/15	Adeline Hackett
1/03	Wess Presley	1/16	Eloise Brown
1/04	Grace Paquette	1/17	Michael Finnegan
1/04	Martin Vogts	1/19	Emily Mark
1/04	Amy Paquette	1/22	Don Rathbone
1/04	Jim Neill	1/23	Neil Dunn
1/05	John Blair	1/24	Annette Radina
1/06	Ingelin Leslie	1/25	Carson Wall
1/07	Sue Klinger	1/26	Molly Sarvis
1/10	Dick Elkins	1/29	Gabe Ng
1/11	Shiloh Vick	1/30	Bill Washington
1/12	Lois Merriman	1/30	David Parker
1/13	Bud Cox III		
1/13	Peggy Lyons		
1/13	Brad Wille		



Thank You From the Wolff Family

Dear First Presbyterian Church,

Thank you for the beautiful Baptism Blanket, Baptism Candle and First Bible. They are greatly appreciated and will be a great way to remember his special day every year. Thank you for being a part of this special moment in Jack's life.

Sincerely, Mike, Jessica and Jack Wolff

Why did the chicken cross the globe?



TO MAKE A BIG IMPACT!

We've supercharged our "Egg a Day" effort, and created the Coop Club. When you join the Coop Club, you'll receive a welcome package with fun surprises to celebrate your generosity, along with information about the impact chickens have on families in need of a sustainable source of food and income.

Joining is easy, and faster than boiling an egg! You can:



Give a family of chickens each month, selecting "Make this a monthly gift" online during checkout

OR



Give an egg a day for a year with our one-time "Egg a Day" gift on the order form or online

COOP CLUB

For their mission, the Mid-High Youth (6th-8th Grade) are raising money for the "Coop Club". This mission is through Presbyterian Missions and the money goes toward providing eggs/chickens to those in need in other countries to promote their sustainability, providing a way for them to produce their own food and other necessities such as feathers for pillows. The middle schoolers kicked off their fundraising efforts with a handmade ornament sale after the Children's Christmas Pageant on December 4th. Their goal is to raise \$50 every other month and their first fundraiser was a success, exceeding their goal with a grand total of \$111 raised. Keep your eye out for their future fundraisers to support this awesome mission!



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January Lectionary

Sunday, January 1 | First Sunday after Christmas

Isaiah 63:7-9 & Psalm 148; Hebrews 2:10-18 & Matthew 2:13-23

Sunday, January 8 | Epiphany of the Lord

Isaiah 60:1-6 & Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14; Ephesians 3:1-12 & Matthew 2:1-12

Sunday, January 15 | Second Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 49:1-7 & Psalm 40:1-11; 1 Corinthians 1:1-9 & John 1:29-42

Sunday, January 22 | Third Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 9:1-4 & Psalm 27:1, 4-9; 1 Corinthians 1:10-18 & Matthew 4:12-23

Sunday, January 29 | Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Micah 6:1-8 & Psalm 15; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31 & Matthew 5:1-12