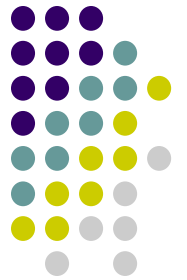


First Presbyterian Church  
P.O. Box 297  
915 E. Orange St  
Hoopeston, IL 60942  
Return Service Requested



Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Permit No. 49  
Hoopeston, IL 60942

First Presbyterian Church  
Hoopeston, Illinois



# The Bridgebuilder

November 2022

## Hymn of Thanksgiving

Now thank we all our God, with heart and hands and voices,  
who wondrous things hath done, in whom this world rejoices;  
who, from our mothers' arms, hath blessed us on our way  
with countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.

O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,  
with every joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us;  
and keep us in God's grace, and guide us when perplexed,  
and free us from all ills in this world and the next.

All praise and thanks to God, who reigns in highest heaven,  
to Father and to Son and Spirit now be given:  
the one eternal God, whom heaven and earth adore,  
the God who was, and is, and shall be evermore.

*The lyrics of this hymn – Now Thank We All Our God – originated as a family table prayer during wartime in 1836, by Martin Rinkart.*

## Psalm of Thanksgiving

I thank you, LORD, with all my heart;  
I sing praise to you before the gods.  
I face your holy Temple,  
bow down, and praise your name  
because of your constant love and faithfulness,  
because you have shown that your name  
and your commands are supreme.  
You answered me when I called to you;  
with your strength you strengthened me.  
All the kings in the world will praise you, LORD,  
because they have heard your promises.  
They will sing about what you have done  
and about your great glory.  
Even though you are so high above,  
you care for the lowly,  
and the proud cannot hide from you.  
When I am surrounded by troubles,  
you keep me safe.  
You oppose my angry enemies  
and save me by your power.  
You will do everything you have promised;  
LORD, your love is eternal.  
Complete the work that you have begun. Amen.

Psalm 138

### Inside this issue:

Pastor's Letter	2
Advent, Christmas	3
Message and Music	4
Mail, Prayers	5
Finance, Mission, Session, Dates	6
Calendar	7



First Presbyterian Church  
915 E Orange St  
PO Box 297  
Hoopeston, IL 60942

Phone: 217-283-6229  
Fax: 217-283-6229  
E-mail: church@fpchoopeston.com

We're on the web!  
[www.fpchoopeston.com](http://www.fpchoopeston.com)

## First Presbyterian Church of Hoopeston

Head of the Church	Jesus Christ
Ministers of the Good News	All of Us
Session Elders	Gwen Bandy, Wayne Bandy, Sadie Hofer, Christy Lee, Waylon Lee, Jill Nelson, Missy Prorise, Julie Stump, Ray Stump
Deacons	Gina Morgan, Debby Dixon Linda Martin
Organist and Music Director	Rick Brackmann
Administrative Assistant	Pat Catron
Custodian	Gary Deck
Director of Older Youth Group	Sadie Hofer
Pastor	Wade Meranda
Childcare Provider	Lindsey Paredes
Director of Younger Youth Group	Lindsey Paredes



### Pastor's Letter

Dear Friends,

I'm grateful for the return of our Pasta Dinner tradition on November 11. We've been working side by side for many years to serve a warm and tasty meal to the people of Hoopeston, people of all ages. I encourage everyone to sign up to help in some way.

Many of you have been selling tickets ahead of time and the number of pre-sales have been terrific. Tables in Fellowship Hall will be set up soon and Christmas lights will be hung in the parking lot. We are grateful to have Vera Keller leading us once again. Twenty-nine years ago, it was Vera and others who had the vision for this ongoing ministry. We are grateful to be able to continue the tradition.



Food and supplies have been ordered. The aroma of simmering pasta sauces will be in the air soon. We will serve our guests with the nourishment of heaven – love, grace, and pie. That's what Jesus would do.

Our pledge drive for 2023 will begin soon. Cards will be mailed to homes and we will dedicate our pledges to God during worship on Nov 13. I ask that you make a generous pledge. We are like many churches today who need a renewal of generous giving among the congregation. Many generous givers in the church have died in recent years and we are not alone in that. Let us all renew our giving for 2023.

The organization who had inquired with us about the possibility of operating a Head Start program in our facility has informed us that they will not be pursuing this any further at this time, due to financial constraints and because a new organization will be heading up the Head Start programs in our area in the coming months. Perhaps the new organization will want to continue talking with us. Time will tell.

I wish you a Happy Thanksgiving. May you find ways to express the gratitude that is on your heart.

Blessings, Wade



### Youth Group for Younger Kids

A new youth group for younger kids (Pre-5th Grade) will begin in November. We are pleased to have Lindsey Paredes, who is already on our staff as our childcare provider, leading the group. Children are invited to attend youth group on a regular basis.

The first meeting dates are Nov 13 and Nov 20, from 6:00-7:00 p.m., and Lindsey will inform parents of dates moving forward. The group will normally meet in the childcare room, twice a month, on Sundays, from 6:00-7:00 p.m.



- The purpose is to embrace younger children into the life of the church in a new way, beyond Sunday morning. We hope the church will become a joyful and safe place where children feel comfortable. Perhaps children will form friendships with one another as well.
- We will share God's good news (Bible stories) in age-appropriate ways, through story-time, crafts, games, and perhaps movies and music. We will have fun with holidays and birthdays.
- We will practice prayer with the children and may explore some age-appropriate mission activities now and then.
- We hope the younger group will help prepare the children for a comfortable transition to the older group when they reach 6th grade. The older youth group meets in Fellowship Hall and will often meet at the same time as the younger group.

May God bless Lindsey and our children – Audrey, Caroline, Gemma, William, Mason, Ronan, Oliver, Jolleen – as they get started.



# November 2022

First Presbyterian Church  
915 East Orange Street, Hoopeston, Illinois 60942  
www.fpchoopeston.org 217-283-6229

Sabbath Day of Rest	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Elder of the Month: Waylon Lee	Pray for Ray and Julie Stump	10:30 Meals on Wheels SAINTS DAY	2	3	4 Recycling 9:00 Adult Study	5
6 Time Change: Turn clocks back one hour. 10:00 WORSHIP 11:15 Refreshments	7 Pray for Stan and Shirley Wagener	8	9 No Adult Study	10 Pasta Dinner Preparation	11 Pasta Dinner Serving 4:30 - 7:30 p.m.	12
13 10:00 WORSHIP 11:00 Refreshments 6:00-7:00 Older Youth Group (6th-12th) 6:00-7:00 Younger Youth Group (PreK-5th)	14 Pray for Cameron Watson	15	16 9:00 Adult Study	17 10-4 Presbytery Meeting Zoom	18 Recycling	19
20 8:30 Handbells 10:00 WORSHIP Change for Change, Food Cupboard 11:00 Refreshments 11:30 Older Youth Group 6:00-7:00 Younger Youth Group	21 6:00 Session Pray for Connor Watson	22	23 9:00 Adult Study	24 Office Closed Thanksgiving Day	25 Office Closed	26
27 10:00 WORSHIP 11:00 Refreshments 11:15 Decorate Church for Christmas!	28 Pray for Cooper Watson	29	30 9:00 Adult Study Group	Dec 1	Dec 2 Recycling	Dec 3

### General Fund Giving

	2022	2021	2020
Given as of Oct 31	\$81,526	\$75,111	\$88,400
Total for Year	tbd	\$95,085	\$100,396
Pledges for Year	\$92,000	\$108,458	\$112,345

Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (2 Corinthians 9)

### Change for Change

Our **October 16** our mission offering was \$209 and supported Bismarck Blessings, a program that supplies backpacks of food and school supplies for children in the Bismack-Henning School District.

Our **November 20** offering will support the ongoing work of the Grant Township Food Cupboard.

### Pledge Sunday

**November 13** is Pledge Sunday. Please bring your 2023 Pledge Card to worship and we will dedicate them to the Glory of God. Pledge cards will be mailed to homes the week before – or use the one below. Please take time to pray and consider how the church has blessed your life and the lives of others with the love of God, the grace of Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. Encourage your children to pledge as well. The Session will use the pledges to prepare the budget for 2023.



## 2023 Operating Fund Pledge

First Presbyterian Church, P.O Box 297, Hoopeston, IL, 60942

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

My (our) Estimated Giving for 2023 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Session Highlights

From the October 24 stated meeting:

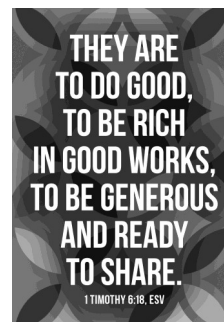
- 8 out of 10 present
- Made plans for the Advent and Christmas seasons.
- Directed the Change for Change offerings: Nov to the Food Cupboard, Dec to Illinois Refugee Center.
- Approved a position description for the Younger Youth Group Director. Lindsey Paredes has accepted the position.
- Reviewed and approved Finance Report for September. All records are in good order.
- Set Pledge Drive plans.
- CDI Head Start informed us they will not be pursuing a move to our facility at this time; perhaps down the road sometime.
- Nominating Committee has a slate of candidates ready for the Oct 30 Congregational Meeting.
- Approved McFarland Grant of \$1,000 for the Project Success Christmas Wish List for HA youth.

### November Birthdays

11/1	Marty Kloska
11/3	Robert Richardson
11/5	Skip Betka
11/12	Scott Watson
11/13	Laura Meranda
11/15	David Nelson, Trent Betka
11/24	Chalmers Flint, Kristi Keller, Craig Lee
11/28	Betsy Schellhardt

### November Anniversaries

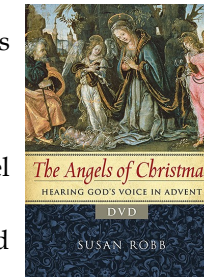
11/07/1970	Jeff and Betsy Schellhardt
11/18/2000	Skip and Melissa Betka
11/22/1969	Stan and Shirley Wagoner
11/26/1994	Matt and Gina Morgan



### Adult Study for Advent

Our adult study for Advent will be a new video led program called "Angels of Christmas: Hearing God's Voice in Advent." The group meets at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday mornings. All are invited. The four week program begins on Nov 30.

The study explores the four angelic visits surrounding the birth of Jesus with Zechariah, Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds. God sends angelic visitors to inform the world about the miraculous birth. Christmas is God's story and Jesus is God's gift, so it's wise to listen to those who know – God's angels.



The weekly sessions include: Gabriel and Zechariah, Gabriel and Mary, Joseph and an angel of the Lord, and the shepherds and the angels.

### Christmas Pizza and Movie Night

Our next family movie night will be on Sunday, **Dec 4** at 5:30 p.m. We'll begin with pizza in Fellowship Hall and then move to the sanctuary to watch a Christmas movie, for all ages, on the big screen. Popcorn too. It's the most wonderful time of the year and we are working on selecting the movie.



### Christmas Poinsettias

Poinsettias bring Christmas joy to our worship service. Plants may be taken home after Christmas Eve service.



**\$17.00 per plant**

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

In Celebration of: \_\_\_\_\_

Total plants ordered: \_\_\_\_\_

Total amount due: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form with your payment to the church office by **December 8**. Mail to: First Presbyterian Church, P.O. Box 297, Hoopeston, Illinois 60942.



### Upcoming Advent and Christmas Schedule

<b>November 27</b>	1st Sunday of Advent: Decorate the church after worship.
<b>December 4</b>	2st Sunday of Advent: Hanging of the Greens Service, Communion, Movie Night
<b>December 11</b>	3rd Sunday of Advent: Christmas Breakfast 9:00, Christmas Joy Offering
<b>December 18</b>	4th Sunday of Advent: Advent Music Service, Handbells at Nursing Home
<b>December 24</b>	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, Communion, 7:00 p.m.
<b>December 25</b>	Merry Christmas
<b>January 1</b>	Communion
<b>January 8</b>	Service of Epiphany
<b>January 15</b>	Ordination of Elders and Deacons



## Basic Message of the Bible

(By Donald McKim in *Presbyterian Questions, Presbyterian Answers*, Westminster John Knox Press, 2017.)

Some see the Bible to be a drama in three acts: Creation, Fall, and Redemption. Another way to put this is to say that the message of the Bible is:

God created the world good.  
Humans messed up the good creation.  
God came in Jesus Christ to set things right.

The richness and the fullness of what the Bible communicates is much more detailed and richer than these three “basics.” But, broadly speaking, the whole of Scripture is encompassed by these three points.

*God created the world good.* This is vital and is the Bible’s first statement (Gen 1:1-2). We know who we are and where all things originated. We are God’s children. All things come from God. God’s verdict on the creation was: “and indeed, it was very good.” God the Creator is a constant theme in Scripture. The greatness and goodness of God lead humans to praise the creator of all things, including us!

*Humans messed up the good creation.* The story of sin is of humans who have chosen to live according to our own wills and agendas, rather than seeking the purposes and directions that our Creator intends. We have broken God’s laws and, even more, broken God’s heart because we have rejected the relationship of love God wants to have with each of us. God’s “steadfast love” which pervades the earth has been rejected by unfaithful people.

*God came in Jesus Christ to set things right.* This is the gospel, the “good news”! Our relationships with God – broken by sin – are now restored and made new through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. God loved the world so much that God sent the Son of God into the world to provide the means, through his death and resurrection, of bringing new “eternal” life to sinners. This is the greatest news we can ever hear. It is the message Presbyterians share vigorously with the whole world. Through Christ, “all things, whether on earth or in heaven” will be reconciled to God, since God in Christ is “making peace through the blood of his cross.”

## Music and Art in Worship

(By David Gambrell in *Presbyterian Worship: Questions and Answers*, Westminster John Knox Press, 2019.)

Bible scholars believe that one of the oldest fragments of Scripture is actually a song – Miriam’s song, to be specific, in Exodus 15: “Sing to the Lord, for God has triumphed gloriously.” From the beginning, the people of God have raised their voices in song to praise God for our salvation.

Singing helps define sacred space and time. Something powerful and profound happens when we sing together in worship. It is immediately clear to all – whether they are in the sanctuary or listening in from the street – that this is a different kind of event. When there is singing, it is impossible to mistake worship for a town hall meeting, academic lecture, or business conference. Something holy is happening.

Singing transcends mere speech. Music communicates something that words alone cannot convey. Speaking alone does not do justice to the good news of God’s saving love. Perhaps this is why the psalmists keep exclaiming, “Sing a new song!” and why people like Moses, Miriam, Hannah, Zechariah, Mary, and Simeon keep breaking into song throughout the Bible.

Singing builds community. Our minds are united around the words, images, and themes of a common text. Our spirits get in tune with one another through a common melody or harmony. Our bodies dance, clap, sway, and breathe together to the pulse of a common meter, rhythm, and tempo. Research suggest that singing together may even synchronize our heartbeats. What better image of the body of Christ?

Singing stays with us. As we go forth from worship, the melodies, rhythms, and harmonies of sacred songs accompany us in our daily lives. They help us to tune our stories to God’s story. They enable us to order our steps according to God’s word. They inspire us to seek harmony through reconciliation in our relationship and peace in the world.



## In the Mailbox

*For McFarland grant:*  
We wish to thank the church and the McFarland Trust for their generous donation to the Shoes for Little Souls program. Because of that funding, plus donations from Prairie Green Church members and other individuals, the program was able to coordinate with the Muti-Agency in supplying 290 pairs of shoes for students in need. Thank you so much.  
–Carole Bond, Shoes for Little Souls Coordinator

*For card shower:*  
To my church family,  
Thank you for your thoughts, prayers, and cards to help celebrate my 90th birthday. Thank you also for the mum! Bless each and every one of you.  
–Peg Clem



*For Change for Change:*  
We would like to gratefully acknowledge your donation. It is through donations like yours that we are able to continue to serve Jesus and feed the children. An average of 127 K-5th grade children receive a sack of food every Friday during the school year to have for the weekend. Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.” - Feed My Lambs Program

*For care and memorial service:*  
Thank you for celebrating my Mom’s life this past June (Janet Smith). The support and love you have shown Mom and Dad and our family have been a blessing. The dinner after the service was amazing as Mom would have loved it. Your cards and letters throughout Mom’s journey this past few years meant so much to Mom and us. You will be forever in our prayers. –Marshall and Katie Smith, Riley, Landyn, and Nolan

*For McFarland support:*  
Thank you for your support of our trip to the Liberty Bowl over Christmas break. – The Marching Cornjerkers

*For Change for Change:*  
I wanted to say thank you to your congregation for its generous donation to our agency. We are beyond grateful for your support and would not be able to continue our mission without the support of our community. -Elizabeth Melon Irlle, Director of CASA



## In Our Prayers

**Those who grieve for:** Rich Thompson (R. Carter’s friend), Melvin Miles (S. Burton’s uncle), Ellen Martin-Huff (L. Martin’s cousin), John Smock (R. Carter’s uncle), Jim Peterson (Joyce Nelson’s brother), Karen Evans (R. Carter’s friend), Lisa DeWitt Amore (R. Carter’s friend), Nancy Runge (J. Nelson’s friend), Karl Steiner, Sadie Evans (R. Carter’s friend), Sharon Blackwell (M. Prosisé’s friend)

**Those with immediate concerns:** Judy Brockway (K. Kelnhofer’s friend), Scott Watson, Anna Jean Brackmann (R. Brackmann’s mother), Barbara Stump (R. Stump’s sister-in-law), Cheryl Gillins (L. Martin’s friend), Amanda Garman Landers (S. Wagoner’s friend), Toby and Kim Wagoner, Paul and Patti Ziemnisky (R. Carter’s friends), Larry Betka, Dwight Judy (D. Dixon’s friend), Vickie Anderson (J. Stump’s sister), Landon Potter (S. Burton’s cousin), Kathy Grobowski (L. Martin’s friend), Mark Spidle (J. Stump’s friend), Christopher Graham (H. Steiner’s nephew), John Schertz (G Jahn’s nephew), Karla Von Huben (J. Stump’s friend), Marie Seaman (D. Boyer’s friend), Tina Skender (C. Flint’s daughter).

**Those with long-term concerns:** Mason Steiner, Linda Martin, Ann Wise (L. Martin’s friend), Emma Winslow (G. Morgan’s friend), Bob Murphy (M. Betka’s dad), Lindsay Boyden (C. Lee’s friend), John White, Larry and Jan German (L. Martin’s friend), Marcie and A.J. Wright (L. Flint’s cousins), Sam Matthews (home fire), Jane Steiner, John Roark (M. Prosisé’s friend), John Zollar (E. Donley’s brother), Beth Farias (L. Martin’s cousin), Sue Burton, Roberto Martinez (R. Carter’s friend), Crew Feltner (child with leukemia, K. Kelnhofer’s friend), Tina and John Hanson (Vi Hanson’s children), Leonard Goldstein (D. Boyer’s brother), Patti Root (K. Root’s mom), Joyce Cottingham (L. Martin’s friend), Mary Kane (K. Root’s aunt), Natalie Zollar (E. Donley’s niece), Martha Barner, Carole Ronane (J. Stump’s friend), Beth Meese (G. Morgan’s friend), Sandy Glenn (J. Steiner’s cousin), Cookie Galloway (B. Schellhardt’s sister), Carol Schrepfer (J. Stump’s friend), Ian Anderson (J. Stump’s nephew), Karen Peterson (D. Dixon’s sister), Troy Flint, John Long (D. Dixon’s brother), Brian Lemenager (M. Foster’s grandson), Rob Burton Family (J. Stump’s brother), John Masengale (S. Burton’s dad), Lori Egnew Vaughan (G. Morgan’s friend) and Sophia Voyda (E. Donley’s niece).

**Those homebound in assisted living or nursing homes:** Marty Kloska, Mike Blankenship, Judy Benjamin, Sam Terrell, and John Haughee.

**Those in church leadership:** Our Session and Deacons, Rev. Wade, Rev. Ann, Rev. Ruth Santana-Grace and Rev. Shavon Starling-Louis (General Assembly Co-Moderators), Rev. J. Herbert Nelson (G.A. Clerk), Rev. Jean Wollenberg (Presbytery Moderator), Rebecca Blair (Lead Presbyter).

