



The Steeple Chimes

The E-Newsletter of The First Presbyterian Church of Greenlawn
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Rev. Dr. Ann M. Van Cleef, Pastor

January, 2023

Pastor's Message

My Beloved Church Family,

I am a big fan of the British comedy series, *Fawlty Towers*. Although there are only twelve episodes in the entire series, it still placed first on the list of *100 Greatest British Programmes*, drawn up by the British Film Institute.

One of my favorite lines of dialogue from the series is delivered by the lead character, Basil Fawlty, and it goes like this: “Zoom! What was that? That was your life, Mate! That was quick. Do I get another? Sorry, Mate.”

That’s how I’m feeling as I write this. Where did the last year go?

Many good things happened at The First Presbyterian Church of Greenlawn in 2022. Some that come to mind are:

- A “Visioning Meeting” of the Session early in the year
- Upgrading microphones for better Zoom transmission on Sunday mornings
- Many projects undertaken by Buildings and Grounds, including the replacement of the Manse oil tank
- The establishment of the position on Building Use Manager
- The return of Wednesday Lenten Soup Suppers after the pandemic
- Collaboration with Bethany and Sweet Hollow Presbyterian Churches for Holy Week
- The return of The Flowering of the Cross after the pandemic
- Richard and Susan Brewster’s presentation on Mercy Ships
- Five new members joined our church
- Leonora Knight joined us as Worship Accompanist
- Celebrations of Valentine’s Day, St. Patrick’s Day, Mother’s Day, and Father’s Day
- Increased use of our Little Food Pantry by the community
- The Church Fair, Christmas Fair, and Victorian Christmas Tea
- Lessons and Carols, Outdoor Tree Lighting, and Community Carol Sing-Along
- Food and Fellowship: coffee hours and gatherings.
- The wonderful members, friends, staff, and officers, who, led by the Holy Spirit, are the life-blood of this church.
- And, of course, our terrific 150th Anniversary Celebration!



Some not-so-good things happened here as well. The passing of church members Dorothy Harris, Carolyn Brockett, and Ron Lievendag comes to mind. There is a lot of maintenance yet to be done on our aging building, and we are facing a budget shortfall this year. Then there's the matter of fears about the national economy and the influence it might have on our members and friends.

But God is good all the time. I am looking forward to 2023, and pray that God will bestow blessings on all of us. May there be much that is good, and may we be granted the grace to deal with that which is not.

With love and blessings,

Pastor Ann



Zoom Worship

We will continue to “simulcast” our Sunday worship on Zoom for those who cannot be in the Sanctuary. You may log on as early as 10:00 a.m. for our 10:30 Celebration of worship.

The easiest way to do Zoom is to download the Zoom App from the App Store. Zoom will work on a computer, a laptop, an I-Pad, or a Smartphone.

What are the Meeting IDs for the post-Christmas season?

January 1 through February 12, inclusive, the **Meeting ID** is **810 6717 5509**. The **Passcode** is **757038**.

If you are on the church e-mail list, you will get a weekly e-mail with the Zoom link.

I don't have a computer or a Smartphone. What can I do?

You may telephone the following number:

1-646-558-8656.

You will be asked for a Meeting ID and a passcode. (Please see paragraph 3.)

You won't be able to see us, but you can still hear what's going on.



Birthday Blessings

January 2 – Rosalie Wilson
January 21 – George Santos
January 22 – Betty Chatfield
January 25 – Linda Rixon
January 26 – Stephanie Horne

February 8 – Caroline Prentiss
February 9 – Janice Hago
February 13 – Kathy Fitzgerald
February 14 – William Chatfield
February 15 – Bob Van Cleef





Prayer Corner

BETTER THAN BISCUITS

A Pastor asked an older farmer, decked out in bib overalls, to say grace for the morning breakfast.

“Lord, I hate buttermilk,” the farmer began. The visiting Pastor opened one eye to glance at the farmer, and wondered what was going on.

The farmer loudly proclaimed, “Lord, I hate lard.” Now the Pastor was growing concerned.

Without missing a beat, the farmer continued, “And Lord, You know I don’t much care for raw white flour.” The Pastor once again opened an eye to glance around the room, and saw that he wasn’t the only one who was feeling uncomfortable.

Then the farmer added, “But Lord, when you mix them all together and bake them, I do love warm fresh biscuits. So Lord, when things come up that we don’t like, when life gets hard, when we don’t understand what You’re saying to us, help us to just relax and wait until You are done mixing. It will probably be even better than biscuits. Amen.”

Within that prayer there is great wisdom for all when it comes to complicated situations like we are experiencing in the world today.

Stay strong, my friends, because our Lord is mixing several things that we don’t really care for, but something even better is going to come when He is done with it. Amen.

FROM BILLY GRAHAM

“Don’t leave Jesus in the manger.

Don’t remember Him only at Christmas,
Instead, learn to walk with Him every day,
as you pray and read His Word
and ask Him to help You.”

FAITH

When you think of faith as a war to be won, you will see people as enemies to be conquered. But when you think of faith as a world to be explored, you will see people as neighbors to be loved.

A PRAYER FOR PEACE

This prayer for peace and unity, spoken by astronaut Frank Borman in 1968 while orbiting the moon, still holds true to this day.

*Give us, O God, the vision which can see Thy love
in the world in spite of human failure.*

*Give us the faith to trust Thy goodness in spite of
our ignorance and weakness.*

*Give us the knowledge that we may continue to pray
with understanding hearts.*

*And show us what each one of us can do to set
forward the coming of the day of universal peace.*

Amen.

THOUGHTS FOR THE NEW YEAR

- If you owe me, don’t worry about it.
- If you wronged me, it’s all good.
- If you’re beefing with me, you won.
- If we aren’t speaking, it’s cool. Be safe, and I wish you well.
- If you’re talking about me, thanks for the advertisement.
- If you don’t deal with me, I don’t care.
- If you left me hanging, don’t pick me up.
- If you feel I wronged you, I apologize.
- In all things I forgive you.

Life is too short to keep holding onto the past and for all this unnecessary drama. The reality is ... no one is promised tomorrow!

Be blessed, but also be a blessing.

PRAYERS TO HELP YOU EMBRACE CHANGE

Lord, as You were with Abram when You called him out of Ur, so be with me in this new venture. You are my shield, my very great reward, and I know that nothing is too hard for You.

(Based on Genesis 15:1, 18:14)

May the God before whom Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who has been my Shepherd all of my life to this day, bless these steps I now take.

(Based on Genesis 48:15-16)

God, make me strong and courageous in this new undertaking. Let me not be afraid or discouraged, knowing that as You were with Joshua, so You will be with me wherever I go.

(Based on Joshua 1:9)



Worship in December

December 4: Advent II – Peace. The sermon was titled, “A Strange New Religion.” The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper was celebrated. One of Leonora Knight’s students, Kaylee DiGregorio, sang Leonard Bernstein’s *A Simple Song*.

December 11: Advent III – Joy. The sermon was called, “What would Jesus Do?” One of Leonora Knight’s students, Olivia Evola, sang “The First Noel.”

December 18: Advent IV – Lessons and Carols. Community members and church members read the nine lessons. The choir sang two anthems; Leonora Knight and Debbie Eitel sang solos.

Saturday, December 24: We had a lovely Christmas Eve Service which included the congregation singing “Silent Night” by candlelight. Leonora Knight and Olivia Evola sang “O Holy Night” as a duet.

December 25: Christmas Day – we had a short Prayer Service via Zoom.

On Saturday, December 3, we held our Second Annual Victorian Christmas Tea. Thirty-six people enjoyed delicious sandwiches, scones, and desserts. Three fortunate people won door prizes, and everyone got to take home a beautiful cup and saucer set.

Many thanks to Chairperson Jill Wilson as well as her committee: Claire Proctor and Kathie Gerlach. Thanks also to Arlissa Dean and Kathy Fitzgerald, who stepped in at the last minute to help serve food.



Some church ladies enjoying tea time.



January 1: New Year’s Day. The sermon was titled “New Year’s Resolutions.” The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper was celebrated. A New Year’s Day party was held during coffee hour.

January 8: Celebration of The Epiphany. The Sermon was called “They Went Home Another Way.”

January 15: The Baptism of Jesus. The sermon is titled “Finding Your Identity.”

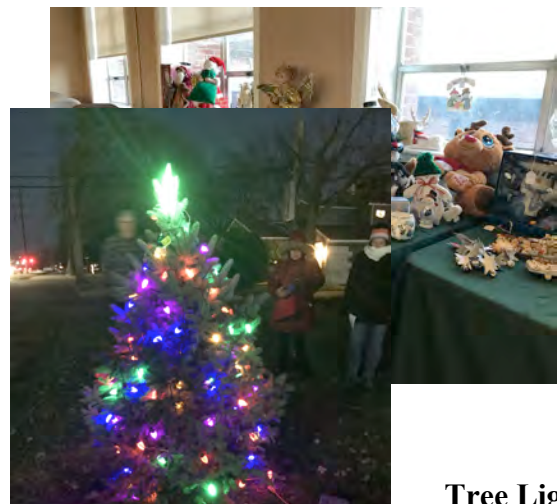
January 22: Epiphany 3 – “Called to Follow Jesus.”

January 29: Epiphany 3 – “Blessed Are They.”

Victorian Christmas Tea

Christmas Fair

Our Christmas Fair was held on Saturday, December 10. We had a wonderful response from both the church members and the community at large. It was a win-win- for everyone: people bought decorations and gifts for very low prices, and the church made a little money. With the proceeds from the Fair, we were able to buy a dozen green tablecloths and contribute something to the church as well.



Tree Lighting

Thanks to the generosity of one of our church people, we now have a new, healthy Christmas tree outside. It's a bit small, but we will enjoy watching it grow, and hope it will be enjoyed for generations to come.

Our little tree shone proudly the night of the tree lighting (December 18) and was a blessing to the entire community.

Community Carol Sing

It started out as cookies and hot chocolate after the tree lighting. But the Holy Spirit turned it into a splendid Christmas party. Pastor Ann played the piano, Leonora Knight led the singing, and a good time was had by all! In fact, three community members who were there came to our Christmas Eve Service!

Many thanks to everyone who contributed in any way to the occasion, especially to Arlissa Dean and Debbie Eitel who coordinated the refreshments.



Arlissa and Debbie – what a team!

A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols Service was held on Sunday, December 18.

This Service tells the story of the fall of humanity, the promise of the Messiah, and the birth of Jesus. It is told in nine short Bible readings from Genesis, the Prophetic Books, and the Gospels, and is interspersed with the singing of Christmas carols, hymns, and other music.

The original format was based on an Order of Worship for Christmas Eve, 1880, in Cornwall,

England. It is said that a key purpose of the Service at that time was to keep men out of the pubs on Christmas Eve!

The Service at FPC Greenlawn was based on the one at *The King's College* in Cambridge, England, where the nine lessons are read by representatives of the congregation and of the local community.

Many thanks to the people who read the nine lessons: Sevi Regis, Jo-Ann Monte, Catarina Rasizzi, Olivia Evola, Marian Adams, Jane Longstreet, Bill Becker, Michelle Perrotta, and Jim Dean. Congratulations to Debbie Eitel, alto soloist, Leonora Knight, soprano soloist, and our Women's Choir, who sang three anthems.



Bill Becker reading at Lessons and Carols.

Welcome, Bill Becker

We were delighted to have William (Bill) Becker join our church on December 11. He comes to us from South Lake Presbyterian Church in Clermont, Florida, and has already immersed himself in the life of our congregation. Welcome, Bill!

Christmas at First Presbyterian

Our beautiful Christmas Eve Service took place at 7 p.m. on December 24, and ended with the traditional lighting of individual candles held by the congregation, while "Silent Night" was sung by



those in attendance.

40 poinsettias decorated the Communion Table for our Lessons

and Carols and our Christmas Eve Services. They were dedicated by members and friends of our church in honor and in memory of loved ones.

Christmas Day fell on a Sunday. We celebrated with a short Prayer Service on Zoom on Christmas morning.

New Year's Day

We celebrated the New Year with a special Service, the singing of Auld Lang Syne, and a New Year's Day party, which included noisemakers, hats, and a countdown to "New Years plus Twelve" at noon. We feasted on appetizers and non-alcoholic "bubbly."



Debbie Eitel led a New Year's Day Quiz, and we held our annual Ugly (and Pretty) Christmas Sweater Contest. Congratulations to winners Bob Van Cleef for the ugliest, and Meg Lawrence for the prettiest.

Our Session

Susan Perrotta, Recording Clerk

Class of 2022

Diane Kirchhoff
Gary Prentiss

Class of 2023

Arliisa Dean
Kathie Gerlach
Craig Satterlee

Class of 2024

Debbie Eitel
Larry Foray
Susan Perrotta



Childhood Injuries: Fell out of a tree. Fell off my bike. Twisted my ankle.

Adult Injuries: Slept wrong. Sat down too long. Sneezed too hard.

After all the eating I did over the holidays, I am happy to report that my socks still fit!

If you put dry tea bags in your shoes, the tea bags will absorb the odor. So, your shoes smell great, but the tea tastes so bad, it's almost not worth it.

Roadside sobriety tests are getting ridiculous. Last night I had to fold a fitted sheet!

I can't imagine how stressful the holidays were for my husband. Imagine having to wait until Christmas to find out what gifts you bought for everyone?

Yesterday, I had the misfortune of being served by the most uncoordinated and untrained cashier in the whole store. I can assure you that I will never use self-checkout again!

Do not drink and wrap presents. Also, if anyone got a remote control from me for Christmas, I'm gonna need that back.

When I was young, I was a poor golfer. But after years of play and practice, I am no longer young.

I used to just crastinate, but I got so good I went pro.

When a Child Falls Down:

Moms today: "Oh, baby, are you okay? You poor thing! Come, let me give you a cuddle. We'll go get a Band-Aid and some candy to make it all better."

My Mom: Any bleeding or broken bones? No? Good. Now brush it off and next time, when I tell you not to do something, maybe you'll listen to me!