

First Presbyterian Church
221 East Sixth Street at Lincoln
Bloomington, IN 47408
(812) 332-1514



First Press

Celebrating Christ and Serving Community

March 2022 Volume 64, No.3

Inside this Issue

“Journeying through Lent”	2
Lenten Sermon Series	3
Multi-Faith Covid Memorial Service	4
Re-Opening Task Force	5
Session Meeting notes	6
Report of the Treasurer	7
Adult Education	8-10
PNC	11
Racial Justice Task Force	12-13
FPC Equal Exchange Coffee Cart	14
One Great Hour of Sharing	15
Blood Drive	16
A Crack in the Wall	17
Earth Stewards	18
Easter Tulips	19
March Birthdays	20
Calendar	21



“Journeying through Lent”

I am old enough to remember that (until relatively recently) most Presbyterian churches did not follow the lectionary, observe the liturgical seasons (with the exception of Christmas and Easter!), or celebrate the sacraments (Baptism and the Lord’s Supper) in harmony with the liturgical practices of the early church or with an ecumenical awareness of our deep connection to other major Christian bodies (Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Lutheran, Methodist, and Anglican—or even other Reformed groups!). [Do you remember when sermons were always placed at the end of the worship service?].

In fact, when I began my ministry in the late 1980’s, the church I was serving at the time observed Ash Wednesday and Lent for the first time. I recall months long discussions about this at Worship Committee meetings and at Session meetings. For some it just seemed too Catholic! And the imposition of ashes (for some) was a bridge too far!

The background to all of this is that the global ecumenical movement of the 1960’s and 70’s was extraordinarily successful in fostering broad agreement to re-orienting the worship practices of the major Christian traditions around the liturgical practices of the early church. In turn, liturgical resources were developed and “test marketed” in the various churches in the late 1980’s and early 1990’s and were subsequently incorporated into subsequent editions of the PCUSA’s Book of Common Worship.

So, most PCUSA churches have been worshipping in this new, more ecumenically sensitive way for only 25, or at the most, 30 years. By now it all has become routine and expected, but it was a rather “bumpy-ride” in many congregations when all of these changes were first introduced—and these changes were resisted by many (particularly clergy!).

But for me, these changes have brought great comfort and a sense of deep connectedness to the hundreds of millions of other Christians around the world who are hearing the same readings from scripture Sunday after Sunday, celebrating the sacraments in the same or similar ways (although not always agreeing as to their meaning), and marking time by moving through the liturgical year together.

Ash Wednesday (March 2nd, 6pm, w/Imposition of Ashes and Communion) marks the beginning of our Lenten journey with as many as 2 billion other Christians around the world. The Imposition of ashes is a simple recognition of our mortality, human frailty, and the preciousness of human life. Then, week by week, we will walk with Jesus toward Jerusalem and the cross, recall the major events of the last week of Jesus’s life and ministry during Holy Week, mourn his death on Good Friday, and celebrate his resurrection at Easter (God’s “yes” to Jesus’s life, according to Marcus Borg).

I look forward to making this journey (that is both familiar and ever new) with you.

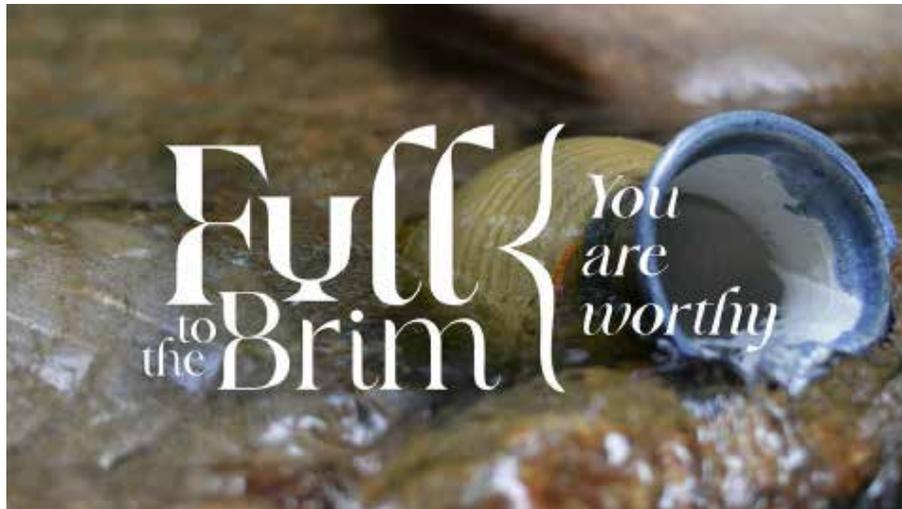
Blessings,
Scott Kenefake, Transitional Senior Pastor



(see: Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry--
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baptism,_Eucharist_and_Ministry.)

The result is that there is now a remarkable amount of similarity between the liturgical practices of the “ecumenically-oriented” Christian denominations and traditions—but each has still maintained some of their distinctive practices. For example, when the PCUSA’s Book of Common Worship and the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer are compared, the similarities are striking. However, a closer reading reveals how we Presbyterians have maintained classic Reformed theological emphases in our prayers such as “covenant,” “God’s sovereignty,” and the “centrality of scripture,” among others.

Lenten Sermon Series: *Full to the Brim, an Expansive Lent*



The scriptures for this Lenten season (in the Revised Common Lectionary, Year C) are filled with parables and promises of God’s abundant and expansive grace. Jesus as a mother hen, a prodigal son welcomed home, a fig tree nurtured with care and hope, precious oil poured out lovingly and freely, stones shouting out with praise —these sacred texts are brimming with a gospel of grace. We’ve done nothing to deserve or earn this grace, and yet, like water, it spills over.

Full to the Brim is an invitation—into a radically different Lent, into a full life. It’s an invitation to be authentically who you are, to counter scarcity and injustice at every turn, to pour out even more grace wherever it is needed. It disrupts the scarcity mentality that certain forms of capitalism, oppression, or hierarchy can plant inside of us. When we allow ourselves to be filled to the brim with God’s lavish love, that love spills over. It reaches beyond us; like water, it rushes and flows, touching everything in its path. We recognize that traditional iterations of Lent often emphasize restraint, confession, and piety. The origins of Lent were that one was to leave their old life behind to fast and prepare to be baptized into a new way of living. In essence, this was a practice of stepping away from the rat race, corrupt power, scarcity mentality, and empty rituals in order to live a more expansive and full life of faith. And so, Full to the Brim trusts the promise of our baptisms—God has already claimed us as God’s own and nothing we can do will ever change or erase that.

Full to the Brim doesn’t ignore or deny sin and suffering. It doesn’t absolve accountability for wrongdoing. Instead it contextualizes our faith. If love is our beginning, how can we live our lives led by love’s promises? It reminds us to live fully—as we pursue justice and hope, or express grief and gratitude. And so, this Lent, let us trust—fully—that we belong to God. Let us increase our capacity to receive and give grace. Let us discover the expansive life God dreams for us.

Multi-Faith COVID Memorial Service – March 23, 2022

Can you believe we are coming up on the two-year anniversary of the COVID-19 pandemic? How does a person even begin to understand the enormity of loss and change we have endured these past two years?

Our friends over at the Unitarian Universalist congregation have undertaken a community wide COVID Memorial Installation in their sanctuary (see photos below). They are recording all the numbers up to the number of people who have died from COVID-19 in the United States. There are a few ways you, too, can get involved in the recognition of another pandemic year.

Multi-Faith Covid Memorial Service – March 23, 2022, 6:30- 7:30 p.m. – 2120 North Fee Lane

Faith leaders in Bloomington, including Pastor Kelley, have been working to shape a service to mark the two-year anniversary of COVID-19 and its effects on individuals and our community. It will be held at Unitarian Universalist congregation at 2120 North Fee Lane. We are planning for a time of remembrance, recognition, music, reflection, and prayer. Please join us.

Covid Memorial Visiting Hour - Sundays, noon-1:00 p.m.

Each Sunday, the Unitarian Universalist congregation is opening our sanctuary to those who would like to visit their Covid Memorial Installation. It is an opportunity to be in the presence of the numbers we have recorded up to this moment for a time of silence and reflection. Those who would like to may light candles of memory, record more of the numbers, offer the name(s) of loved ones who have died of Covid or simply sit for a time of reflection. A pastoral care team member will be present. Masks are required and visitors are expected to be vaccinated and boosted (if eligible).

Interested in adding to the art?

Pastor Kelley has a handful of numbered rolls she is working on. It is a moving and contemplative practice...but also a time-consuming one! She is always welcoming others to help – just ask.



Re-Opening Task Force Recommendations

With continued falling Covid infection rates in Bloomington and Monroe County, the Task Force recommends the following:

- That the choir be allowed to resume singing beginning **Feb. 27**, (together with congregational singing) and additionally recommends that congregational singing resume on **Feb. 20**, as long as all were masked.
- The Christian Education Committee will begin in-person Sunday School on **Feb. 20** for children and youth and on **March 6** for Adults (Faith Forum).
- FPC-related groups may continue to meet at the church as long as everyone is masked. It is expected that attendance will be recorded for each meeting. If anyone tests positive for Covid after such a meeting, it is the responsibility of the group to notify the members present for contact tracing.
- Attendance pads should continue to be numbered, as this is helpful to the church staff in identifying close contacts of anyone in Worship services who may later test positive for Covid.
- If/when the county relaxes the mask mandate, the question was asked as to whether the church will follow suit. It was suggested that FPC should continue to encourage people to remain wearing masks but will not mandate it. It was noted that the congregation has vulnerable children under the age of 5 and some adults who continue to need to be protected. The Task Force will reconvene after the county rules are modified.



SESSION MEETING NOTES - February 13, 2022

Session Actions:

- Approved the Office of the General Assembly Session Statistical Report
- Approved that a letter regarding an encroachment on the Larry Crowe property that was discovered during the property survey.
- Approved Nominating Committee candidates to be proposed for election at Congregational meeting to be conducted March 6, 2022. (see below)

Informational Items:

- Nominating Committee 2022
- o Session Members
 - Sherry Knighton-Schwandt, Chair
 - Randall Burcham
- o To be elected by the Congregation
 - Julie Strycker (Deacons)
 - Carol McGregor
 - Kathy Hollinger
 - Nate Nickel
 - Saundra Tracy
- The Christian Education program will begin meeting in person on Sunday, February 20 for children and youth. Adult education will begin meeting in person in March.
- FPC, St. Thomas Lutheran and Trinity Episcopal Church have initiated a cooperative youth program to facilitate opportunities for the youth of each of these churches to participate in activities together.
- FPC raised over \$10,000 for the Exodus Refugee project. The original goal was \$5,000 needed to participate in the Exodus project. In addition, volunteers from FPC are being trained to work with the refugees.
- A bid has been accepted for the harvest of selected timber, in an environmentally correct manner, on the Larry Crowe property.
- A 2022 mission trip to West Virginia is in the early planning stage. The possibility of a trip will depend on the Covid situation.

Congregational Meeting

On Sunday, March 6th, following the 11 am worship service, there will be a brief Congregational Meeting, to elect a new Nominating Committee, consisting of five members of the church and two members of the Session [Sherry Knighton Schwandt (chair) and Randal Burcham]. The nominees from the church membership are: Carol McGregor, Nate Nickel, Julie Strycker (Deacons), Kathy Hollinger, and Saundra Tracy. Note that nominees are elected for one-year terms but are eligible to serve for up to three years.

Report of the Treasurer

January 31, 2022

General Fund

Balance on Hand January 1, 2022

\$0.00

Income

Prepaid pledges for 2023

Current pledges and contributions of record

31,655.00

Future pledges and contributions of record

-

Prior pledges

-

Plate Offering

40.00

Building Use Income

130.00

Miscellaneous, Reimbursements, Transfers

32,707.28

Bank Interest

1.06

Ledger entries

0.98

Total Receipts

64,533.34

Disbursements

Payroll

(31,344.50)

Non-payroll GF

(11,101.54)

Other GF Checks/Disb (includes fund transfers, non budgeted items)

(2,639.65)

Total Disbursements

(45,085.69)

Balance on Hand January 31, 2022

\$19,447.65

Special Funds, Balance on Hand January 31, 2022

\$96,510.44

Endowment (New Covenant Funds): Balance on Hand January 31, 2022

\$ 92,526.91

Reserve Fund January 31, 2022

\$ 140,360.82

Parking Lot Fund January 31, 2022

\$ 52,023.14

Parking Lot Mortgage (monthly payments: 2,413.99)

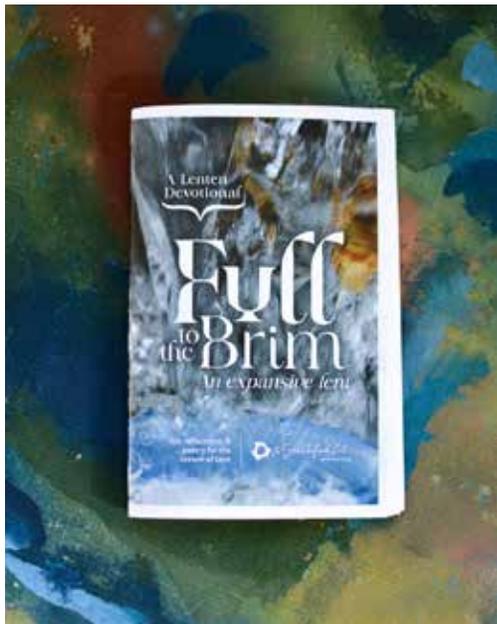
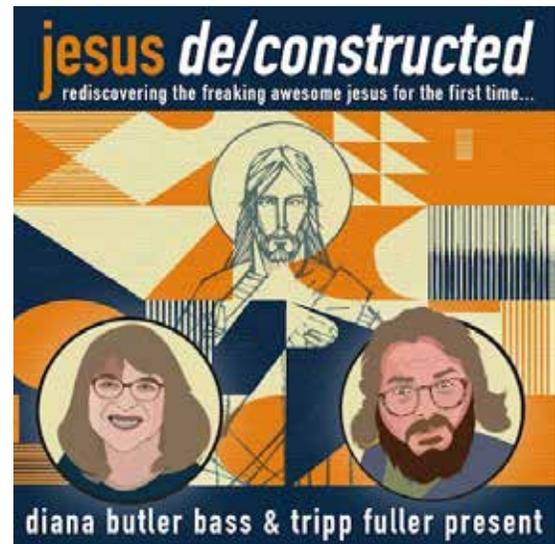
\$ (187,965.01)

2.75

Treasurer

A 6 Week Lenten Encounter with Jesus

We invite you to join the Online course for Lent. This is the link where you can find all the information. <https://homebrewedchristianity.lpages.co/jesusdeconstructed/>



FULL TO THE BRIM LENT DEVOTIONAL BOOKLET

Beginning with Ash Wednesday, this Devotional follows the Revised Common Lectionary (Year C) through Easter Sunday. Each week offers: commentary poetry, visual art, and written reflections, along with hymns and journaling prompts for Holy Week.

(Copies available at the Welcome Center)

Lenten Bible Study - Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. – starting March 8 – April 5

As we embark on the Matthew 25 journey, we rejoice in knowing that we are not alone! Recently, a collaboration has been created between FPC Bloomington, FPC Columbus, Fairlawn Presbyterian and North Christian (Disciples of Christ) churches. During Lent, these four congregations, together will be studying Matthew 25 on Tuesday evenings via zoom. We hope you'll join us!

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83939714267?pwd=eE90alUyMWxWUFA5NkdsQUJmdnpuQT09>

Meeting ID: 839 3971 4267 Passcode: 522470

ADULT EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR MARCH

Adult Education at FPC is back in person—as well as through Zoom and recordings. Take advantage of some great opportunities through Bible study as well as through classes on practicing your faith regarding contemporary issues.

Lectionary Bible Study

Not unlike children and youth, adults need regular Bible study for their own faith development. The Lectionary Bible Study provides an exciting opportunity for you to engage with other adults in discussing Bible passages based on the weekly Revised Common Lectionary, primarily used by the ministers in their sermons. The class uses a PC(USA) curriculum, *Feasting on the Word* to enrich the study. No prior Biblical knowledge is necessary, and you won't feel lost if you miss a session. Volunteers take turns leading the spirited discussion.

Beginning March 27, the in-person study will be held at 10:00am in Room 5. Jim Ernest and Cathy Hahn coordinate this class.

Faith Forum

Faith Forum is an exciting way to understand how your Christian faith relates to contemporary issues. The forum discussions are led by experts in the field coming from FPC, the local community, and/or PC(USA) denomination. Join us for the following Faith Forums in March:

March 6: Introduction to Full to the Brim: An Expansive Lent. These 40 days of Lent are full of rich tradition, ancient practices, and invitations to a new way of life. This year we are using A Sanctified Art's worship series: *Full to the Brim*. The creators write: "The origins of Lent were that one was to leave their old life behind to fast and prepare to be baptized into a new way of living. In essence, this was a practice of stepping away...in order to live a more expansive and full life of faith. And so, our Lenten theme, *Full to the Brim*, is an invitation—into a radically different Lent, into a full life." Join Pastor Kelley on Sunday March 6 at 10 a.m. to learn more about the series and find practices for engaging more deeply in our journey of Lent.

March 13: Join intergenerational events

March 20: Join intergenerational events

March 27: Public Education and Our Faith. Public education is in the spotlight at the current Indiana legislature, in Board of Education meetings, and as the focus of our own FPC Racial Justice Taskforce. Race, sexuality, and other values are being debated regarding their place in public schools and the role of teachers. These are very relevant to how we practice our Christian faith and are an important element of our Reformed theology. Join Deb Prenkert, FPC Elder and MCSSC Director of Elementary Education, to understand the territory in which educators are facing attacks and what our own church can do to respond to the needs of public schools, students, and teachers.

Faith Forum is provided in three formats:

1. In person on Sunday mornings at 10:00am in Room 7.
2. Virtually through zoom connections with Room 7 at 10:00am on Sundays. The Zoom link will appear in the Friday announcements before the Sunday class.
3. Recordings after Sunday on FPC's vimeo site: vimeo.com/showcase/fpcchristianed

Questions? Contact Gary Crow at gcrow@iu.edu

Upcoming Faith Forums:

Several exciting Faith Forum sessions are planned. Watch Friday announcements for details.

Implicit Bias: Workshop with “Brother William.” William Morris will lead us in a mini-workshop on Implicit Bias. Our presenter is a Bloomington attorney, whose private practice includes civil rights, housing, and employment law. “Brother William” is known throughout the community as the DJ host of the Soul Kitchen on Fridays and Saturdays on WFIU. He is an ordained deacon serving at St. David’s Episcopal Church in Bean Blossom.

Covenant Network of Presbyterians (CNP) The CNP is a broad-based, national group of clergy and lay leaders working for a church that is simultaneously faithful, just, and whole. The Covenant Network seeks to: support the mission and unity of the Presbyterian Church (USA); articulate and act on the church’s historic, progressive vision; work for a fully inclusive church; and find ways to live out the graciously hospitable gospel by living together with all our fellow members in the PC(USA). Rev. Brian Ellison a Presbyterian minister and Executive Director of CNP, will join us to discuss what it means to be part of the Covenant Network of Presbyterians.

What is a Columbarium and Why FPC Might Consider Such a Memorial Space? Join JoAnn Main, Michael Williams, and Don Hollinger in a discussion/presentation of plans and to answer your questions during this Faith Forum.

Homelessness in Bloomington: FPC’s Current and Future Contributions. FPC has been involved in addressing homelessness for several years through our work with three different shelter programs. This Faith Forum series will focus on each of these three programs: Wheeler Mission; Shalom Center; and Robin and Trisha’s House. Representatives from each of the three programs will separately present a Faith Forum that examines how they address homelessness and how FPC can be involved.

“This Is the Word of the Lord”: **How the Bible Became Text and Why It Matters.** This Faith Forum is an author talk of the book, which is an overview of the evolution of the contents of the Bible from its earliest oral traditions to the final priestly compilation in the 5th century BCE. Why is it important to know this history? Because the evolution of these texts and the way historical circumstances shaped their contents affect how we understand the Bible today. With such historical knowledge, people of faith can respond to those who insist the Bible is inerrant and those who insist the Bible is irrelevant.

Bill Thomason received a B. A. in English from Oklahoma Baptist University (1965) and a B. D. (1969) and Ph. D. (1972) from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has taught philosophy and religion (the University of Louisville, Stetson University, and Indiana University Southeast), managed bookstores, and sold books as a publishers’ representative. Thomason is the author of two other books, and, now retired, he is concentrating on writing about biblical, theological, and cinematic subjects.

Pastoral Nominating Committee

The past month has been a busy one for your PNC. The Ministry Information Form (MIF) was formally submitted to PCUSA, where several matches were made with potential candidates for the Head of Staff position here at FPC. Along with these matches, self-referrals and recommendations from individuals have been made as well. Ads have been placed in Presbyterian Outlook, Presbyterians Today and Christian Century.

We have received Pastor Information Forms (PIFs) from several candidates. While we will continue to receive PIFs, we have begun the process of discernment, during which God will help us bring the right person to FPC. In the context of the church, discernment is the way we will make thoughtful and prayerful judgements through awareness, understanding and action. First, we look at different candidates based upon their PIFs. Second, upon reviewing PIFs and online sermons, we consider who to interview. And third, we begin interviewing potential candidates. At each stage of the discernment process, we are your representatives, guided by God to make the best choice for both FPC and the individual being considered. Currently we are in the consideration stage, moving toward the interviewing stage. We'll keep you updated as we move through the critical stages of the process. Please continue to pray for us.

As always, your PNC appreciates and needs thoughtful feedback.

You may address questions or suggestions to any PNC member: Gary Crow (gcrow@indiana.edu), Nancy Voskuil (nvoskuil@mccsc.edu), Karen Hahn (kehahn@gmail.com), Dan Conkle (conkle@indiana.edu), Addie Schmucker (sadiedogrocks@gmail.com), or Jeff Main (jmain@rwbaird.com).



Gary Crow-Co Chair



Nancy Voskuil-Co Chair



Dan Conkle



Karen Hahn



Jeff Main



Addie Schmucker

Racial Justice Task Force Equal Exchange: Living Out Matthew 25

Written by Debbi Conkle

Kelley Jepsen's letter in last month's First Press talked about our Matthew 25 journey and of our exciting new partnership in the Myrtle Cohort. We will certainly learn and do new things as we journey forth with other churches, and with each other.

However, as part of our journey toward living out the Matthew 25 initiative, it is also worthwhile to look at what our church is already doing, all the while keeping our new focus in mind. As a member of the Outreach Committee, I try to keep up with the news of the PCUSA Mission Agency. This past November, I was excited to spot a video entitled "Equal Exchange: Living Out Matthew 25."



As background, our church has been connected with Equal Exchange for over 20 years, selling their coffee, chocolate, and tea products each month at our FPC coffee cart. Over the last 10 years, we have purchased an average of \$2,700 of products each year. Equal Exchange is a worker-owned co-operative that has been helping small scale farmers in over 20 different countries stay on their land, support their families, plan for the future, and care for the environment. They help create a more equitable world by providing a steady buyer and fair prices.

As one example, José Luis Castillo Vasquez is a member of the Las Colinas Cooperative in El Salvador. He and his wife Reyna plan to send all their children to school. "I want to send my thanks to all of the congregations that purchase our coffee. Thanks to you, we have a seed of hope in our lives."

Equal Exchange values its connection with churches through its Interfaith Program. Currently, over 788 Presbyterian congregations purchase fairly traded products from Equal Exchange. As we purchase products from Equal Exchange, a percentage of the proceeds are returned to the Small Farmer Fund within the Presbyterian Hunger Program. Jessica Maudlin Phelps, the spokesperson for that program, stated, "The Presbyterian Hunger Program is proud to partner with so many great organizations that allow Presbyterians to actively engage in the world around us, so our faith comes alive and we wake up to new possibilities! Equal Exchange and the Presbyterian Coffee Project are just one way that Presbyterians can engage Fair Trade as a way of living out Christ's urgent call to be a church of action, where God's love, justice and mercy shine forth and are contagious."





Our FPC youth talking with students in the Posoltega College Scholarship Program in 2017

In addition to that, you, the members of First Presbyterian Church, have been purchasing these products knowing that the profit from each chocolate bar, box of tea, or bag of coffee goes toward our Posoltega, Nicaragua mission, which itself addresses systemic inequality in the Global South. Nicaragua is the second poorest country in the western hemisphere, and through our long-time working partnership with our brothers and sisters in Posoltega, we are indeed reaching out to some of “the least of these.”

However, the story does not end there. As reported in the video from November, Equal Exchange has recently partnered with New Communities, Inc., a grassroots organization working to empower African American families in southwest Georgia. “For Black farmers in the United States, land ownership is tied to freedom. But systemic racial discrimination has pushed many out of agriculture. Equal Exchange’s partners at New Communities, who supply our fair trade pecans, know the power of land — and these challenges — firsthand. Over the organization’s fifty-year history, these tenacious farmers have experienced more than their share of hardship and prejudice. Yet today, they are still farming and looking to the future.”

Last year, Equal Exchange bought all of their pecan halves and helped find a buyer for the pieces that are a result of the shelling process. Shirley Sherrod, one of the founders of New Communities, says their business is growing. “Without Equal Exchange, I am not sure of what we would have done because just like in the past, we would have been locked out of markets that actually would help bring in some income.”

It is good to continue the things that we have been doing, and to see ways of doing new things through our Matthew 25 work. Thank you for your support.

First Presbyterian Church has already begun buying New Communities’ pecans through Equal Exchange. Come check them out at the FPC Coffee Cart this month!

FPC Equal Exchange Coffee Cart *from the Outreach Committee*



The Coffee Cart will be outside the Lyman Hall entrance on Sunday, March 6, after worship. Please visit the cart if you would like to purchase coffee, tea, chocolate, or our newest product – pecans!

You will be helping support small-scale farmers, including Equal Exchange's newest partner, New Communities, in Albany, Georgia, and our church's ongoing mission in Posoltega, Nicaragua.

If you are unable to come at that time, feel free to arrange for free delivery to your home.

Contact Debbi Conkle at debbiconkle@gmail.com or 812-333-1712.

Coffee \$10: Breakfast Blend Drip, Hazelnut Crème Drip, Organic Decaf Drip, Café Nica BEAN, Organic Decaf BEAN

Coffee \$12: Sisters' Blend Drip (1 lb.)

Tea \$4: English Breakfast, Earl Grey, Chai, Green, Jasmine Green, Decaf English Breakfast, *Ginger Caffeine free, Peppermint Caffeine free, Rooibos Caffeine free*

Chocolate \$4: Panama Extra Dark (80%), Very Dark Chocolate (71%), Dark Chocolate Whole Almond w/ sea salt (55%), Dark Chocolate Caramel Crunch w/ sea salt (55%)
\$3.50 Special SALE Dark Chocolate w/ mint crunch (67%)

Cocoa \$6.50: Organic Baking Cocoa Mix (8 oz.),
\$5.50 Special SALE Organic Hot Cocoa Mix (12 oz.) (3 left)

Pecans \$9.00: **New!** Natural Pecans (10oz.)



Checks may be written to First Presbyterian Church, with COFFEE on the memo line.

One Great Hour of Sharing *from the Outreach Committee*



Every gift makes a difference
in the life of someone
who deserves
God's love and support.



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT

03.02.22-
04.17.22

Received during the season of Lent (March 2 – April 17), each gift to One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) helps to improve the lives of people in challenging situations. **In fact, One Great Hour of Sharing is the single, largest way Presbyterians come together every year to work toward a better world.**

Around the world, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. The three programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing - Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People - all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance works alongside communities as they recover and find hope after the devastation of natural or human-caused disasters, and support for refugees. (Receives 32% of funds raised)

Presbyterian Hunger Program takes action to alleviate hunger, care for creation, and the systemic causes of poverty so all may be fed. (Receives 36% of funds raised)

Self-development of People invests in communities responding to their experiences of oppression, poverty and injustice and educates Presbyterians about the impact of these issues. (Receives 32% of funds raised)

Here at First Presbyterian Church, Bloomington, we receive offerings throughout the season of Lent and send them in together as one special gift after Easter. Last year, your generous donations totaled \$2,843. Thank you! We hope that you will again consider giving generously to One Great Hour of Sharing.

Checks may be made out to First Presbyterian Church, with OGHS on the memo line, and placed in the offering plates or mailed to First Presbyterian Church 221 E. Sixth Street, Bloomington, IN 47408.

Or go to <https://www.fpcbloomington.org/> and click Give Now, listing OGHS in the Notes.



You Gave blood. **You helped save lives.**

Thank you to First Presbyterian Church members and friends for your blood donations and volunteer help at the February 16, 2022, Pat Riggins Red Cross blood drive.

56 units of blood were given. This is the highest collection total at FPC. This amount can go on to save as many as 168 lives! In addition, there were 5 first time donors.

“I hope everyone at the church is as excited about that as I am because it’s really something to celebrate! It’s not overstating things to say that those units are going to be the difference between life and death for patients in hospitals as soon as next week! It’s truly a gift you all have given to those patients, and I know I speak on behalf of not only myself and the Red Cross, but the patients and healthcare workers that need that blood when I say – THANK YOU!!!”

Lance White - Red Cross Account Representative.

Again, thanks to all, especially Don Hollinger who coordinated it all so well. Everything went smoothly. The next blood drive at First Presbyterian Church will be on Thursday, June 2, 2022. Please mark your calendars.

- submitted by Don Hanna



A Crack in the Walk *By Pat Stackhouse*

Melanie saw a crack in her sidewalk. As she looked down, she noticed a tiny blade of greenery that resembled a weed. Her first inclination was to yank it up. But something told her not to. She glanced down again and walked away from it.

Each day as she walked by it, she noticed it growing larger all the time. Again, something told her to not pull it up. Maybe there was a reason, because little by little it grew and grew into a flowering bush.

How does this compare with us? We remain as small as the greenery until we are in the cross of Jesus. Then in the cross we begin to grow and flourish and become beautiful and whole.

Let me add something to this story. I had a tall bunch of greenery growing between my shrubs. My husband wanted to cut them down. He kept telling me they were nothing but weeds. I remembered Melanie's story. I said, "Let's just give them time."

It wasn't long until they grew into the loveliest purple flowers I have ever seen. I have enjoyed them so much and have thought of the Biblical meaning that we can grow and flourish in the cross of Jesus and become beautiful, whole, and blessed.



Earth Stewards *By Allan Edmonds and Norm Holy*

Can anything good for the environment come out of the Indiana Legislature this year?

Indiana is in the midst of its 2022 legislative session, currently scheduled to run through March 14. A few hot-button issues get most of the publicity. But much goes on below the radar.

If we're concerned about the environment and the existential threat of global warming and climate change, we should encourage and support the rapid expansion of

- wind power
- solar power, and
- electric vehicles

and associated infrastructure. In Indiana we have lots of room for progress!

But a recent op-ed piece at the Indiana Environmental Reporter, by Wendy Bredhold, with the Sierra Club, details a long list of bills of environmental importance that are going nowhere. At the same time she points to bills moving forward on behalf of powerful business interests like BP, Reliable Energy (re-branding of the Indiana Coal Council), and the nuclear industry, all promoting harmful or unproven technologies, while financially protecting business interests, pushing costs for unproven technology onto rate payers.

As individual citizens we need to connect with organizations that can work with legislators on a regular basis, including the Hoosier Environmental Council, the Sierra Club, and Hoosier Interfaith Power and Light. For issues before the Indiana legislature related to the environment, the Hoosier Environmental Council at www.hecweb.org is an especially valuable resource. Also check out Indiana Environmental Reporter for good current information.

It is time for people of faith to take a more proactive, issue-oriented, non-partisan approach to these and other issues of profound importance.



It is time to purchase tulips to beautify our sanctuary for Easter.

Order yours today!

Dedications will be printed in the Easter bulletin and in the Friday email.

*The price is **\$13**, with a portion of the proceeds going to FPC Youth.*

The deadline to order tulips is March 31. *Please pay with your order. You may take your tulips home after the 11 am Easter service.*

Thank you from the Worship Committee!

Click [HERE](#) for online copies.

Hard copies are available at the Welcome Center.





3/1 - Joe Harrell, Evan Darling

3/3 - Hank Ruff

3/5 - Tom Gardner

3/6 - Julie Farris

3/7 - Nona Melton

3/8 - Steve Schechter

3/10 - Dick Darling

3/12 - Jim Coppedge, Clara Voskuil

3/14 - Ann Schechter, Wes Ratliff, Cooper Harriss

3/15 - Wendy VanderZee, Garth Goodlett

3/19 - Nancy Gettinger

3/20 - Hana Elliott

3/21 - Carol McGregor, Bill Adams

3/22 - Ginny Coombs

3/25 - Dana Holy

3/27 - Eric Swank

3/29 - Bill McGregor, David Burkhart

3/30 - Sue Connell

MARCH 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 6:00 pm Ash Wednesday Service	3	4	5
10 am Sunday School 11 am Worship Service (Communion) 12 pm PNC Meeting	6:30 pm Christian Education	7 pm Koinonia Circle	6 pm Worship Committee	5:45 pm Bell Choir Practice 7pm Choir Practice		
10 am Sunday School 11 am Worship Service 12 pm PNC Meeting 6 pm FPC Session	11:30 am Emmaus Group	6 pm Membership Ctte		12 pm Prayer Gathering 5:45 pm Bell Choir Practice 7pm Choir Practice <i>St. Patrick's Day</i>		
10 am Sunday School 11 am Worship Service 12 pm PNC Meeting	6 pm Theology on Tap		Are 10 Grocery Bagging & Delivery	Are 10 Grocery Bagging & Delivery 5:45 pm Bell Choir Practice 7pm Choir Practice		
10 am Sunday School 11 am Worship Service 12 pm PNC Meeting 5:30 pm Youth Group	11:30 am Emmaus Group			5:45 pm Bell Choir Practice 7pm Choir Practice		