

COVENANT CHIMES

Volume 41, No. 2

February 2024



OUR NEIGHBORS' PLACE

Our Neighbors' Place overflow homeless shelter will be open March 13-26 at FPCC. See how you can help!



SOUPER BOWL OF CARING

Who will win the coveted "Golden Ladle" in our annual Souper Bowl of Caring event? Join us on Feb. 4th and find out!



FEBRUARY ACTIVITIES

From "Souper Bowls" and Connections Dinners to Candlelight Concerts and Faith Formation classes, there is something for everyone in February!



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WHAT IS PER CAPITA?

by **Rev. Chris Weichman**, Senior Pastor

What is Per capita? The term is familiar for some of us, but unfamiliar for others. Each year, every church in the denomination is assigned a per capita apportionment by their presbytery. This per capita pays the expenses for the three levels of government above the church Session. For our church, these three levels are the Lake Erie Presbytery (local), the Synod of the Trinity (regional) and the General Assembly (national).

Per capita is the fundamental way in which all the nearly 10,000 congregations, synods, and presbyteries connect, participate, and share in the work of the wider church. Per capita is the primary source of funding for the Office of the General Assembly, the Synod of the Trinity, and the Presbytery of Lake Erie.

On the national level per capita pays for the meeting of the General Assembly and helps to cover the cost of travel, meals and lodging for commissioners. Per capita pays for Church Leadership Connection (CLC) the system that helps connect ministers and churches searching for pastoral leadership and for the Presbyterian Mission Agency, the main governing board of the PC(USA).

Locally per capita pays for the work of the Presbytery of Lake Erie. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) which helps to prepare candidates for ministry and the Committee on Ministry (COM) which helps churches to facilitate relations between congregations, ministers, and the presbytery, and to settle difficulties when possible. Without per capita the church doesn't work on the national or local level.

Each year First Covenant is financially assessed for each member of our congregation. Per capita is not a tax. Nothing happens to us if we don't pay per capita, but we do give it because it strengthens the church locally and nationally. The per capita for 2024 is \$34.00 per member. As part of your giving to the church we ask that you consider making a per capita contribution. In the next several weeks you will receive a letter further explaining the importance of per capita along with a return envelope. Your contribution will help defray this expense and support the larger mission of the church.

In January, the church will be updating our membership and financial software. The new software called "Realm" will enable you to access the church directory online as well as see your up to date giving statement and statements from past years. To make the transition as smooth as possible, we need to make sure we have your email address. If you have a new or updated email address, please let JoAnn in the Business Office know. You can contact her at joann.peters@firstcovenanterie.org We will be sending out more information about the transition and how you can maximize the available information soon.

Cover Photo: First Sunday Hike - Jan. 2024

SPRINGHILL SENIOR LIVING VISIT DeSANCTIS CRECHES

As we closed out our holiday season, residents from Springhill Senior Living had the opportunity to visit FPCC to learn about the DeSanctis creches. Dr. DeSanctis shared with the group his creative process in constructing these beautiful works of art.



FIRST SUNDAY HIKE

First Sunday Hikes is a wonderful initiative allowing members of the congregation and community to gather together and enjoy the natural beauty of state parks. On Sunday, January 7th, a group met at Headwaters Park for this event. The hike was a great success! Participants enjoyed the snowy scenery and fresh air.



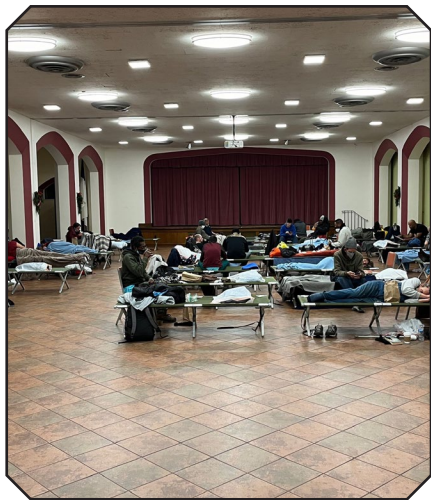
BACK TO THE GRIND - GU STUDENTS RETURN

We enjoyed a Back to the Grind coffee event on a chilly January morning. This event is a great opportunity to celebrate the spring semester return of our Gannon University neighbors. We are proud to collaborate with GU on various events throughout the year, and this is just one of the many ways we show our support for our neighbors.



OUR NEIGHBORS' PLACE AT COVENANT

BY STEVE OSBORN - EVENING LEAD



We completed our first 14 day run with the Our Neighbor's Place homeless shelter from December 27 to January 10. We had two nights with 39 guests, and all the others were at the full complement of 40 overnight guests. Many people, mostly from FPCC, volunteered for the 140 four-hour shifts needed to run the shelter for two weeks. In addition, approximately 700 evening meals were made, again mostly by church members.

Over the course of the fortnight, our guests went from strangers, to people with names, to our friends with whom we shared time. On the last night, I interviewed about 25 of our guests asking how things were going. I consistently heard great things about our volunteers (that everyone was hospitable, accommodating, fair, kind and friendly) and our program (the food was great, the coffee good, and a great facility). Pat Tracy finished her last night as a leader after twelve years of service. She is so admired by the overnight guests and her co-workers.

FPCC will host the shelter for another two weeks from March 13 to March 26, ending in the middle of Holy Week. We can use help again. Call Karen Wiechman (724-456-0408) to volunteer for a shift. Call Cathy Anderson (412-400-6015) or Chris DeCrease (814-323-2311) to provide a bag meal. Call Rick Bernardini (814-323-1207) to help with the set-up and take-down.



MEALS FOR OUR NEIGHBORS' PLACE AT FPCC

In March, our church is hosting Our Neighbors' Place for a two week period. *We are looking for meal bags which would cover Wednesday, March 13-Tuesday, March 26.*

Meal bags should have a sandwich, fruit (no apples), cookies or individual lunch cakes and pretzels/chips, napkins, and perhaps a breakfast bar (soft food for easy chewing). The church will supply brown bags, baggies, condiments, hairnets, and plastic gloves. On the scheduled night, bagged meals can be prepared before 4 PM or after 6 PM on the date of service. Bags prepared at another location must be at the church by 6:45 PM.

DO MINISTRIES LIKE SUNDAY SUPPERS AND THE ONP SHELTER MATTER?

Does your embrace of visitors and guests matter? Do ministries like Sunday Supper and the ONP shelter matter?

Here is a letter from an old friend who was welcomed and cared for by the congregation almost 20 years ago...

Merry Christmas to my church family at First Covenant...

I follow you all now on social media. The photos of you all warm my heart. Thank you for what you did for me 19 years ago. The church as a whole taught me it is better to give than to receive. To share love, to be kind, to follow God regardless of life's situations. Every complication, every difficult period is a lesson.

I left Erie at 29. I am now 47! I was in recovery from addiction. Now I am almost 19 years sober. I am living my best life, not to mention I am finally in a church I love, a Lutheran Church. I attend bible study and church on the regular. I live comfortably and just paid off my car. I went from homeless to Hellertown (outside of Allentown)! I have had the same job for 8 years. I am active in community outreach and I am a member of the local Lion's Club. I am blessed every day with goodness.

I wouldn't be where I am today without your love and support – and God's good grace. I still remember, with a soul that is now peaceful and a grateful heart.

I love all of you. I am healthy, happy and finally where I am supposed to be. There is no plan to visit Erie soon. One day I might. It is a difficult thing for me, so many ghosts. Yet maybe a visit will help in my healthy journey of healing. Anyway, this letter is a letter of gratitude. Thank you for your love.

Love always,
Emily

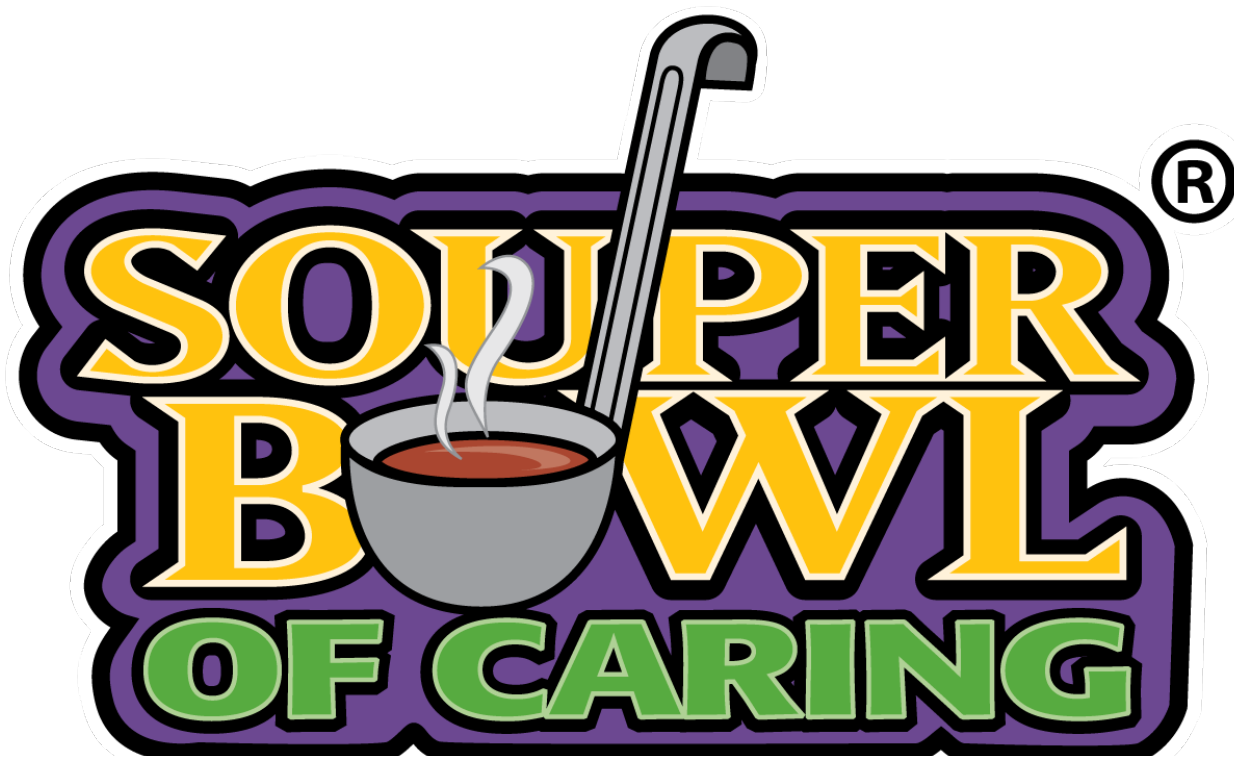
ERIE CITY MISSION LUNCH PREP

The church's partnership with Gannon English as a Second Language students has been an excellent opportunity to bring the community together to prepare lunch for 150 neighbors. This partnership has regularly occurred on the first Thursday of every month. We want to extend our gratitude to Linda Holmes for serving as our Erie City Mission liaison.



CRITICAL NEED FOR SLEEPING BAGS

The ONP's Seasonal Overflow Shelter requires more sleeping bags to keep the homeless warm during winter nights. Donations can be dropped off at the EUMA's Headquarters during office hours. Donations must meet the necessary requirements (good to -30 F) for winter conditions. Contact EUMA on Facebook or call 814-456-8073 for inquiries.



SOUPER BOWL OF CARING - FEBRUARY 4TH

Each year, the youth group chooses a nonprofit in our community to raise money for during the Souper Bowl of Caring. Since 2018, the youth and children of First Covenant have raised close to \$5,000 for non-profits, including the Multicultural Resource Center, after-school programs at Erie High School, Community Shelter Services, Second Harvest Food Bank, and Shriners Children Hospital of Erie. This year, the youth have chosen the A.N.N.A. Shelter as the recipient of the Souper Bowl fundraiser.

On Sunday, February 4th, after the 11 AM worship, children and youth with their families are invited to make their best soup and compete to raise money in Knox Hall. The last time we did a Souper Bowl like this was in 2020, and our youth students wanted to bring back the fun! Students are welcome to sign up with an aunt, uncle, or grandparent to compete with—especially helpful if two or more kids want to compete in a family. Bring your soup in a crock pot. We will provide the bowls and spoons for everyone in the congregation to try! We will also have salad and bread rolls to go along with the soup. The congregation is invited to try each soup and vote with their money (cash or check). We will announce the winner of the "Golden Ladle" award and the amount raised at the end of the lunch.



HOLIDAY GREETINGS FROM NEAR & FAR

As the holiday season has ended, we always enjoy reflecting on some of the Christmas greetings we receive from near and far. From our Iraqi friend, Abdullah, who now lives in Texas: "To my kind and sweet family in First Presbyterian of the Covenant...I wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays. I wish I can be there during Christmas times. May the season be full of love, joy and blessings for you and your families and your loved ones." We feel blessed by all of the holiday greetings we received this season!



THANK YOU GAUDENZIA NEIGHBORS



We want to extend a big "thank you" to our 7th Street neighbors from Gaudenzia's Community House for helping "undecorate" the church and for clean-up assistance after the ONP shelter moved out! It's important to remember that we're all in this together and can make a difference in each other's lives in one way or another. Thanks, ladies!

KIRK HOUSE STUDENTS ATTEND ERIE OTTERS GAME

Gannon International students residing at Kirk House were thrilled to attend their first-ever ice hockey game. The match featured Erie Otters versus Owen Sound, and despite the Otters losing, the students enjoyed a fantastic evening. The gift of the tickets from Gannon was much appreciated, and it allowed the students to experience a new activity and bond over a shared interest.



COMING SOON - KIRK HOUSE 50TH ANNIVERSARY WEEKEND

We're currently working to finalize the details of the Kirk House 50th Anniversary Weekend with a possible date in April. More information to come.

LENT: MEETING JESUS AT THE TABLE

In our tradition, the Lord's Table is always before us. "This is the joyful feast of the people of God! People will come from north and south, and from east and west to sit at the table in the kingdom of God." This is the beginning of the communion liturgy. It beckons us to remember and imagine that we are gathering at a table that stretches across the globe through time and space, with people of all different traditions and cultures. At this table all are welcome. The Table remains a hope and anticipated reality where we are united with one another and Christ.

Tables are important to the Gospel story: Jesus shares meals with many people. His last night is spent at the table with the disciples preparing them for what is next. How can the table stories in the Gospel prepare us? How can they shape and reform our understanding of who Jesus is? What good can come from retelling the meal stories in the Gospel when, for so many, mealtimes are not pleasurable? Many eat alone, others live in food deserts, and several others struggle with the weight food holds in their lives.

As the author of *Meeting Jesus at the Table*, Cynthia Campell writes, "When food and eating become metaphors for God's reign, it is as much about justice as it is about spiritual nourishment." We hope you will join us on this journey of deep reflection of self and community as we examine the table stories of Christ.

LENTEN SCHEDULE

We are hosting many events this Lenten Season to help prepare our hearts and minds for Easter and Christ's resurrection. All are welcome to take part! More information will be released as it is finalized.

| | |
|----------|---|
| Feb. 14: | Ash Wednesday Fish Dinner, 5:15 PM (Knox Hall) |
| Feb. 14: | Ash Wednesday Service, 6:30 PM: Mark 6:30-44 "What are you hungry for?" |
| Feb. 18: | First Sunday of Lent, 11 AM: Matthew 9:9-13 "The Welcome Table" |
| Feb. 25: | Second Sunday of Lent, 11 AM: Luke 7:36-50, "Dinner Interrupted" |
| Mar. 3: | Third Sunday of Lent, 11 AM: Luke 14:7-14, "Making Room at the Table" |
| Mar. 10: | Fourth Sunday of Lent, 11 AM: Luke 14:15-24 "Empty Chairs at the Table" |
| Mar. 17: | Fifth Sunday of Lent, 11 AM: John 12:1-8 "Meal with Chosen Family" |
| Mar. 24: | Palm Sunday, 11 AM |
| Mar. 28: | Maundy Thursday Dinner, 5:15 PM (Knox Hall) |
| Mar. 28: | Maundy Thursday, 6:30 PM: Matthew 26:17-30 "A Meal of Memories" |
| Mar. 29: | Good Friday, 6:30 PM: Taize Service |
| Mar. 31: | Easter Sunday, 11 AM: Luke 24:13-35, "Revived by the Breaking of Bread" |

SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

Faith Formation classes will be held at 9:30 AM in rooms throughout the building. Worship takes place at 11:00 AM in the Sanctuary and Facebook LIVE, with Fellowship after the service in the Parlor.

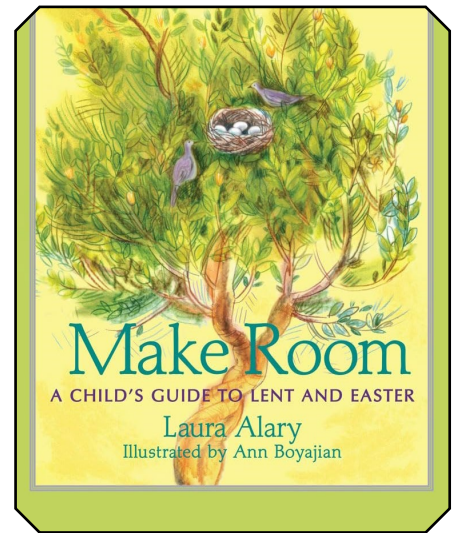
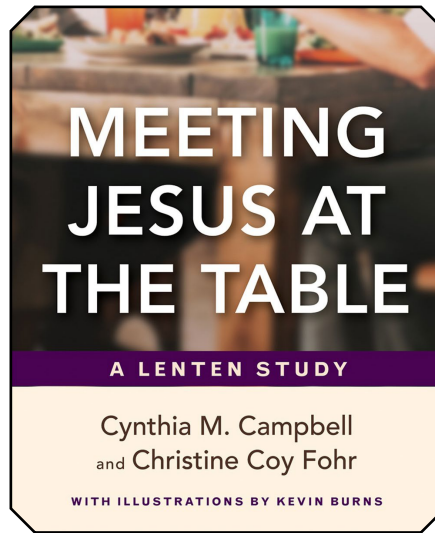
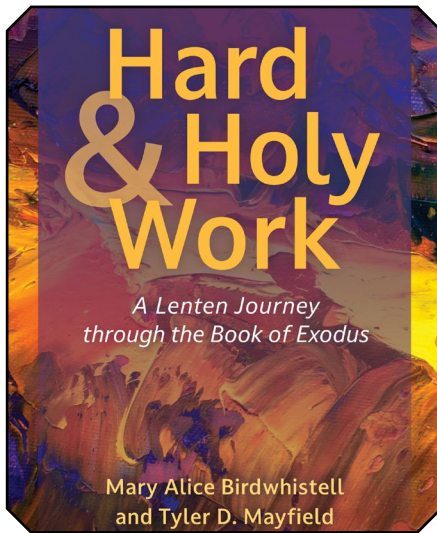
ADULT SMALL GROUP STUDIES DURING LENT:

This year, we are encouraging folks to join a study group instead of providing one devotional. Three studies are happening weekly during Lent, each with a different book and theme. Please sign up with Pastor Britney by Wednesday, February 7th, if you are interested in a study. That way, books can be ordered in time for Ash Wednesday. There is no cost for the study, but we are asking for a donation for the cost of the book. All books are \$10. If you would like a book but are unable to join a study, you are still welcome to sign up.

Pastor's Class, Sundays 9:30 AM during Lent in Fidelis Room: "Meeting Jesus at the Table" by Cynthia M. Campbell and Christine Coy Fohr

Women and the Word, Tuesdays 7:00 PM beginning February 20th in the Parlor: Book to be determined, please check the weekly bulletin for more information

Wednesday Morning Bible Study, Wednesdays 10:30 AM beginning February 14th in Room 116: "Hard and Holy Work: A Lenten Journey through the Book of Exodus" by Tyler D. Mayfield and Mary Alice Birdwhistell



CHILDREN'S LENT BOOKS:

On Sunday, February 11th, all children in Pre-K through 5th Grade will receive "Make Room: A Child's Guide to Lent and Easter" by Laura Alary. This is a beautiful book with lots of pictures and information that families can work through together. It is a helpful resource that answers many questions children have about this season.

UPCOMING EVENTS

CANDLELIGHT CONCERTS

They're back! We are excited to partner with Fever, a global live entertainment platform, to bring an extraordinary candlelight concert experience to Erie! Our Sanctuary has already played host to this unique event, and it has been met with overwhelming popularity. Please join us for a very special Valentine's concert:

Friday, Feb. 9th at 6:00 PM & 8:30 PM: A Valentine's Day Special with music from "Romeo and Juliet," "Breakfast at Tiffany's," "Casablanca" and more!

Tickets start at \$28 and can be purchased online at feverup.com/en/erie/candlelight. *Please note that tickets can only be purchased on the feverup.com website.



ASH WEDNESDAY FISH DINNER & WORSHIP SERVICE - FEB. 14TH

Come and join us on Wednesday, Feb. 14th, the First Day of Lent, for a delicious fish dinner! This Connections Dinner will begin at 5:15 PM in Knox Hall. Dinner is \$6 for adults and \$3 for college students and children. Be sure to make your reservations by Feb. 12th at noon!

After dinner, all are welcome to gather in the Sanctuary and Facebook LIVE for our Ash Wednesday Worship Service. We hope you can join us for an evening filled with delicious food, warm conversations, and a service to prepare for Lent.

NEXT CONNECTIONS DINNER - MAUNDY THURSDAY

On Maundy Thursday, March 28th, we will host a Connections Dinner at 5:15 PM in Knox Hall. Dinner is \$6 for adults and \$3 for students/children. Please contact the office Monday prior to the meal to make your reservations. After dinner, all are welcome to gather in the Sanctuary and on Facebook LIVE for a Maundy Thursday Worship Service.



MUSIC AND WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

There are many ways you can help with our worship services, and we are always looking for people to take part! To learn more and get involved, contact **Leslie Weber** or **Monty Service**. For more information about our ensembles for children and youth, please visit page 13.

Covenant Choir

The Covenant Choir will continue rehearsals using our old yet new schedule this fall and winter! Be sure to check the weekly Sunday Bulletin for updated information on rehearsals! Target singing dates for February include Sunday, February 4th and 11th.

Women's Choir Opportunity!

March 17th is the target date for the return of the Women's Choir. We will sing a lovely Lenten song called "The Lamb" by Elain Hagenberg. Rehearsals will take place following the service, two Sundays prior to our singing date.

Men's Choir Opportunity!

The Men's Choir will return in late spring to present our favorite Spiritual, "Swing Down Chariot." Stay tuned for more detailed information regarding rehearsal and singing dates.

Multigenerational Choir

The Multigenerational Choir will return Easter Sunday, March 31st, with a combined anthem entitled: LOOK AROUND! This anthem includes both singers AND ringers!

Covenant Bells

The Covenant Bells will also continue rehearsals using our old, yet new schedule this fall. We will play bells on Sunday, February 25th with a new version of 'Amazing Grace'! Stay tuned for more info in the weekly Sunday Bulletin regarding rehearsal dates.!

Soloists, Cantors, and Instrumentalists

There is an ongoing need for singers and instrumentalists to share solos, duets, or other musical works during worship services. In addition, vocalists are always invited to lead our congregation in song as a cantor.

Praise Band

This ensemble, open to youth and adult instrumentalists and vocalists, meets once or twice per month to practice contemporary worship music to share in worship. Rehearsals are scheduled via group text to find when everyone is free.

*Please contact Leslie Weber at bachfan1956@gmail.com should you have any questions regarding any of the above music groups!

Carillon

Help us gather for worship by playing the carillon before worship services. Our carillon may sound like an old-fashioned bell tower, but it's played on a keyboard like a piano. Orientation and practice times are provided.

*Please contact Montgomery Service at montgomery.service@firstcovenanterie.org for more information.

Worship Technology

We are looking for volunteers to run our sound and light boards and run the cameras used to livestream worship. Training is provided, and no prior experience is required.

Readers

We are always looking for volunteers interested in sharing the first reading or confession section of our worship services. To volunteer, please contact **Pastor Chris** or **Pastor Britney**.

KIDS CHURCH HELP NEEDED

We are looking for volunteers to help with Kids Church. This can involve reading stories, helping kids assemble preprepared crafts, and other fun activities. If you can assist with Kids Church (even once or twice would be a great help!), please contact Pastor Britney.

FAITH FORMATION



Our Faith Formation classes are designed to provide group learning opportunities for our congregation and community. Drop-ins are always welcome. Information about our children and youth Faith Formation opportunities can be found on page 13. To learn more, contact **Pastor Chris** or **Pastor Britney**.

Pastor's Class

Sundays at 9:30 AM | Led by Pastor Chris, this class discusses the Biblical texts used during worship.

Paul and The Corinthians

Sunday at 9:30 AM | Paul's letters take up two books in our New Testament and touch on a variety of issues within the first-century church. Journey with **Bill Holmes** as he dives into Paul's theology, how his words have affected the church over the centuries, and how they may inspire us today.

Women & The Word

Alternate Tuesdays at 7:00 PM | Women & The Word returns this Fall with the new Presbyterian Women's Bible Study titled *Sacred Encounters* by **Olive Mahibir**. Study guides are available at the church office. All women, 18 and older, are invited to join.

"Readers are invited to consider Jesus, who shared the Good News through sacred encounters with everyday people. The Gospel According to Luke and the book of the Acts of the Apostles, or Luke-Acts "one story in two parts," demonstrate the unfolding of God's redemptive purposes in human history and present a distinctive perspective on the person and work of Jesus Christ."

Facebook LIVE Bible Study

Wednesdays at 12:00 PM | Join us for a midday Bible study, hosted by Pastor Chris, on our Facebook page.

Men's Bible Study

Alternate Thursdays at 7:30 AM | This group meets over Zoom and has breakfast outings four times per year.



BENEDICT SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

The Benedict Fund, derived from money given in memory of Mary and George Benedict, was established to provide college scholarship funds for a student who was active in First Covenant's youth group. This scholarship is available to a high school senior or college student who has been accepted for admission at an accredited four-year undergraduate institution of higher education and an active participant in First Covenant's youth program.

Contact Pastor Britney to learn more or receive an application. Applications are due to Pastor Britney or the church office by Sunday, March 31st. The recipient will be announced in May.

CHILDREN & YOUTH ACTIVITIES

All students in our area are invited to join us for the many events, meetings, and service opportunities we will host this year. More information will be shared as it is finalized. The best way to stay up to date on our children and youth activities is to make sure **Pastor Britney** and **Monty Service** have your email and home addresses.

Age 4 - Grade 5

Kids Faith Formation: Led by **Kristin Headley**, this group meets on Sundays and follows the Whirl Bible Study curriculum. Filled with activities and videos, this class is a great complement to the Children's Moment during worship.

Children's Moment: Children ages 4 through 5th grade will be invited to the front of the Sanctuary for a special moment where our pastors share the day's message with stories and props.

Kids Church: After the Children's Moment, kids are welcome to gather in the nursery for music and crafts. On non-Communion Sundays, students can be picked up from nursery after the service. On Communion Sundays, children will return to the Sanctuary after the sermon to see Communion and partake if desired.

Junior Ringers: Our youth chimes ensemble meets during select Kids Church sessions and one or two times per month as availability permits to practice a piece to share during worship. To learn more and receive an updated rehearsal schedule, please contact Monty Service.

Grades 6 - 12

Youth Formation: Teens are welcome to join **Kaitlyn Falk** and **Steve Osborne** to study the Book of Luke Sunday, Feb. 18.

Youth Group: Hosted by Pastor Britney, Monty Service, and other volunteers, students are invited to stay after our 11:00 AM worship service for a meal, service opportunities, and other activities. Youth Group runs until 2:00 PM, and will be held on Sundays, Feb. 18 and March 3.

Greater Than The Sum (GTTS): This vocal and handbell choir meets during select Youth Group meetings to practice and prepare pieces to play during worship. Students of all musical abilities are welcome. Rehearsals will be held on Sundays, Feb. 18 and March 3.

SPECIAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

We will hold several opportunities for our congregation to connect with each other and our community. More information will be announced as it is finalized.

Feb. 1: Erie City Mission Lunch Prep

Feb. 4: Souper Bowl of Caring

Feb. 9: Candlelight Concerts

Feb. 14: Ash Wednesday Dinner & Worship Service

March 24: Palm Sunday

March 28: Maundy Thursday Dinner & Service

March 29: Good Friday Worship Service

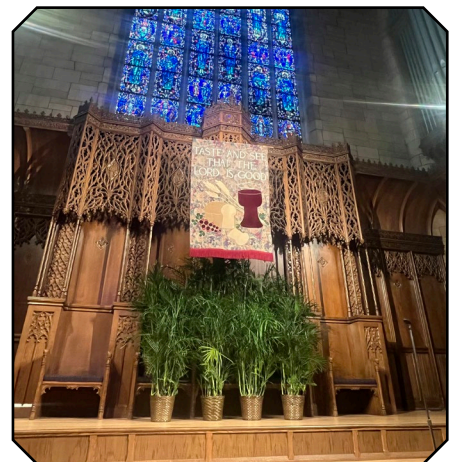
March 31: Easter Sunday



Souper Bowl of Caring



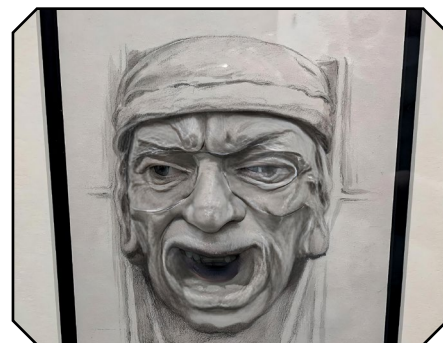
Connections Dinner



Lenten Season

EXPLORING OUR CHURCH

If you're interested in learning more about the storied past of our church, you won't want to miss our free booklet. You can find it at the magazine rack adjacent to the men's restrooms. This informative guide was originally created for tours, and provides insights into our unique communion table, intricate carvings, and mysterious gargoyle. Whether you're seeking to acquire new knowledge, brush up on existing facts, or want to share with others, this booklet is an excellent resource. If you need extras, just ask Dale Sweet, Pastor Chris, or Pastor Britney.



NAMETAG SUNDAYS

On the first Sunday of each month, our Hospitality & Membership Committee supplies blank nametags to wear during Fellowship. We encourage you to fill one out and say hello to a new friend!

IN HONOR OR MEMORY

If you would like to donate flowers or contribute to a church ministry in memory or honor of a loved one, contact **Mary Concoby** at 814.440.4327. Dedications will be included in each week's bulletin.

PASTORAL VISITS

If you or a loved one have been hospitalized, have undergone a large life change, or need spiritual guidance and would like a visit from a pastor, please contact **Pastor Chris**, **Pastor Britney**, or the church office.

PRAYER CHAIN

Our Prayer Chain is a space to share requests for prayers and support for those going through troubling times. The chain is a Google Drive document that is updated daily Monday through Friday. If you would like to pray for those who are requesting support, add your intentions, or share updates, please contact **Monty Service**.

FELLOWSHIP HELP NEEDED

The Hospitality and Membership Committee is looking for volunteers to host Fellowship after worship on Sunday mornings. You can use this time to celebrate a holiday, birthday, anniversary, or other theme. Basic supplies are on hand and committee members are available for support. You can sign up on the calendar at the office or by contacting **Lorie Fritts** at fritts05@gmail.com.

HEARING DEVICES ARE NOW AVAILABLE

We are happy to announce that we are now able to offer hearing devices to enhance your experience during our Worship services. If needed, these devices are available at the Welcome Table in Narthex.

THREE WAYS TO GIVE TITHE OR OFFERING

1. Use the QR code at right which will take you to Realm.
2. Go to <http://www.firstcovenanterie.org> and click the GIVE NOW button at the bottom of the homepage.
3. Mail your check to our office: First Presbyterian Church of the Covenant
250 West 7th St, Erie, PA 16501



DIRECTORY UPDATE

The Hospitality & Membership Committee has released an update page to accompany your printed member directories. This update includes membership and contact information changes for our congregation members. This sheet can be found at the church office or at the Welcome Table on Sunday mornings.

If you have recently changed your phone number, address, or email address, please contact the church office or **Sheila Sweet** at shedal68@gmail.com so we can update our records. You can also do this from home in our Realm account.

CLERK'S CORNER

January 2024

At the stated session meeting of January 15th Session:

- Heard a report from Rev. Weichman that to date 106 pledge cards have been returned for a total of \$259,000.00.
- Elected Marlene Spires as the second elder on the Nominating Committee for 2024.
- Approved an increase from \$38,000.00 to \$42,000 to be taken from the Tiffany Window Fund to purchase a new truck.
- Authorized a special offering to be taken as part of our celebrations of 50 years of campus ministry work with Gannon University. The designated purpose of the special offering is to support the Kirk House and campus ministry.

At the Congregational Meeting Part 1 and Special Meeting of the Corporation on January 21st:

- Members Sheila Sweet, Steve Osborn, Kia Howell, Karola Ranft, and Lorie Fritts were elected to serve a one year term on the Nominating Committee as representatives from the congregation at large.
- Elder Jason Irwin, Chair of the Budget Committee, gave a brief overview and explanation of the 2024 General Fund Budget. Session has approved a General Fund Budget with anticipated revenue of \$862,495.00 including \$108,387 in additional funds from the principal of the Endowment Fund and anticipated expenses of \$862,495.00.
- A special meeting of the corporation was held during a recess in the congregational meeting. In this special meeting members voted to approve a motion from Session to withdraw up to \$112,788.00 from the principal of the Endowment Fund to be used to balance the General Fund Budget for 2024.
- When the Congregational meeting resumed, members voted to approve motions from the Personnel Committee granting Rev. Chris Weichman and Rev. Britney Knight each a 3% raise for 2024. Due to a printing error, the correct details of the new terms of call were not available. The details will be available in the near future.

W. D. Holmes
Clerk of Session

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FEBRUARY 2024

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|--|--|---|---|---|---|
| | 29 | 30 | 31 | 1 9:00 AM: Erie City Mission Lunch Prep (Erie City Mission) 12:00 PM: NA Vigilance (Discovery) 5:15 PM: Covenant Choir Rehearsal (Parlor) 5:30 PM: Campus Ministry Team (Library) | 2 | 3 9:00 AM: Communion Prep (Sanctuary) |
| 4 9:30 AM: Faith Formation/ Music (Various) 11:00 AM: Worship (Sanctuary and FB Live) 12:00 AM: Praise Band Rehearsal (Music Room) 12:00 PM: Souper Bowl 4:00 PM: Sunday Supper | 5 9:30 AM: Women's Connection (Room 116) 6:00 PM: NA Freedom of Choice (Parlor) 7:00 PM: AA Conscious Contact (Room 116) | 6 1:00 PM: Stephen Ministry Meeting (Library) 4:30 PM: Nominating Comm. (Room 116) 6:00 PM: Mission Comm. (Library) 7:00 PM: Women & the Word (Parlor) | 7 7:30 AM: Men's Bible Study (Zoom) 10:30 AM: Bible Study (116/ Zoom) 12:00 PM: FB Bible Study 5:00 PM: Music & Worship Committee (Zoom) 5:30 PM: NA Alive & Free (116) | 8 12:00 PM: NA Vigilance (Discovery) 5:15 PM: Covenant Choir Rehearsal (Parlor) | 9 1:00 PM: Speaker Jam Prep (Knox Hall) 5:00 PM: GU TGIF Prayer/ Praise (Gannon Chapel) 6:00 PM & 8:30 PM: Candle Light Concerts | 10 2:00 PM: Vigilant NA Speaker Jam (Knox Hall, Kitchen) |
| 11 9:30 AM: Faith Formation/ Music Rehearsals (Various) 11:00 AM: Worship (Sanctuary and FB Live) 12:00 PM: Fellowship (Parlor) 4:00 PM: Sunday Supper (Knox Hall) | 12 9:30 AM: Women's Connection (116) 6:00 PM: NA Freedom of Choice (Knox Hall) 7:00 PM: AA Conscious Contact (116) | 13 5:30 PM: Hospitality & Membership (Library) | 14 10:30 AM: Bible Study (116) 12:00 PM: FB LIVE Bible Study (Live) 5:15 PM: Ash Wednesday Fish Dinner (Knox Hall) 5:30 PM: NA Alive & Free (116) 6:30 PM: Ash Wednesday (Sanctuary & FB LIVE) | 15 12:00 PM: NA Vigilance (Discovery) Chimes Article Deadline 6:30 PM: ONP Leadership Meeting (Library) 6:30 PM: Covenant Bells Rehearsal (Sanctuary) | 16 | 17 |
| 18 9:30 AM: Faith Formation/ Music (Various) 11:00 AM: Worship (Sanctuary and FB LIVE) 12:00 PM: Fellowship (Parlor) 12:00 PM: Youth Group/Greater Than The Sum (Various) 4:00 PM: Sunday Supper (Knox Hall) | 19 9:30 AM: Women's Connection (116) 5:15 PM: Session (Parlor) 6:00 PM: NA Freedom of Choice (Knox Hall) 7:00 PM: Women & the Word (Parlor) 7:00 PM: AA Conscious Contact (116) | 20 4:30 PM: Properties Comm. (Library) 7:00 PM: Women & the Word (Parlor) | 21 7:30 AM: Men's Bible Study (Zoom) 10:30 AM: Bible Study (116) 12 PM: FB Live Bible Study 5:30 PM: Deacons (Parlor) 5:30 PM: NA Alive & Free (116) | 22 12:00 PM: NA Vigilance (Discovery) 6:30 PM: Covenant Bells Rehearsal | 23 | 24 |
| 25 9:30 AM: Faith Formation/ Music (Various) 11:00 AM: Worship (Sanctuary/FB) 12:00 PM: Fellowship (Parlor) 4:00 PM: Sunday Supper (Knox Hall) | 26 9:30 AM: Women's Connection (116) 6:00 PM: NA Freedom of Choice (Knox Hall) 7:00 PM: AA Conscious Contact (116) | 27 5:15 PM: Trustees (116) | 28 10:30 AM: Bible Study 12:00 PM: FB LIVE Bible Study 5:30 PM NA Alive & Free (116) | 29 12:00 PM: NA Vigilance (Discovery) 5:15 PM: Covenant Choir Rehearsal (Parlor) | | |