



HEARTBEATS



A monthly publication of First Presbyterian Church

Volume 4 | Issue 12 | December 2022

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By Rev. Bill Pollack

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the Light of mankind. ⁵ And the Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not grasp it. ⁹ This was the true Light that, coming into the world, enlightens every person. [John 1:1,4,9]

If you know me, you know my fascination with light. So this time of year, the lights are ablaze in Central Park, the streets of Winchester and Carter Avenues and yes the Christmas tree outside FPC! It can only mean one thing. Yes! Advent is here! This news should be music to our ears. This is a time in the church liturgical year when we get a fresh start. It is the church's New Year! Beginning this past Sunday and continuing through Christmas Eve, we are given good news. I believe we can all use some.

In our scripture text I have chosen for my Advent messages, we are reminded very simply that Light=Jesus. He is the "light of the world." If we find ourselves in darkness by chance or even of our own doing; there is still the good news that Light can help! A.W. Tozer has written, "Man is lost but not abandoned. Had men not been lost, no Savior would have been

required. Had they been abandoned no Savior would have come." — A. W. Tozer, Finding Christ in Christmas: An Advent Devotional from the Writings of A. W. Tozer.

As we continue through this Advent season, let us not forget the Light. May He be at the center of everything we do. From gift buying, gift giving, gift receiving; let us be grateful to God for His gift of Light to the world. Which reminds me of one truth. As we receive the gift of Light, let us not keep it to ourselves put pass it on to others we meet who may in many ways still caught by the darkness in their lives. John 1:6–8 reminds us of our ongoing mission. Within these verses [I hope you will read them] we discover John—a witness—to testify to the Light that others might believe. May we be faithful Light-bearers too!

Please make this Advent season a time to gaze upon the lights that can dazzle our eyes and warm our spirits. And let us be reminded that the true Light that has already penetrated, and continues to do so with His gaze upon us, wants to fill our lives so that any darkness we are experiencing will flee forever!

Advent, 2022 is here. Let us together celebrate with others the coming of the Light once again into our world. Grace and peace to you and your household. ✝



Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.

Sunday Morning Worship: 10:50 a.m.

Men's Bible Study: Wednesdays, 7 a.m., Bob Evans

Bell Rehearsal: Wednesdays, 5:45 p.m.

Chancel Choir Rehearsal: Wednesdays, 6:45 p.m.

Highlands Christmas Tour of Homes: Saturday & Sunday, Dec. 3 & 4

Men's Lunch Bunch: Thursday, Dec. 8, 11:30 a.m.

Cookie Exchange: Sunday, Dec. 11, Noon

Dames for Dinner: Thursday, Dec. 15, 5:30—7 p.m.

Parents' Night Out: Friday, Dec. 16, 5:30—8 p.m.

Lessons & Carols: Sunday, Dec. 18, 10:50 a.m.

Men's Lunch Bunch: Thursday, Dec. 22, 11:30 a.m.

Christmas Eve Worship: Saturday, Dec. 24, 7 & 11:30 p.m.

Christmas Day Worship: Sunday, Dec. 25, 10:50 a.m.

Children's Christmas Program

Our children will share a small Christmas program on **Sunday, December 11**, during the children's moment. This is a special time in the life of our congregation as we remember Jesus' birth in Bethlehem. Everyone is welcome!



Advent Devotional and Advent Calendar

This year's Advent devotional, *Be Born in Us Today* is available now! It is our hope and prayer that these devotional readings will be helpful in our preparation for the Christmas Season. Please feel free to take one for your family and any other person who might benefit from these words of encouragement. An **Advent calendar** is also provided (1 per family).

It's Time to Order Your Poinsettia for Christmas



If you would like to order a poinsettia for Christmas in memory or honor of someone, order forms are available in the Narthex or online at fpcaky.org. The cost for each poinsettia is \$15 this year and will be purchased from Fields Flower Shop. Please have your order **forms** in by **Sunday, December 18**. You may take your poinsettias home following the Christmas Eve/Day service.

Christmas Cookie Exchange

We are happy to announce that our cookie exchange is scheduled for **Sunday, December 11** following Morning Worship. Please bring your cookies individually wrapped. We look forward to this festive time of sharing our favorite cookies with one another. Rumor is that we will have a "special" visitor who will delight the hearts of children of all ages.



2022 Christmas Offering

We will receive the JOY Christmas offering during morning worship on **Sundays, 4, 11 & 18**. This offering is collected each year through the PCUSA and is divided evenly between retired church workers and scholarships for students to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Thank you for your prayerful response to this special offering this year!

Mitten Tree

We are, again, providing a mitten tree during the Advent/Christmas season. All winter donations (mittens, socks, scarves and gloves) will be given to the Ashland Schools Family Resource Center. Thank you for your wonderful response in the past.

New Bible Study Coming Soon



Pastor Bill will lead a new Bible study beginning **January 8, 2023** and will be offered **Sundays at 5:30 p.m.** in the Bethesda Community Hall, or on Facebook. This study, *The God You are Looking For*, will help us rediscover (or discover) some of the attributes of God. Notebooks will be provided. Hope to see you then.



Kris Adkins—December 8
Dr. Barbara Walters—December 8
Dewitt Goodman—December 13
Geri Willis—December 13
Kent Wheeler—December 31

Merry Christmas from Your FPC Staff!

As we bring this year to a close, your staff sends a heartfelt thanks for the opportunity to serve you. We also offer our best wishes and prayers for you and your family during this Christmas season. From our hearts to yours – Merry Christmas and a most Blessed New Year!

Kara, Glen, Max, Nanette and Pastor Bill