

Good News

December 2022

"And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:10-11



Image created from elements found at
[Forbes.com](https://www.forbes.com) and [Pexels.com](https://www.pexels.com)

Christmas is one of my favorite times of the year. Listening to Christmas music on the radio, watching Christmas movies, remembering those who are not here with us this year...all of this brings me great joy. And this makes me think of the words of the angel on that Christmas night so many years ago—"I bring you good tidings of great joy." This is the time of year where we are called to remember the Good News of the Gospel which comes in a different way than what we expect. No one expected a helpless baby, but that is the

ultimate gift that God gave us. The calling to "fear not" seems out of place with the Good News, but it fits in perfectly in my mind. New things are scary, whether they are bad news or good because they mean that something has to change and we don't know what change will bring in our lives.

It's hard to believe I'm writing my last newsletter article. This is such a bittersweet moment for me as I have loved every minute of my time with you. However, I feel God's call for me to serve elsewhere and I must listen to the urgings of the Holy Spirit. I keep repeating the words of the angel, "fear not" because I am apprehensive of change. I know many of you are as well. But I firmly believe the words that come next, that they are words from God: "I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." Within every situation is good news of great joy. I don't know what the future looks like, but I know great joy is waiting for us. I am not sure what is going to change in our lives, but I believe that the Good News of the Gospel is there. Please know that I love all of you so very much, and I will miss you greatly. Let's all keep our eyes open for the great joy that is coming, for the Good News that God promises. Because it's there, and it's waiting for us.

Peace to
you,
Elizabeth



Christmas Eve Service at 6:30 pm

**Christmas Day Service at 10 a.m. Wear your pajamas and bring a bell
from home to participate in this fun and informal celebration!**

Congregational Meeting

There will be a congregational meeting after worship on December 11th. Please plan to stay and participate . Then stay to have some fun with Caroling and Cocoa right after the meeting.

New Community Garden Project

The Community Garden Committee met for the first time November 2 nd . It was decided to establish a church managed garden instead of leasing out spaces to individuals. The produce would be distributed to the community. Grants will be submitted to various religious and secular organizations. After funding has been achieved, work will begin to encourage the city of Jacksonville, other government organizations, various businesses, and non-profit organizations to participate in the garden. First Presbyterian Church members will not be able to accomplish this program on their own. A budget is currently being developed and then grant writing will begin. If you would like to be a part of the committee or just give some input, please let Karen know.



[Pexels.com, Timo Miroshnichenko](https://www.pexels.com/photo/two-women-working-in-a-garden/)

Over a thousand pounds of food generated by the FPC Wheel of Food Challenge!!



A visit by Duke and Barbara to the Perryville Food Pantry provided insight to an efficient operation for helping those who have food security issues: How to identify and vet those truly in need? How to meet this need in an efficient manner without duplicating efforts?

Perry County's Food Pantry operation has been in operation for over 20 years. They have a core volunteer group

that passes out food 4-5 days per week. Their food purchases are paid with donations, grants and support from local churches and organizations.



Our church alone raised \$785 during our challenge, which will buy 1,121 pounds of food to distribute! Way to go, First Presbyterian Family!

Thank you to all who played the game, took on the challenge, and helped fight hunger in our state.

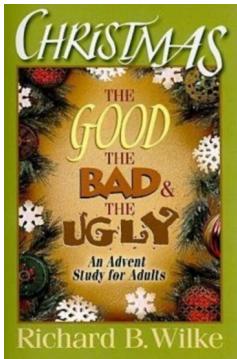


Joe Pand Duke M celebrated their shared birthday in Sunday School!



Mitten Tree

Each year our congregation decorates a Christmas tree with warm socks, mittens, and hats to be distributed to those in need of them in our community. The Mitten Tree will be in the foyer awaiting your donations of new warm items to give away this season. Just clip them on and watch the Mitten Tree grow!



Advent Bible / Book Study

A study of the book Christmas: The Good, The Bad, & The Ugly by each Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. You are invited to join us!

Caroling and Cocoa!

Please plan to join together for Caroling and Cocoa right after church on December 11 th . We will record some Christmas carols and post them online for all our members and friends to enjoy. Then we will retire to the Fellowship Hall to enjoy some hot cocoa and cookies!

You are cordially invited to the Park Hill Presbyterian Church Presbyterian Women's Christmas luncheon Dec 13th at 11:30. We will have a guest speaker from Partners Against Human Trafficking (PATH). All women are invited. Hope to see you then!

Our next Community Lunch will be on Dec. 4th. We will be serving spaghetti, garlic bread, green beans, cookies, and big helpings of friendship in a welcoming environment.

Want to Be Involved?

We could use help with set up, clean up and serving. Then, stay to break bread together with our neighbors so that they can feel the love of community as we have been blessed to know it. And sign up for the January meal by contacting Elizabeth or Mary Jane.



Help Us Spread the Word

This program will take a few rounds to become known in the community. Help us spread the word by sharing this information in places the local public might gather: other churches, community centers, the library, gas stations, and grocery stores. If you need flyers to hand out, please let us know!



Jacelynn Mand Denisse M attended Youthquake in October. They are in the second row on the right side. Elizabeth was also there as the Small Group Coordinator.

Help Is Needed

Please consider signing up on the tablet in the west lobby to help clean the church one weekend this month. We can do it if we all pitch in!

Attendance

Nov 6	39
Nov 13	22
Nov 20	28
Nov 27	25

A Ferncliff Christmas

Come with our church on Dec. 10th at 7 pm (meet at the church at 5:30) to Ferncliff to experience the story of Christ's birth anew! Bring a flashlight and walk the Nativity Trail, a 45 minute (3/4 mile) walking trail where you will move through the biblical story of Jesus' birth though sight, sound, music, and reflection. Hear the Angels announce the upcoming birth; get stopped by a Census Taker, feed Mary's tired donkey, and more. Eat Hot Cocoa and Christmas Cookies at the Ferncliff Christmas Café and check out the Alternative Gift Market where your purchases support ministries that make a big difference. Tickets are free but we only have a few left for you to reserve. Parking is \$5.00. Please reply to this email if you would like to go.



Free Advent Worship Aids For Your Family

To help your family celebrate the season of Advent, your worship committee has prepared devotional packets for everyone. There are also free candle sets for your home Advent wreath: please let an usher know if you'd like either or both of these items. Advent videos will also be distributed weekly via the group email list. If you would like to be added, please let us know.

Monica S was given a baby shower to prepare her for the upcoming birth of twins Haley and Hudson. The women of the church did a great job of decorating and preparing delicious treats, and all who attended enjoyed themselves. We are praying for Monica, Nathan, and their twins as the due date draws near!



Pet Photos With Santa At First Presbyterian Church

Bring your cats, dogs, and kids!

Free admission Saturday, December 10th at 11-2 pm

\$10 per photo to benefit the Jacksonville Arts Theatre & Life Academy

Performance program, Door prizes, a food truck, games, music, child ID kits with the Jacksonville Police Department, Jacksonville Animal Shelter Adoption Unit, and an art exhibit by local artists!

Covering Our Church, Communities, and World With Prayer

- Pray for our Community Lunch Program, its volunteers, and the people it serves.
- Pray for the increasing numbers of families in need in our community and for the donors who have supplied food, water, toiletries, clothing, and bedding for those families.
- Pray for the people of Ukraine and the leaders whose decisions affect peace in the region.
- Pray specifically for the recovery of all Covid-19/variant patients, for the families of those we have lost, and for those at risk. Pray for countries of the world that are dealing with surges or new strains of the virus.
- Pray for the continuing safe and rapid distribution of the vaccines/boosters and for the protection of vaccine supplies. Pray for them to reach all communities and people equally, for their efficacy against any additional strains that may emerge, and for the reversal of the pandemic in general.
- Pray for the leaders of our nation, state, city, church, and communities.
- Pray for all military and veterans.
- Pray for all teachers, bus drivers, students, and school employees.
- Pray for those affected by Hurricane Ian/Fiona and floods in Pakistan and Kentucky.

Bible Book Study

Join us at 10:00 a. m. each Wednesday for our Bible/book study. **All are welcome.**

Individual Prayer Requests From November

Monica and Nathan	James M
Kara N	Opal C
Chris D	Duke M
Mark C	Hartley J
Jerry W	Michael K
Barbie M	Krystal G
Amie S	Kayla G
Wendell P	Family and loved ones of Cathy
Jerry Deen D	Buck's sister-in-law
Randy N	Benny Duch
Beth H	Pat and Jay H
Steven and Elizabeth P	The loved ones of Joe S
Harvey P and Paula P	Frank C
Charles , Paula's father	Emily S
Rod B	Vicki D
Greg T	Friends and family of Mike J
Buck B	Elizabeth and Blake B
Bill P	
Glenn F	



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*May the Christ who walks on wounded feet walk with you.
May the Christ who serves with wounded hands stretch out
your hands to serve.
May the Christ who loves with a wounded heart open your
heart to love.
And as you leave this place, may you see the face of Christ on
everyone you meet, and may everyone you meet see the face
of Christ on you.*

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If you are receiving this newsletter by mistake or would rather get one at the church in person, please let us know. If you know of someone who would like to receive this newsletter in the mail, please call us at 501-982-2876. God Bless You!