

JANUARY

2022

THE CHURCH'S LIFE
News of the First Presbyterian
Church
408 North Bergamont Boulevard
Oregon, Wisconsin 53575
Office: 608.835.3082
Email: info@fpcoregonwi.org
Website: www.fpcoregonwi.org

From the Interim Pastor's Study

As the New Year begins and snow covers the ground, I often turn to the hymn *All Beautiful the March of Days* by Frances Whitmarsh Wile. Usually sung to the tune of *Forest Green* by Ralph Vaughn Williams, it has a bright lilting quality to it.



All beautiful the march of days / As seasons come and go / The hand that shaped the rose has wrought / The crystal of the snow...

As I planned worship last week (when I thought we would be gathering in-person even if adapted due to the renewed viral spread, I was chagrined to find that it was not included in our new Presbyterian hymnal *Glory to God*. But I found myself humming it anyway. For me, this hymn is about the unique beauty of winter as well as a reflection on the movement of time as we wind up the Christmas season and move into the New Year: *The seasons come and go...*"

We are in the winter season these days, literally and figuratively: COVID continues to dominate our lives with new variations always needing to adapt to the situation of the moment. It isn't what it was in March 2020, but we are still nowhere near what we took for granted in January of 2020. The congregation is now a half year into an "interim period". Now is a time when movement toward finding a new pastor often feels like it has paused in the same way our lives are paused by a large snowstorm - or by ice creating a glassy and dangerous surface on the sidewalk. That pause is frustrating when we are eager to get out and about. And, yet those snow and ice days are often gifts - a fallow time to ponder who we are and what we are about in ways less methodical than formal planning and study. They are important days because they give us time to stop and listen for God's voice and look for God's hand at work in the crystal of the snow.

God works in ways unseen when we think "nothing is happening". But God is really quite busy, calling us to slow down, pray, and move into the New Year with an appreciation for the beauty around us and the gift of time. As the snow and cloud cluttering our minds and hearts begin to clear, we can move on with the tasks before us with a new hope and appreciation for God's wisdom. A direction for pastoral leadership will emerge. A pro-

From the Interim Pastor's Study (cont'd.)

cess for finding that "right person" will be established in God's good time, and in time a new relationship of pastor and people will begin.

We may not know exactly when that will become clear but can trust that God is at work. As Wile wrote in the final stanza of her hymn: *O God, from whose unfathomed Law/ the year in beauty flows....* And so, our year will flow.

Blessings,
Sue



Utilizing our Church Property

One of the three focuses of the FPC Future Focus study was better utilization of our church property to reflect our values. A subcommittee of the Session has been charged with exploring opportunities to maximize our property. That committee, comprised of Mike Fahey, John Mehl, and Kathy Danielson, has begun working with the Oikos Project to assess congregational skills and interests, needs of our community, and opportunities to provide revenue for First Presbyterian Church.

A crucial part of this exploration process is involving the full congregation in an exploration of our collective skills and values. The Oikos Project has provided a structured online exercise that will identify shared congregational skills and help us better focus on areas where we might be able to develop a profitable enterprise that is consistent with our values.

The Skills Deck is an easy online exercise that will take less than 15 minutes to complete. We will compile the results of this exercise and hold a congregational meeting to discuss the outcomes and explore next steps.

Click the link below to do the Skills Deck exercise

Use this link to take them to the Skills Deck exercise: <https://skillsdeck.rootedgood.org/?group=C1%20-%20First%20Presbyterian%20Church%20-%20Oregon,%20WI>. You will be asked for your name, email address, and occupation. All that information stays internal with FPC. If you have any questions about the effort to better utilize our property, please reach out to any of the three members of the Oikos Project team (find them listed on the next page).

Utilizing our Church Property (cont'd.)

Thank you,
Mike Fahey - mikefaheywi@gmail.com
John Mehl - johnwmehl@gmail.com
Kathy Danielson - kdanielson180@gmail.com

Pastor Search Update

With guidance from Jean Loup (John Knox Presbytery, Committee on Ministry) and Pastor Sue Melrose, Session has continued discussions about the next pastor we are seeking for FPC.



Last July, we assumed we would be looking for a part-time pastor. However, as we worked through the various steps in the search process, it became apparent that it would require a full-time (or almost full-time) pastor to guide the implementation of our Future Focus Initiatives. Session members felt strongly that this initiative - developed a few years ago and approved by the Congregation - is still relevant, meaningful, and what we all want to see in our church.

On the other hand, as we looked at information on such issues as church membership numbers, church participation in general, the long-term uncertainty regarding the pandemic, recruitment of church officers, and finances, a narrower approach seemed practical. Session has had several meetings (and many hours of discussion) trying to discern how FPC would function with a part-time pastor versus a full-time pastor. Those discussions will continue until we reach consensus, hopefully in the next month.

"The Small Church: A Gift to Its Community"

We are a "small church," but far from the only one. Here is a link to an article in last month's Presbyterian Today that Session members recommend on the gift of small churches: <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/pt-1121-smallchurch/>



Special Congregational Meeting Jan. 9 following worship

A Special Congregational Meeting is called after worship on Sunday, January 9, 2022, to hear the report from the Nominating Committee. This is the meeting where the next class of elders and Deacons will be elected by the congregation. Please make plans to attend this relatively short congregational meeting.

Annual Congregational Meeting

January 30 after Worship



Please make plans to join us for the Annual congregational Meeting following worship on Sunday, January 30. Reports from all committees of the church will be available, financial updates given, progress on the pastoral search will be presented, as well as reports from the Deacons and the Pastor.

Printed copies of the Annual Report will be available on Sunday, January 23 for you to take and look over prior to the meeting.



Treasurer Needed

\$\$\$\$\$ %%% %### ## \$\$\$\$\$ %%% %

After almost half a decade of service to FPC, Sue Mielke has chosen to resign from the position of Treasurer in early-2022. The Session is extremely grateful for Sue's commitment and for her professional dedication while serving as Treasurer for our congregation. We wish her well as she moves ahead to other challenges.

Because of that upcoming vacancy, we encourage you to prayerfully consider whether your talents might be moving you in the direction of serving as FPC's next Treasurer. The time commitment is minimal - about two hours a week - and Sue has offered to mentor the new Treasurer through the first days until you "get the hang of the job."

Please contact either Marcia McDermid (outgoing Personnel Chair, 2mac@charter.net) or Dave Hanson (Administrative Asst, info@fpcoregonwi.org) if you have questions about the tasks involved; a position description can be forwarded to you.

Thank You for Your 2022 Pledges

Thank you to everyone who has pledged their financial support to FPC in 2022! To date, \$128,420 has been pledged, a nice increase from 2021. Remember, if you have automatic online giving set up, you need to update your giving amount if you changed your pledge for 2022





Epiphany Star Sunday Jan. 9

This Sunday, January 9, FPC will be distributing Epiphany stars during the worship service. If you are not able to attend and would like a star, let the office know via email. Please indicate how many stars you would like. The church email address is: info@fpcoregonwi.org.

Mission

Thank You for your Christmas Joy Offering Contributions!



The Presbyterian Church (USA) has been receiving the Christmas Joy Offering since the 1930s. Through the Great Depression, in times of war and peace, and now in the midst of a global pandemic, we have been given the chance to support past, present, and future church leadership through our gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering.

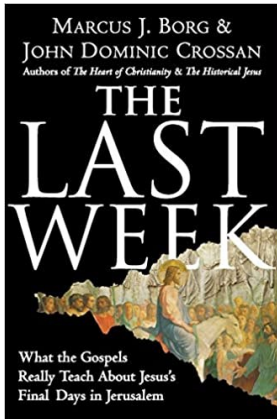


Thank you for your contributions of \$635.00 this year to support the church leaders in the PC(USA)!

PPOW Collection for January



Welcome to 2022! As we all know, prices at the grocery store keep going up. The Mission committee knows this affects everyone, including our PPOW families. Our collection for this month is toilet paper. We try and give our families at least 2 rolls per month. If you are able to donate even just a few rolls we know our families will be grateful. As always, thank you for continuing to support the PPOW program!



Fall/Winter Bible Study

As in previous years, during 2021-22 we will continue the FPC tradition of biweekly Bible study. We will continue to meet **virtually via Zoom every other Tuesday, from**

January 4 — April 26 from 7:00 - 8:15 PM

Our focus this year will be reading and discussion of the book *The Last Week: What the Gospels Really Teach About Jesus's Final Days in Jerusalem*, by Borg & Crossan ([amazon link](#), available as paperback, Kindle e-book, Audible audiobook, or on audio CDs).

The book takes a unique approach, and in eight concise chapters guides us through each day of the Easter Week, day by day (starting with the Palm Sunday, and ending with Easter), following **the timeline of the Gospel according to Mark**.

Because the book starts with the Palm Sunday (which corresponds to chapter 11 in Mark), during the first five bi-weekly meetings (October - December) we will read and review the first 10 chapters in the Gospel of Mark, reading the text alongside selections from several popular commentaries. You will only need your Bible (New Testament) for these first five meetings - other materials will be provided as electronic (PDF) handouts on the website.

Then, after Christmas/New Year (a 2-week break), **starting on Tue. Jan 4, 2022**, we will begin reading the Borg-Crossan book, and plan to finish it on Tue. of the Easter Week, April 12, 2022, just in time for Easter which is on April 17, 2022. We will conclude the series on April 26, with a Summary/Reflection meeting.

Please contact Mike Fahey at mikefaheywi@gmail.com, if you are interested in participating, and would like to be added to the **FPC Bible Study mailing list** to receive updates, announcements, Zoom meeting invites, and meeting reminders.

How to Watch our Worship Service



With our transition to in-person indoor worship on May 30th, we will no longer have a Facebook livestream of the service. We will still record the service and post that recording on YouTube on Sunday afternoon. The YouTube service will be linked to our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/fpcoregon, and the homepage of our website: www.fpcoregonwi.org.



Session Update

Session voted to call a Special Congregational Meeting for January 9, 2021 to hear a report from the Nominating Committee related to the selection of Ruling Elders and Deacons to begin (or continue) their service in 2022.

Voted to hold the Annual Congregational Meeting on January 30, 2022 following worship.

Approved a series of motions to clear the Per Capita Fund deficit by:

1. The Per Capita Fund balance be cleared to zero by December 31, 2021, using any Operating Cash surplus, supplemented with FPC Reserve Funds as needed. The Per Capita Fund, as of November 30, is \$6411.20 in arrears.
2. The process for managing our per capita donations and payments be simplified to use only the two P&L lines above, with the understanding Per Capita deficits will be reflected in the Operating Cash budget status in future years.
3. The Per Capita Fund will be discontinued in 2022.

Approved a revised Position Description for the Treasurer.

Approved a motion from the Mission Committee to approve a \$1500 Shared Mission pledge for 2022.

Approved a motion to allow Alcoholics Anonymous to resume holding meetings in the church assuming they follow Dane County Covid Guidelines, have a Hold Harmless agreement and provide proof of liability insurance.

Respectfully submitted, Tom Niebauer, Clerk of Session

Oregon Community Blood Drive

Saturday, Jan. 8, 2022



Come give Jan.1-31 to automatically be entered for a chance to win an exciting Super Bowl LVI getaway in LA for you and a guest! Plus, a chance to win a home theater package and \$500 e-gift card in January. Terms apply; see RedCrossBlood.org/SuperBowl.

Date: Saturday, January 8
Time: 7:00am —11:00am
Place: St. John's Lutheran Church
Address: 625 East Netherwood, Oregon,

To make an appointment call 1-800-733-2767 or visit redcrossblood.org and enter sponsor code: Oregon



Jan. 1 Scot Williams
 Jan. 3 Tom Niebauer
 Jan. 5 Ace Klug

Jan. 6 Dana Ames
 Jan. 14 Emily (Turrell) Hylton
 Jan. 15 Tim Pavel
 Jan. 16 Robert Edgren
 Jan. 21 Char Hanson and Charlotte Dalstrom
 Jan. 24 Jacsyn Disrud, Lisa Johnson, and Brian Johnson
 Jan. 27 Charlie Johnson
 Jan. 29 Avery Johnson

November Financial Snapshot

| First Presbyterian Church of Oregon | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Monthly Financial Summary | | | | |
| as of | | November 30, 2021 | | |
| | | Monthly Amount | Year-to-date Actual | Year-to-date Budget |
| Pledges Committed (Annual Budget \$116,388) | | | | |
| | Operating Cash Revenue from Pledges | \$ 12,840 | \$ 123,791 | \$ 106,689 |
| Operating Income | | | | |
| | Total Income | November \$ 14,432 | YTD Actual \$ 137,178 | YTD Budget \$ 111,181 |
| | Deduct: Total Expenses | \$ 8,440 | \$ 110,950 | \$ 140,461 |
| Adjustments to Cash: | | | | |
| | Add: Transfer from Current Assets | \$ - | \$ 1,246 | \$ - |
| | Deduct: Principal Payment on Debt | \$ 789 | \$ 10,393 | \$ - |
| Net Operating Income (Loss) ADJUSTED | | <u>\$ 5,202</u> | <u>\$ 17,081</u> | <u>\$ (29,280)</u> |
| Cash Balance-Operating Fund | | | | |
| | Beginning Balance | November \$ 29,227 | Year-to-date \$ 7,634 | |
| | Ending Balance | <u>\$ 34,050</u> | <u>\$ 34,050</u> | |
| | Increase in Available Operating Funds | <u>\$ 4,823</u> | <u>\$ 26,416</u> | |

Per Capita for 2022— Per capita envelopes are available now in the narthex. The amount this year is **\$33.70 per person**. Feel free to take an envelope as a reminder. Payment of your per capita is much appreciated by the church and helps to meet our budget.