

*For God alone my soul waits in silence,  
for my hope is from him.  
He alone is my rock and my salvation,  
my fortress; I shall not be shaken ~ Psalm 62:5-6*

Dear Friends in Christ,

What a glorious Fall it has been at First Presbyterian Church!

We now turn our hearts and minds to the holy day season. This time of year is filled with gratitude, celebrations, and the joy of Christ's birth. But we know that this time of year is not always joyful and bright for some in our community. For all of us, it can be a time of great stress as we work to make everything just right.

Here are some ways to faithfully mark the season ahead and to do so in such a way that you're not left totally exhausted when the New Year comes.

**Set realistic expectations for the season.** I moved into a fabulous apartment during my second year in seminary, with a great kitchen, and I decided that I would stay on campus for Thanksgiving and cook for all my classmates who were unable to travel to be with family. I even had some financial help from the seminary to host the meal! When the day arrived, I was up by 4 a.m. to put the 26-pound turkey in the oven and to start preparing all the sides. When 1pm rolled around, when the turkey was supposed to be finished cooking, it was raw as raw can be inside. I hadn't fully thawed the turkey ahead of time and later on I found out that my oven was not heating properly. We sat around and waited and waited, and I scrambled to keep the sides hot and fresh. By the time the turkey was done around 5pm, I didn't even feel like eating.

But my guests ate their fill and there was almost nothing left. I had a vision in my mind of what that day was going to look like...and it didn't turn out anything like that! But stomachs and hearts were full at the end of the evening. It was pretty a pretty-darn-good Thanksgiving though it wasn't anything like I had planned.

**Make space for messy feelings like grief.** We have all lost a loved one or friend at this time of year, and there is always someone missing at the table when we sit down to feast. As Jesus shows us in the death of his beloved friend Lazarus, it is OK to grieve what was and what could have been (Jn. 11:35). Jesus did not keep his emotions to himself so as to prevent causing a scene; he did not put on a 'strong face' in order to shield his true emotions from others. Jesus allowed himself to enter deeply into the grief he felt at the loss of his friend, and we can too. If there is a moment during a church service, family dinner, or other celebration when you feel as though you need to step away for some quiet, do so. Display pictures and mementos from those who are no longer with you, and honor the immense presence they had in your life. Call to mind the best memories of those lost loved one that you can, and cherish the good things they have left behind.

And consider attending our Healing Service on **November 8** at 7:00 p.m. as a way to encounter the healing presence of God during this busy time of year.

**Keep your self-care routine or begin a new one.** Self-care can, at times, feel self-indulgent or self-centered. But self-care is key to our health and wellbeing as Christians and as people. It is easy

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JILLIAN NORRIS  
NURSERY STAFF

ALEESHA GILL  
NURSERY STAFF

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:  
TUESDAY THRU FRIDAY  
9:00 A.M. TO 2:00 P.M.



# PLEDGE Sunday

**2023 Pledge cards will be collected and dedicated  
on November 23 during worship.**

Please bring your pledge card to worship that day, or you may indicated on another piece of paper or envelope that you have already submitted your pledge.

## Thanksgiving Food Drive for the Watertown Urban Mission Food Pantry

Instant Potatoes  
Canned Sweet Potatoes  
Rice  
Dried Beans  
Stuffing Mix  
Gravy  
Cranberry Sauce  
Canned Vegetables  
Canned Soups  
Canned Fruit Pie Filling  
Canned Pumpkin  
Confectionary Sugar

Cake Mixes and Frosting  
Pudding Mix  
Evaporated Milk  
Dessert Mixes  
Brownie Mixes  
Dream Whip  
Cookie Mix  
Bread Mixes  
Jelly  
Nuts



**Always in Need**  
Sanitary Pads  
Shampoo  
Conditioner  
Body Wash  
Deodorant  
Toothpaste  
Dish Soap  
Toilet Paper  
Laundry Soap  
Paper Plates  
Plastic Dinnerware

**Collect some or all of the items listed above,  
and bring them to the church by November 13!**



December 2	Sophia Stevens	December 26	Gabriel Saki
December 6	Margot McGorman	December 28	Ruthann Reed
December 10	Alexandria Hiotis	December 28	Kendra Pyke-Milligan
December 12	Michael Shanahan III	December 29	Anne Willaman
December 14	Nicholas Bambury-Rothfuss	December 30	Bradford White
December 17	Peyton Thomas	December 30	Peter Pike
December 18	Sarah Slabchuck	December 31	Lauri Piiparinen
December 18	Gary Valik	December 31	D. Peter Van Eenenaam
December 21	Laurabelle Enow	December 31	Sarah Fluno Thomas

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during the holy day season to leave out or put aside a good self-care routine, likely because we have set unrealistic expectations. It is easy to skip the gym or yoga because that next batch of cookies needs to go out the door. It is easy to skip over morning devotions or evening prayers because there is shopping that must be done. It is easy to forget to drink enough water or eat healthy meals throughout the day when, frankly, eggnog, turkey and gravy, and red wine are so much more appealing. But nothing will ever get ‘done’ if we forget to take care of ourselves first.

One of the most meaningful moments in the Bible for me is in Mark’s gospel where the disciples and Jesus have just come off of a long and strenuous preaching, teaching, and healing tour. They come to the lake at Galilee and even more people are pressing in on them to hear the Word of God. Instead of grinding himself and the disciples down even farther, Jesus says, “Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while (Mk. 6:31). Jesus knew that if he and disciples continued at the current pace, they would be of no good use to anyone. As you go about remembering and celebrating and feasting this season, take time to remember yourself and your need to rest and recuperate.

**Create your own traditions.** This has been the hardest for me in the early years of adulthood. I was blessed with a wonderful upbringing, in a family that knew its priorities, where love was poured into everyone until we were overflowing. We also had many beloved traditions. But as I’ve been blessed with a family of my own, and with being called to live in different parts of the United States, many of those traditions are no longer possible. This used to cause me despair, as if leaving those traditions behind would dishonor my family and keep the holy days from being special. But what I have found over the past several years is that the traditions themselves are not what is most important - it is those we make the traditions with that are most important. And that God remains at the heart of it all.

The psalmist knew this well. In Psalm 62, we read the confident prayer of one who has seen the world change radically, and not always for the better. The seas roar. The mountains tumble and fall into the sea. The foundations of the earth shake and tremble. Life is different than it used to be. *But God is my fortress and I will not be shaken.*

I wish you a blessed holy day season and I invite you to sit down with a cup of something warm as you read this edition of *First Press*. There are many ways for you to be involved in the life of the church this season. Perhaps you will try to be involved in everything; maybe you will pick one or two things where you can give all of your attention. However the Spirit is calling you to be active in the community this season, cling to the rock, the fortress of our salvation, God Almighty, who is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Andrew



Pastor Long and Gerda Barbour, Beadle

## Kirkin’ O’ the Tartan October 30, 2022



Caitlin Lee, bagpiper



On October 28 our **2nd annual Trunk or Treat** extravaganza showered 160 trick or treaters and their families with Halloween treats, hilarity and hotdogs.

**Thank you** all who generously donated treats and decorated the 12 vehicles in our parking lot.

**Thanks to** *Bill Brown, Doug Danforth and Mike Stratton* for grilling and serving more than 150 free hotdogs.

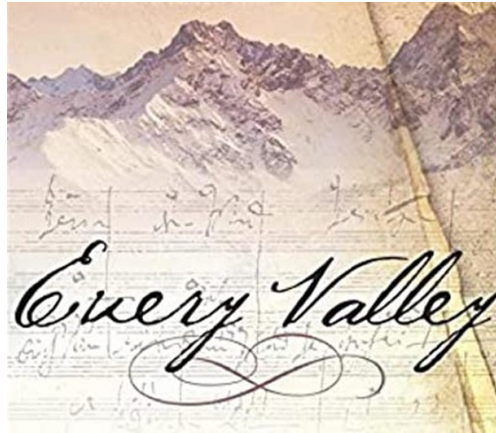
Hearty thanks to those who hosted our Halloween guests in the parking lot:

*Liz Bonisteel; Stacey Bristow; Becky Brown; Cherie Danforth; Pat Guldenpfennig; Betsy and Don Klug; Beth Linderman; Katie and Andrew Long; Wendy and Don Long; Laurie and Peter Pike; Heather White; Julia and John Wright.*



**THANK YOU ALL!**





## **Every Valley: Advent and Christmas Through Handel's *Messiah***

Handel's *Messiah* holds an important place in the history of religious music and also in our hearts and minds during the seasons of Advent and Christmas. Join your church family for Advent and Christmas this year as we prepare our hearts and minds for Christ's birth reflecting on some of the most well-loved choruses from *Messiah*. "Every Valley" will shape our worship and learning for the season, where we will hear the choruses during Sunday worship and then discuss them deeper the following Wednesday over a potluck dinner. Mark these important dates on your calendar!

### **Sunday, November 27: The First Sunday of Advent**

10am Morning Worship  
"Comfort Ye My People" and "Every Valley"

### **Wednesday, November 30**

5pm Potluck Dinner Discussion

### **Sunday, December 4: The Second Sunday of Advent**

10am Morning Worship  
"For Unto Us A Child Is Born"

### **Wednesday, December 7**

5pm Potluck Dinner Discussion

### **Sunday, December 11: The Third Sunday of Advent**

10am Morning Worship  
"Glory to God"

### **Wednesday, December 14**

5pm Potluck Dinner Discussion

### **Sunday, December 18**

10am Morning Worship with Christmas Pageant  
"His Yoke Is Easy"

### **Wednesday, December 21**

5pm Potluck Dinner Discussion

### **Saturday, December 24**

Christmas Eve  
4:30 Children and Family Service  
7:30pm Candlelight Communion Service

# NORTHERN CHORAL SOCIETY 2022

## Christmas Concert

Northern Choral Society is thrilled to return to singing in the Christmas Season with its 2022 Christmas Concert. Our theme this year is "Voices of Christmas" and is centered around the Holy Family and other people who were at the birth of Jesus or showed up shortly after. The River Ringers Handbell Choir and NCS Children's Choir will be joining us as well.

**WHEN:** December 3rd & 4th at 3:00 p.m. each day

**WHERE:** Asbury United Methodist Church  
200 Parker Street, Watertown, NY

**TICKETS:** Cost is \$13 for Adults; \$11 for Seniors, and \$8 for Students.

Tickets go on sale mid-November and can be purchased from any NCS choir member, at Kinney's on Washington St., or at the door.

Please consider spending the afternoon with us for this musical interpretation of the Birth of Jesus!



**Saturday, December 10**

**9:30 a.m. - 12 noon**

Whispers have been heard around FPC that Santa is coming to visit on December 10 and wants to have breakfast with you! Join us at 9:30 for pancakes, bacon and sausage, fruit, juice, and hot chocolate, and stay for Santa's visit where he will read us a great Christmas story and then take a picture with everyone who attends. There will also be Christmas crafts and a Christmas movie! There is no cost for this exciting morning!

***Seating is limited to 60 people so please  
call the church office today to reserve your spot!  
(315) 782-1757***

### **CAN YOU HELP?**

Deacons are looking for Donations of  
Christmas wrapping paper  
Hats and mittens  
Christmas mugs  
Drop off donated items in Stacy's office





## MEN'S FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST

Men's Fellowship Breakfast is taking on a new form starting in December! Join the men of the church on the first Wednesday of each month at 8:00am for breakfast, fellowship, and a local guest speaker. These fellowship opportunities will be a great way to build bonds within the church and learn more about our community and other interesting topics. Bring a friend on Wednesday, Dec. 7 - guest speaker information will be shared soon!

## IS GIFT WRAPPING A CHORE FOR YOU?

We have elves who enjoy wrapping, and they are waiting to help you! Just call Stacey at the church, (315)782-1750, and we will find a date and time that works for you. We can either come to your home to wrap your presents or you can drop them off at the church.

Let us help you wrap up your holiday to do list so you can relax and enjoy the holidays.





# BIG GOD BIG QUESTIONS

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## CONFIRMATION FOR A GROWING FAITH

The Christian Education Committee at FPC is pleased to announce that a Confirmation Class will be taking place starting in January 2023 for children ages 11-14. Using “Big God, Big Questions,” the first PC(USA) confirmation curriculum to be published in decades, confirmands will study the Bible, church history, and the workings of the local church in preparation to answer these following questions at their confirmation ceremony:

*Trusting in the gracious mercy of God, do you turn from the ways of sin  
and renounce evil and its power in the world?*

*Who is your Lord and Savior?*


*Will you be Christ's faithful disciple obeying his word and showing his love?*

*Will you devote yourself to the church's teaching and fellowship,  
to the breaking of bread and the prayers?*

Pastor Andrew will be teaching the confirmation class this year and will be working with the families involved to craft a class schedule that is convenient for all involved. Confirmands will also receive a Confirmation Mentor who is a member of the congregation who will support them throughout the process. The confirmation ceremony will take place during worship on Easter Sunday, April 9, 2023.

***Please contact Pastor Andrew by December 10 to reserve a spot in the class for your child:  
(410) 916-1673 or [andrew.long1085@gmail.com](mailto:andrew.long1085@gmail.com).***

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**A dinner to express appreciation to Maestro Ken Andrews on his 35th and final year as Music Director and Conductor of The Orchestra of Northern New York will be held on November 12th at the Hilton Garden Inn at 5:30 p.m. The cost will be \$60 and tickets are available by calling Kathy DelGuidice at 315-212-3440.**

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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SUNDAY WORSHIP AT  
**10:00 A.M.**

Listen on your radio  
**WATN 1240AM** or  
watch the service live from  
[www.watertownfirstpres.org](http://www.watertownfirstpres.org)

or  
[www.facebook.com/watertownfpc](http://www.facebook.com/watertownfpc)

If you miss a week of worship it is just a click away.  
just visit our website at [www.watertownfirstpres.org](http://www.watertownfirstpres.org).



*Celebrate*  
WITH ALL THE BOUNTY  
THAT THE LORD YOUR GOD  
HAS GIVEN TO YOU.

DEUTERONOMY 26:11, NRSV