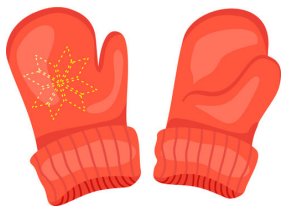


# The Bell Tower

## First Presbyterian Church Happenings



### The Mitten and Hat Tree

The Mitten Tree offers the opportunity to provide some warmth to needy children and infants in the Greenville Area. Please bring winter hats, mittens and gloves of all sizes, unwrapped, and hang them on the tree in the primary Sunday School area anytime between November 19, 2023 and Christmas.

### Christmas Giving Trees

The Christmas Giving Trees will be available in the Church Narthex and Rear Vestibule beginning Sunday, November 12, 2023. This is an opportunity to purchase a Christmas gift for others who may be less fortunate and have limited resources. Tags on the trees describe specific gifts for children, youth, and nursing home residents. The gifts are to be returned in gift bags, with the tags securely attached on the outside, to the church no later than Noon on Sunday, December 3, 2023.



### Save the date!

On **December 3<sup>rd</sup>**, we will begin the Advent season with the return of Alternative Christmas! You will have the chance to enjoy a soup and sundae lunch right after church. This year will feature the return of SERRV crafts for gifts, items from SHOW to wrap, along with supporting local and international ministries. Mission Committee will provide cards to give, telling friends and family about the gifts you give in their names. What could be a more appropriate way to share love and celebrate the birth of Christ this Christmas?

### Good Shepherd Meal

FPC covenant partners were able successfully feed 200 citizens of the Greenville community through the Good Shepherd hot meal program on Monday, October 16, 2023

Thanks to the Social Concerns Committee and Covenant Partners for their combined efforts in helping to provide a nutritious meal to the local communities surrounding Greenville.

### Newsletter Highlights

November 11, 2023 at 8:00 AM Men's Breakfast will be back in Calvin Hall. We will once again meet around Faith, Fellowship, and Food. All men are welcome to come. There is no cost for the event. Come and see.

The Newsletter 'The Bell Tower' (formerly known as the Churchmouse) is going digital! Beginning January 2024 the newsletter will be emailed to all who have an email on file. If you do not have an email you will still get a hardcopy in the mail. If you have an email address but would still like a copy mailed to you please let Sue in the office know.

This Year's Thank Offering will be designated to be split 50/50 to St Paul's Senior Living Community and Shenango on the Green in New Wilmington. They continue to be necessary facilities for our covenant partners and friends. You can use the designated envelopes in the tithe boxes or any other payment method with the notation of thank offering. Contributions for the thank offering will continue until the first of December.



**THANKSGIVING DINNER** available in Calvin Hall  
Thursday, November 23, 2023 @ Noon.  
Come and share a Thanksgiving Meal  
with Eco Partners, Family, and Friends!

The following will be provided: Turkey, Mashed Potatoes, Stuffing & Gravy, Desserts and Beverage.  
Kindly **BRING** a side dish to share—Vegetable, Fruit, or Breads.  
Any and all questions may be directed to the Congregational Life Committee at 724-588-6897.  
Please note: Take-out meals available upon request.

Please complete the reservation form below and return to the church office, or call  
the church office (724-588-6520) by **Sunday, November 12, 2023:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Reservations: # Eat-in dinners \_\_\_\_\_

# Take-out dinners: \_\_\_\_\_



POINSETTIAS will be placed in the sanctuary CHRISTMAS EVE in memory and/or honor of family and friends. A printed list will appear in the Christmas Eve bulletin.

The donation cost is \$9.00 per flower. The deadline for orders is December 3. Please return your order forms to the office. Christmas blessings.

**WORSHIP BULLETIN INFORMATION**

In memory/honor (Please circle)

of \_\_\_\_\_

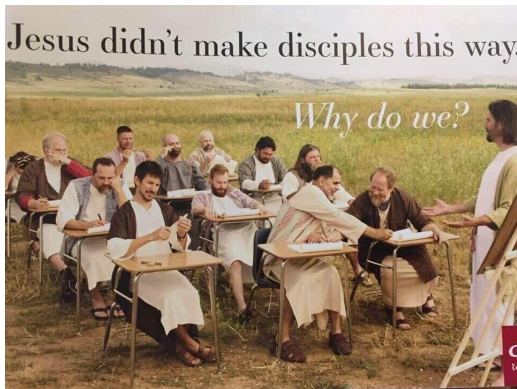
given by \_\_\_\_\_

**WORSHIP BULLETIN INFORMATION**

In memory/honor (Please circle)

of \_\_\_\_\_

given by \_\_\_\_\_



I have joined a cohort group for the Bonhoeffer Project. We meet on the third Thursday of the month and will meet for ten sessions. The group is studying what it means to make disciples the Biblical way. Over the years, the church has drifted away from a Biblical understanding of what it means to be a disciple.

This picture was used in discussing how churches see discipleship. This is not how Jesus did discipleship. He entered into people's lives and had them follow him. They shared life and learned through the interaction of each other.

At some point, the church decided we needed to have classroom settings and learn about Jesus. Church became more about something we do than who we are called to be. The church is not a building but the people who meet in a specific place. The people are the church.

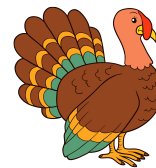
When someone says that a particular style of worship or the look of a building doesn't feel like church, what are they saying? Is it the people who are not friendly? The people don't look like the people they usually worship with on a Sunday. Church is who you are. The bride of Christ. Most countries where Christianity is persecuted heavily meet in homes or underground structures. What, then, would they say when they would walk into our sanctuary? This doesn't feel like church. No, they wouldn't because they know it is about the people around them. They share life. They are walking after Jesus with each other, holding each other up, and walking together through life following Jesus.

We have lost this idea that we are the church, and it is also because we have lost what is the Gospel. In my cohort, we have been talking about what the Gospel is and what Gospel you preach. The book *Conversion and Discipleship: You Can't Have One Without the Other* by Bill Hull talks about the six Gospels that are preached today. The one that is preached the most is what Bill calls the Forgiveness Gospel. This Gospel teaches grace and forgiveness but never mentions repentance or following Jesus. This Gospel says you are forgiven to spend eternity in Heaven, nothing else. There is no growing in the faith. No following the example of Jesus. The person following this Gospel will show up on a Sunday morning, and that is it. There is no fruit from their life with Christ. No need to help anyone else. No taking care of the sick, the widows, and the orphans. This is part of the Gospel, but it is not the whole Gospel. It leaves out the follow me portion of what Jesus says.

Another Gospel that enters into the American church is the prosperity Gospel. You have to have faith, and God will give you all you want. This creates a person who is only concerned about themselves but also leaves a void if something horrible happens. There is no relying on God to help get you through the bad of your life. This is not biblical, either. The book of Acts blows this idea out of the water. The disciples had some of the most remarkable faith and were still beaten and locked up.

Finally, the Gospel of Jesus, or as the book calls it, the Kingdom Gospel. The Kingdom Gospel is the proclamation of the rule and reign of Christ over all of life. Bill Hull says that the way to enter this kingdom has always been the same. "Jesus has invited us to follow him, and he is the entrance to the kingdom. So start walking. We enter by accepting him as our rabbi and our king. We agree to learn from him by following his teaching, submitting to his direction, and praying for his help and provision. As we do, we grow to know him and love him, and through the work of the Holy Spirit, we start to become like him" (C&D page 39). If you believe the Forgiveness Gospel, that is great, but there is more to it. You are known as a disciple, an ambassador, a representative of Jesus on earth. How you live and act in all areas of your life shows others where your heart lies.

Showing up on a Sunday doesn't mean much if every other day is lived apart from the Kingdom of God. Yes, belief in Jesus gets you into Heaven, but He also calls you to DO. We don't DO to be saved because that has already been done for us. We DO because we are saved. That is what the Kingdom Gospel says. Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. Follow Me is what Jesus said to all his disciples. He is saying to you now, as a disciple, Follow me. That doesn't mean sitting and discussing what follow me means. It means follow me through life with others, and I will show you Heaven already here. It is not something for the future only but something for right now, right here, right where you are. There will be others with you as well. Come, Follow Me.



I would like to thank everyone for their prayers during my recovery from my heart attack. I believe that God hears our prayers.

Thank you,  
Dave Geisel

This is part of a newsletter from Rev. Rich Hansen

Dear Faithful monthly partners,

I am deeply grateful for your financial and prayer support during the past two months. Thank you, especially, for your prayers during my time in Addis Ababa,

August 28 through September 10. It was one of my most productive trips yet.

We in Western nations still tend to think that much of the Kingdom of God work in places like Africa is still being done by churches and specifically by missionaries - but this view is many decades out of date. 99% of the advances of God's kingdom are now led by Africans themselves, and are specifically happening beyond the church walls where African leaders are living as "salt and light" out in society.

God's blessings,

Rich

Dear Friends,

We are so grateful for your support of Darfur and for my budget. We just found another pastor willing to go into Darfur to share the gospel. Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide and protect him.

Thank you, Denise Scuito, Frontier fellowship

Rebecca Vogan from Root international writes:

" Dear Friends, Because of your willingness and dedication, many boxes were prepared for shipping to the needy in El Paso, Tx. Good work! Thank you for your continuing support of the mission of Root International."

This has been an incredible year of change and growth for Willow. We made the bold move to step out in faith to relocate to Hermitage, where our clients are already going to restaurants, working and shopping. This removed a transportation barrier that we kept seeing for our clients in Transfer. It also increased the number of women we were scheduling to, at times, double what we were doing last year.

We are so blessed and encouraged by your faithful support. Please update our new location at 295 Kerrwood Drive #106, Hermitage, Pa. 16148. Our mailing address is P.O. Box 1864, Hermitage.

Thank you and God Bless,

Jana McKinny, Willow Women's Care

## NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Garry Thompson	11/2
Barbara Poolos	11/4
Helen Ohle	11/5
Diane Curtis	11/6
Ron Lasch	11/8
Mary K Miller	11/9
Logan Lentz	11/12
Margie Hull	11/14
Amy Johnson	11/15
Darlene McCann	11/15
Wynne Eckhardt	11/16
Asher Bray	11/19
Cherri Artman	11/21
Jessica Crompton	11/21
Ann Petrarca	11/23
Eric Hart	11/24
Marilyn McClimans	11/24
Nancy Palmer	11/24
Keith Shank	11/24
Sue Wilson	11/26
Carol Riley	11/27
Virginia Royal	11/28
Linda Alcorn	11/30
Susan Anderson	11/30
<b>Youth</b>	
Shreve Johnson	11/12

## GOOD SHEPHERD

Thanksgiving request item is boxed desserts.  
Please return your donations by  
**November 5**

## NOVEMBER NURSERY SCHEDULE

11/5	ERICKA DERSHIMER & SAVANNAH JOHNSON
11/12	MARY K. MILLER & JAMIE ICKES
11/19	JACKIE GRISETTI & CONNOR GEIGER
11/26	SUE HART & SUE BLUM





First Presbyterian Church  
323 Main St  
Greenville, PA 16125

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT No. 80

A REGULAR MEETING OF SESSION was gathered hybrid Monday, October 9, 2023, beginning at 6:00 PM. All members of Session and both pastors were accounted for or present.

Session heard the following INFORMATION.

- Heard a continuing education report of the beginnings of 'The Bonhoeffer Project.' (AP)
- Received invitation to the 2024 ECO National Gathering at Greenville, SC, January 29 through February 01. (Clerk)
- Bibles will be presented to third graders ni worship November 05. (Christian Education)
- FPC will serve the evening meal at The Good Shepherd Center -Monday, October 16. (Social Concerns)
- Mission Partner contact information was reviewed. (Mission)
- Completed projects: Parking lot light fixture, main office computer, courtyard shrubs; Sanctuary and Chapel bulb replacement. (Property)
- Kids of the Kingdom will appear as a 2024 budget line item. (Finance/Stewardship)
- Eastern Standard Time returns Sunday, November 05. (Pastor)

Session took the following ACTIONS.

- Approved a pancake brunch in Calvin Hall Sunday, November 12, following worship, in honor of veterans. (Deacons)
- Elder Dale Deist was approved as elder commissioner to the October 28 gathering of Rivers of Life Presbytery in Beaver. (Pastor)
- 2023 request for Giving and Hat/Mitten Trees @FPC was approved. (Congregational Life/Fellowship)
- The 'Pay It Forward' breakfast was approved for Sunday, December 17, 9:30 AM. (Christian Education)
- The church office will be closed 11/23-24 (Thurs-Fri) and 12/25-26 (Mon-Tues). (Pastor)
- Three building use requests were approved. (Pastor)