



The Compass

November-
December 2021

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH—Portland, Indiana

Pastoral Perspectives — On Our Present Need for Christmas

While recently reconnecting online with old friends via social media, I was again reminded of times past among other student thespians and musicians. The sights, sounds and smells of youthful exuberance rekindled aflame with passionate creativity in the arts seemingly yearn anew to break through the socially distanced monotony of current times hopefully soon receding in rearview.

This fall into winter’s spring, the world’s stages continue at prospective reopening(s) with fully vaccinated masked viewing audiences newly present in person for entertainment to be enjoyed once more en masse. Upon earlier now reminiscent days of yore before “when I wore a younger man’s clothes”, the excerpted lyrical phrase from Billy Joel’s “Piano Man” resonates in mind as I recall previous productions of theatrical presentations performed prior to presently prayerfully felt needs.

My first Broadway show to take part in as a high school freshman back in New York was the musical *Mame*. I have fond memories of the camaraderie my fellow classmates and I enjoyed experiencing then as secondary student body members in the cast and crew at the start of those seminal years of adolescence. I remember singing together the song “*We Need a Little Christmas*” that had originated in Jerry Herman’s 1966 Broadway hit, first performed on stage with Angela Lansbury in the title role, and later played by Lucille Ball in the (1974) film version.¹

The scene begins after the stock market crash of 1929 when Auntie Mame is attempting to hurry up Christmas preparations while it is still November with the first freshly fallen snow not having yet even begun to fall, hoping that the activity will help take minds off their lost fortune. With limitless enthusiasm for Christmas and the number’s bubbly mood of anticipation, the lyrics and music by Jerry Herman aim to resound in the public heart and mind with joyful hope for the season of Advent approaching.

Haul out the holly
Put up the tree before my spirit falls again
Fill up the stocking
I may be rushing things, but
Deck the halls again now

For we need a little Christmas
Right this very minute
Candles in the window
Carols at the spinet
Yes, we need a little Christmas
Right this very minute
We need a little Christmas now

Excerpts from the song above resonate in reflection upon the plight of humanity at the past years’ ongoing challenges into the upcoming holiday season. Celebrating the Christ of Christian masses worldwide calls unto us for awakening renewal. It points toward global expression of our deeply felt needs for divine providence and provision. The Suffering Servant Savior and Spirit of the Sovereign Lord over all is the One in and through whom we live, and move, and have our very being—the only wise, true and living God who is able to meet our every need.

“*And my God shall supply all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.*” —Philippians 4:19

To God alone be the glory as we proclaim our need for not just a little Christmas, but the very Christ Jesus our Saving Lord.

With Love’s Joyful Hope in the Peace and Presence of Providence,

Pastor Rex Espiritu

¹ <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/christmas-tabernacle-choir/concert-2019/we-need-a-little-christmas/>

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RALLY SUNDAY RECAP

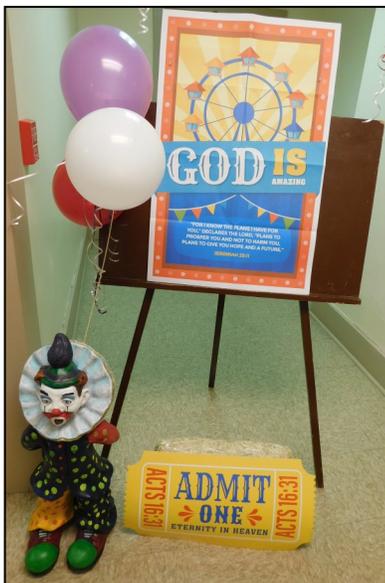
Due to Covid-19, Rally Sunday was a bit different than in previous years, but no less fun. This year, masks were required and sack lunches were provided instead of a carry-in meal. However, the Christian Education Committee rose to the challenges. They decided to extend the one-day feeling of Rally Sunday into six consecutive Sundays and gave the extended time a Carnival theme. Moses even visited on Rally Sunday.

In addition to learning about the heroes in the Bible, the students learning was reinforced with carnival games and prizes that were won. The students were also served carnival treats including popcorn, cotton candy, and snow cones. The children were even provided animal face masks to solidify the carnival atmosphere.

Thanks to the Christian Education committee (Cassandra Byrum, Debbie Ford, Sarona Goodrich, Gloria Green, Carolyn Scott, and Jenny Stout, chair) for creating such a special time of learning and fun for our youth.



All Rally Sunday Photos
by Claire Smith.







November

- 02 Jenny Stout
- 03 Abby Arnold Champ
- 06 John Goodrich
- 08 Lynn Boolman
- 09 Jordyn Champ
- 12 Wil Goodrich
- 14 John Engle
- 17 Lauren Runkle
- 19 Katherine Byrum
- 22 Matt McCord
- 25 Allison Byrum
- 30 Mary McCord

December

- 05 Derek Arnold
- Lauren Haggengjos
- Morgan Trinidad
- 09 Jennifer Rupe
- 11 Reid Knuth
- Pete Vogler
- 15 Liza Haggengjos
- 18 Carley Trinidad
- 19 Rachelle Boolman
- 24 Pastor Rex
- 31 Mim Ludy
- Vivian Morehous

**REMEMBERING THE SAINTS
OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN**

All Saints' Day-November 1

Naomi Pryor

Joined FPC - April 5, 1931

Passed Away - May 21, 2021

Rev. William (Bill) Knight, Jr.

Passed Away - June 8, 2021



**Daylight Saving Time Ends
Sunday morning, November 7.
Don't forget to set your clocks back
one hour before retiring
Saturday night.**

***Stewardship Sunday is
November 21.***

***Please turn your 2022
Pledge Cards in to the office
before that date.***



CHRISTMAS JOY

SPECIAL OFFERINGS

CHURCH LEADERS—PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

and supported through your gifts—doors that lead to hopeful futures for young people at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

Your gifts open doors that lead to relief for church workers and their families when critical financial needs arise. The Christmas Joy Offering has been a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years, nurturing our leaders—past, present and future.

The Christmas Joy Offering will be collected at First Presbyterian Church Portland on December 19.

Did you know? The Christmas Joy Offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s, opening doors of opportunity for our leaders who are shaped

THANKSGIVING DINNER ITEMS NEEDED

Once again, our church has been asked to provide the ingredients for turkey dressing for the upcoming Community Thanksgiving Dinner. Items needed include loaves of bread, celery, eggs, and large cans of chicken broth. If you would like to provide donated items, please call the church office at 260.726.8462. You will then be given instructions on where and when to deliver your donated items.

Due to Covid-19, the meal will be available only in the Asbury United Methodist Church parking lot. Those attending are asked to park and open their vehicle trunks. Then, volunteers will deliver pre-packaged meals. The dinner will be held on Thanksgiving Day, November 25 with drive-through available 11:30am-1:30pm.



BREAD OF LIFE

The next Bread of Life Community Dinner First Presbyterian Church will host is on Monday, November 29.

If you want to help serve or if you would like to provide some of the food, please contact Julia Schwomeyer at 726.4761 or call the church office at 726.8462.



Hanging of the Greens



Hanging of the Greens will take place on Sunday, November 21 following the morning services. Once again this year, the Deacons are asking everyone to participate in this exciting time of fellowship and decorating the church for the Christmas season.

If you plan on participating in the Hanging of the Greens, you are encouraged to dress casually. A light luncheon will be served following this event.

*Congregational Meeting
will be held Sunday December 5
in order to approve the
Nominating Committee's
2022 Slate of Officers.*



Wednesday & Thursday, Nov. 24-25;
Thursday, December 23;
Monday, December 27;
and
Thursday, December 30

2021 PLEDGE PAYMENTS

Contributions for the 2021 tax filing year must be postmarked or delivered to the church office by December 31, 2021 in order to appear on your 2021 Contribution Statement.



We appreciate the faithful stewardship displayed by our church members once again this year. May God continue to bless you in 2022!



Photo by Sarona Goodrich

YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL AFGHAN PROJECT

Recently the youth Sunday school class invited the congregation to join them in collecting items for Afghan family resettlement efforts in Indiana.

Locally, Asbury Methodist led the Team Rubicon disaster response and took our collection by truck to Camp Atterbury where the items were distributed to those in need.

New items collected ranged from clothing to food to hygiene items. Two large boxes were contributed by our congregation.

Thanks to everyone who participated in this outreach.

PW FALL BRUNCH PLANNED

Attention ladies! Mark your calendars for a long-awaited PW Fall Brunch on Saturday, November 6 at 10:00am in the Fellowship Hall.

Claire Smith's friend, Deb Johnson, will be with us again presenting her White House Christmas Ornament program.

She owns the entire collection of 41 ornaments, including the 2021 edition which commemorates the presidency of Lyndon Baines Johnson. She will share the history of how the program began and interesting historical facts about some of the ornaments.

Come join us for fellowship and get an early start on your Christmas spirit.



ADVENT WREATH WORKSHOP

Back by popular demand, the old tradition of creating Advent wreaths will be held again this year.

On Sunday, November 28, an Advent wreath workshop will be held following Worship.

If you'd like to participate in this workshop, please bring your flower clippers and a willingness to experiment. You will be shown how to craft your own Advent wreath.

The following materials will be provided: wreath rings, candles, greenery and wire.

We hope you will all get involved in creating a holiday centerpiece for you and your family to enjoy during this Christmas Season.

Please see Meg Mauger if you have any questions.



CHRISTMAS EVE AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

By Eric Rogers, Worship & Music Co-Chair

First Presbyterian Church will celebrate the birth of the Christ Child with our annual Christmas Eve service of lessons and carols on Friday, December 24 at 7:00pm. The service will include carols, anthems, hymns, instrumental music, as well as readings from the Old and New Testaments. The sacrament of Holy Communion will be celebrated.

All of our Church family and friends are invited to help make the Christmas Eve service meaningful for our congregation and visitors. Please consider participating in one of the following ways:

Sing in the Christmas Eve Choir: If Covid-19 protocols allow, our Christmas Eve choir rehearsals will begin on Monday, November 29 at 5:30pm. There will be four Monday rehearsals plus an abbreviated rehearsal on Christmas Eve before the service. Your participation will be warmly welcomed. Please contact Eric Rogers at 260-726-0717 or email at eprogers@embarqmail.com if you want to sing in the choir. This will help us to order sufficient copies of the music.

Play in our handbell choir. If you can read music, we can use your help. Three or four rehearsals will be organized.

Serve as a Reader for the Lessons: We need several readers for the service. If you are interested, please contact Pam Rogers at 260-729-1941; eprogers@embarqmail.com.

Volunteer for another responsibility: We need acolytes, ushers, greeters, a sound operator, and other volunteers. Please contact Barbara Cortner (260-726-8462 or office@firstpcportland.org). She will put you in touch with the appropriate committee chair.

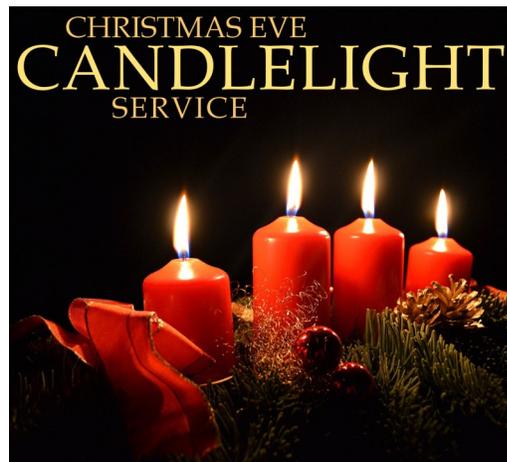
Do you know someone who sings but is un-churched? You could add joy to this individual's life with an invitation to participate in the Christmas Eve Choir. Please let me know if there is interest. I will reach out to assure that individual his or her voice will be welcome.

Invite someone to come with you to the service: The Christmas Eve service is one of our best opportunities to bring a visitor through our doors or welcome back a non-attending member

Do you have an un-churched friend who may be dealing with loss, loneliness, or a crisis? The past 18 months have been difficult for maintaining social connections. While the Christmas season is joyous time for many, for others it is a trying time. Inviting a friend to join you at the service will help your guest feel less intimidated about our Church service. Sitting with you can help. A worship service can be a transformative healing experience for an individual experiencing loneliness, loss, or grief. A positive experience may lead to a return visit.

Are you a friend of a member who no longer attends First Presbyterian Church? Your invitation to join you at the service could help reconnect this individual with our Church.

Please consider reaching beyond your comfort zone to touch another individual with God's love.





**FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

402 North Ship Street
Portland IN 47371

Phone: 260.726.8462

<mailto:office@firstpcportland.org>

<http://www.firstpcportland.org>

Our Vision Statement

“To provide a ministry which will lead people to strengthen their faith in Jesus Christ and reach out with God’s love.”



CALENDAR



NOVEMBER

- 01 All Saints' Day
- 03 Presbytery Meeting
- 06 10:00am PW Fall Gathering
- 07 Daylight Saving Time Ends
Communion
- 09 6:30pm Deacons Meeting
6:45pm Session Meeting
- 11 Veterans Day
- 14 Pastor Rex @ Winchester
- 16 5:30pm Worship & Music Comm. Mtg.
- 21 **Stewardship Sunday**
Hanging of the Greens
- 24-25 Church Office Closed
- 25 **Thanksgiving Day**
- 28 1st Sunday of Advent
Pastor Rex @ Winchester
Advent Wreath Workshop
- 29 5:30pm Christmas Eve Choir Practice
Bread of Life Community Meal

DECEMBER

- 05 2nd Sunday of Advent
Communion
Congregational Meeting
- 06 5:30pm Christmas Eve Choir Practice
- 12 3rd Sunday of Advent
Children's Pageant
Pastor Rex @ Winchester
- 13 9:00am Newsletter Deadline
5:30pm Christmas Eve Choir Practice
- 14 **6:30pm Session Meeting**
- 19 4th Sunday of Advent
Christmas Joy Offering Collected
- 20 5:30pm Christmas Eve Choir Practice
- 21 First Day of Winter
- 23 Church Office Closed
- 24 **7:00pm Christmas Eve Service**
- 26 Guest Preacher: Rev. Kevin Boyd
- 27 Church Office Closed
- 30 Church Office Closed

**Sunday Morning Worship 9:30am
in person & via Facebook**

**Church Office hours:
Monday-Thursday 9:00am-3:00pm
Closed on Friday**