

Rev. Dr. Frank Lewis, Temporary Pastoral Leadership
Rev. Trina Lewis, Temporary Pastoral Leadership

THE PRESBYTERIAN MESSENGER

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January 21

Third Sunday after Epiphany

Scriptures: Jonah 3:1-5, 10; 1 Corinthians
7:29-31; Mark 1:4-11

Sermon: *"When Judgement Means Hope"*

Liturgist: Mike Newman

Music: Haviland Choir

January 28

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Scriptures: Deuteronomy 18:15-20;
1 Corinthians 8:1-13; Mark 1:21-28

Sermon: *"Free to Do Right"*

Liturgist: Mickey Buck

Music: Haviland Choir, Brass & Timpani

Many winters ago (as the Sioux would say) I read a novel that still haunts me. The Last Town on Earth, by Thomas Mullen (New York: Random House, © 2006), is set in the Pacific Northwest during the 1918 flu epidemic. An idealistic lumberman wants to create an ideal working environment for his employees by founding an employee owned and operated sawmill town. Trouble arises when the epidemic breaks out in towns around Commonwealth. In order to keep the flu out, Commonwealth quarantines itself, posting armed guards who are ordered to shoot anyone trying to get into town, no questions asked. Before too long, someone is killed. Eventually the whole town is torn apart by guilt, suspicion, and fear. The truly tragic part of the story from my point of view is that it is based on historical fact. There really were towns in America that tried to isolate/quarantine themselves during the epidemic.

I contrast that story with another one, also true, and closer to home. At her wedding, my daughter Caity wore a gold bracelet that belonged to her groom's great-grandmother. It was Caity's "something old," and while the bracelet itself is not very expensive, the story makes it a priceless heirloom to be passed to generations of Gerra brides.

My son-in-law's great-grandmother lived in Philadelphia during the 1918 influenza epidemic. A certain man's family threw him out of his house because he had the flu. Homeless and sick, he would have died, of course. However, Steve's great-grandmother took him into her home and nursed him back to health. He gave her the gold bracelet as a thank-you gift.

I take the novel as a cautionary tale, and the family story as a living word of hope. Jesus said, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake and for the sake of the gospel, will save it." (Mark 8:35)

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CHURCH INFORMATION:

Temporary Pastoral Leadership:

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You Tube: www.youtube.com / FPCSALEM (Service streamed 10:30 am on Sunday)



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Like every age, we face many dangerous challenges. Daily we hear bad news about the economy. Health-care professionals tell us that another pandemic is just a matter of time. World terrorism constantly threatens civilization. Drug, alcohol, and gambling abuse plague the community. The Church is losing members. The big question for us, and for our church is, 'what can we do about it?'

We could try to do what the folk of Commonwealth tried: isolate ourselves and hope that eventually all the bad stuff will blow over. Or we can bravely and faithfully risk our own survival for the good of others. Consider carefully. I mean, look at God's choice — what Jesus did. Jesus gave his life on the Cross so that you and I and anyone who believes in him will have eternal life. God raised Jesus from death to life, in effect saying, "Yes! That is what I mean by 'love your neighbor as yourself.'"

In his play No Exit, the atheist Jean-Paul Sartre has one character say, "Hell is other people." Without the Cross of Jesus Christ, that too often is true. Thankfully, we have the Cross and the resurrection to free us for acts of mercy, kindness, and self-giving love. They may risk our lives. Actually, they give us life in the fullest and best sense.

[Full disclosure: I wrote this several years ago. I had no idea, of course, that there would be the COVID-19 pandemic or its aftermath. Even so, I edited it only slightly for the Messenger. Rev. Frank Lewis]

Prayer Concerns:

Nancy Boing (*Gloria Shafer's sister*), Archie Crum, Rich Eichler, Dawn Ellis (*Tracey's mother*), Sandi Flake, Mary Lou Gamble, Patti Hays (*Bob and Sue Merry's sister in law*), Karen Hezlep (*Ryan Gillis' mother*), Melissa Jeswald (*Susan Smith's cousin*), Juanita Latham, Lois Middleton (*Alice Jackson's sister*), Dolly Millikin, Gary and Wilma Moffett (*Melissa Costa's parents*), Peggy Pikunas (*Andrew Skiba's mother in law*), Ron and Beverly Price, Charity Ricciardi (*Carol Ricciardi's daughter-in-law*), Carol Shaw (*Gloria Shafer's mother*); Joshua, Tonya and 3 children (*Gloria Shafer's son and family*), Tom Shafer, Roselyn Stephens; Teresa Turney, Ronald Turney, Donna, Judy, Janet (*from Dolly Millikin*); those listed under Special Care and Military, and the Pastor Search Committee.

Sympathy:

The Sympathy and Surrounding Love of Our Congregation are extended to the family of Judy White.

Birthdays:

Judy Sicilia (16), Janet Chumney (19), Cheryl Kekel (19), Susan Simon (21), Ken Kyser (23), Roselyn Stephens (24), Ron Price (26), Terry Rufer (28)

Special Care:

Brookdale Alliance – Goldie Burrier, 122; Carol Dougherty, 138; 1277 S Sawburg Ave, Alliance OH 44601

Brookdale Bowling Green – Barbara Marra, 121; 121 N Wintergarden Rd, Bowling Green OH 43402-2190

Crandall Medical Center – Genevieve Benson, 139; 800 S 15th St, Sebring OH 44672

Lexington Place Assisted Living – Helen Hayes, 211; 2345 Lexington Ave, Salem OH 44460

Whispering Pines – Kay Rousseau, 315; 937 E Park Ave, Columbiana OH 44408

Military:

Haley Herman (*Granddaughter of Sandy Herman*), Roger Knizat (*Frank and Ellen Maticcik's grandson*), Adam Pawlosky (*Son in Law of Jim and Ruth Newman*), Zach Smith (*Nephew of Mickey Buck*), Cody Tonkinson (*Son of Ed and Melissa Tonkinson*)

Thank You Note:

I would like to thank all of you for your prayers and love expressed in so many ways for my Daughter-in-law, Charity, in her battle with brain cancer. Her surgery was last Wednesday and went extremely well with no complications. She is truly grateful for the love and concern shown by our church family. ~ *Carol Ricciardi*

- ✓ **Open Dates for Bulletins:** January 21, 28, February 11, 18, 25, March 3, 17, 24, April 28, June 9, 16, July 7, 28, August 4, 11, 18, September 8, 15, 22, 29, October 6, 13, 27, November 3, 17, 24, December 1, 22. Cost is \$15 a Sunday.
- ✓ **Open Dates for Chancel Flowers:** January 21 (1 vase), January 28 (1 vase), February 11 (1 vase), March 10 (1 vase), March 17 (2 vases), April 28 (1 vase), May 5 (1 vase), June 9 (1 vase), July 7 (1 vase), July 14 (2 vases), August 11 (1 vase), September 1 (2 vases), September 8 (1 vase), September 29 (1 vase), October 13 (1 vase), November 3 (2 vases), November 17 (2 vases), December 1 (1 vase). Cost is \$10 a vase.
- ✓ **Per Capita Apportionment for 2024** is \$32.50 for each Active Member, paid to General Assembly, Synod, and Presbytery. Per Capita funding is how Presbyterians mutually share the costs of coming together to discern the Spirit's leading for the future. It is how Presbyterians are trained to become better elders and ministers. It is how Presbyterians discern God's call in their lives. The Per Capita Apportionment due for the year 2024 for First Presbyterian Church of Salem is based upon reported active membership at the end of the year 2022.
- ✓ The **2023 Annual Report** will be available on Sunday, January 28 at Sanctuary entrances, in time for the Annual Congregational/Corporation Meeting on Sunday, February 4 immediately following worship.
- ✓ **Coming Soon: 2024 Directory** – To update our membership directory (no pictures) and to enhance communications, please let the Church Office know if you no longer have a landline phone and are using a cell phone.

The Environmental Team will meet next Sunday, January 21, at 11:30 a.m. in the Library.

~ *Carol Ricciardi*, Moderator

Soup to Go – Next Sunday, January 21

Help is needed this Saturday, January 20 at 9:00 a.m. to make Chicken Noodle Soup with Brenda Bradley as leader. You can purchase on Sunday morning, January 21, for \$5.00 a quart. When "Soup to Go" was first begun, it was agreed that the price of the soup would be \$5.00 and that the proceeds of the sales would go to local missions. Our committee has chosen to keep the price of the soup at \$5.00 but with the rise in cost of the ingredients, we will not have as much money to donate to the local missions. If at all possible, please consider adding a small donation when you purchase your soup. Please return jars and lids.

Salem Community Pantry – Mondays, 9-11 a.m.; Thursdays, 3-6 p.m. for people in 44460 zip code only.
Drop off **Empty Egg Cartons** in collection bin at the side door of pantry, 794 E 3rd St.

January: *Happy Birthday! Roselyn Stephens (24), Terry Rufer (28)*

- 17 / Weds 6:15 Carillon Ringers (200)
7:00 Haviland Choir (S)
- 18 / Thurs **7:00 Regular Session Meeting (L) Hybrid and Zoom**
- 20 / Sat 9:00 Making Soup to Go (K)
10:00-4:00 United Quilt Guild Workshop (FH)
- 21 / Sun 9:00 Adult Church School (L)
9:00 Church School for Grades 6-12 (209)
10:00 Coffee Hour (FH)
10:30 Service of Worship
11:30 Environmental Team (L)
Soup to Go (K) – Chicken Noodle
6:00 Cub Scout Pack 3 (Scout Room)
- 22 / Mon 10:00 Tai Chi Class (FH)
6:00 Scouts Troop 3 (Scout Room) and 2003G (209)
- 24 / Weds 10:00 Tai Chi Class (FH)
6:15 Carillon Ringers (200)
7:00 Haviland Choir (S)
- 28 / Sun 9:00 Adult Church School (L)
9:00 Church School for Grades 6-12 (209)
10:00 Coffee Hour (FH)
10:30 Service of Worship – *Brass and Timpani*
6:00 Cub Scout Pack 3 Pinewood Derby (FH)
- 29 / Mon 10:00 Tai Chi Class (FH)
6:00 Scouts Troop 3 (Scout Room) and 2003G (209)
- 31 / Weds 10:00 Tai Chi Class (FH)
6:00 Moderators Meeting via Zoom
6:15 Carillon Ringers (200)
7:00 Haviland Choir (S)

February

Happy Birthday!

Ethel Clark (4), Sandy Herman (8), Jan Jones (11), Sue Lewis (17)

- 1 / Thurs **6:00 Christian Education (L) / Mission I and S (P)**
7:00 Devotions (S)
7:15 Property (L) / Worship, Music, Arts (P)
- 4 / Sun 9:00 Adult Church School (L)
9:00 Church School for Grades 6-12 (209)
10:00 Coffee Hour (FH)
10:30 Service of Worship
Annual Congregational/Corporation Meeting
6:00 Cub Scout Pack 3 (Scout Room)
- 5 / Mon 10:00 Tai Chi Class (FH)
6:00 Scouts Troop 3 (SR) and 2003G (209)
7:00 Board of Deacons (L)

Making Resolutions for an Earth Friendly New Year

It's that time of year when traditionally, many of us make those "New Year's Resolutions." I looked on the internet for some ideas to help all of us do this. Here are the ones I found that are very doable. (You will notice, many of them are exactly what the Environmental Team has been stressing over the last few years.)

1. Take your reusable shopping bags with you when you go grocery shopping.
2. Use your own reusable water bottle rather than buying bottled water. Those plastic bottles take 450 years to break down in the landfills. They basically last forever!!!!
3. Stop buying Styrofoam. Styrofoam takes 500 years to decompose-worse than plastic.
4. Reduce your use of paper towels and paper napkins. Cloth towels and cloth napkins are a sustainable alternative to paper napkins and paper towels.
5. Use reusable batteries.
6. Remember to recycle or donate unwanted items in your home. You could donate the good ones to the Rummage Sale planned by our church this coming spring.
7. Replace your incandescent light bulbs or CFL lightbulbs with efficient LEDS.
8. Stop buying or limit buying any kind of single use items.
9. Start planning now for your flower garden for the pollinators.

I'm sure you can think of more. Whatever resolution you make, please try to keep it.

Happy Earth Friendly New Year!

Environmental Team