



church matters

Monthly Newsletter

Official Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church of Ferguson- Faith in Ferguson

WELCOME DECEMBER!

Advent Blessings to each and every one of our Church family. 2020 has been a difficult year for so many of us. Although, we can become fixated on those things that went wrong this year, Advent gives us the chance to reset our viewpoint in order to allow Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love to reorient us on our journeys of faith. God's people are no strangers to challenge, in fact, it is part of our Faith DNA, in that challenge is always an invitation to grow. It is also no accident that Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love are considered Advent disciplines, because each one is an invitation to a deeper walk with God and our neighbors.

It is the lights of Advent that illuminate the true meaning of our Christmas celebrations. A Messiah is desired, and a child is given, whose life is the way to salvation. Many of you may be surprised that I love Christmas and the giving of gifts, the singing of songs and the joy in a child's eye on Christmas morning. What I object to is the rush to Christmas, the absence of a meaningful Advent of preparation.

Friends, let us enjoy Advent for the way it challenges our spirits to grow more like the spirit of our Guide and Lord, Jesus of Nazareth. Merry Christmas and may it be full of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. Love,

Mike

WEEKLY WORSHIP SERVICES

We continue to host weekly worship services on Facebook Live. Weather permitting we have been able to have parking lot services.



Please remember, for the safety of the community, we are continuing to practice physical distancing, mask wearing, and good hygiene practices.

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May your life be colorful,
magnificent, shimmering and joyful,
as the magic of the holiday spreads
on you.

Season's Greetings, Marcia Key

'Tis the season to be jolly. It's cold in
St Louis and the leaves are falling.
God is still good, so we have the gift
of Jesus' life. Merry Christmas too all
and to all a good night!!!

**Season's Greetings,
LaHaji Thomas, Youth
Coordinator**



**Our Handbell Choir
practicing for the season!**



ADVENT SEASON 2020

So that we all get to enjoy a happy and
HEALTHY 2021, this Advent season will be
observed with joy instead of our traditional
activities at Church.

We regret that so many lovely traditions of
Advent and Christmas are being altered due
to COVID-19, but we accept these
appropriate modifications, in order to show
our love, for God's children.

Join us online during this season to enjoy
ideas of ways to celebrate **Advent at Home!**



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CANCELLED TRADITIONS

We are unfortunately forced to cancel these
seasonal traditions:

- Hanging of the Greens
- Breakfast with Santa
- Cookie Walk
- Christmas Eve Service
 - *building will be closed*



Although we are unable to celebrate our Advent traditions in the same way, on our website there are features to help you through the season and make new traditions and memories!

Sending you blessings during this time of physical distancing. Though we may not be together in person, we can share the joys and goodness of the season together virutally.
Season's Greetings, Rachel Foster



Visit our website for more information!



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THE ANGEL TREE

Due to the unusual events of this year the sanctuary will look different this Advent season. We will not be hosting the annual Hanging of the Greens.

The Session has decided to use the Angel Tree in the sanctuary because it will be more visible to those viewing services via Facebook.

The Angel Tree was the inspiration of Jan Foster and Debby Koenig about 15 years ago and was created to honor loved ones we have lost. The tree holds many beloved Angels of all shapes and sizes.

It may be difficult to get out and purchase an Angel ornament this year. But remember this tradition as a way to remember loved ones that have been lost.

Let's all be thankful that during this crisis our building is still actively serving the community by providing space for tutoring of K-8 students who need extra help and for Tai Chi classes. Hopefully, we'll be back to normal by mid-year.

Best holiday wishes,
**The Trustees, Duane,
Harold and Hans**





THE CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

We offer our gifts during this Advent Season to the Christmas Joy Offering because God shows us the power and importance of being together, of "being with." We might not be able to meet face to face with those who need the support that our gifts provide, but we are very much still together.

The Christmas Joy Offering is one way we join together as Presbyterians from around the country. Through the Christmas Joy Offering, we support church workers and their families who experience critical financial needs through help from the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions.

We connect with the young people attending Stillman College, Presbyterian Pan American School, and the Menaul School, supporting the education and leadership development for students of color, the future leaders in our Church and in the world.

During this season of Advent, please think about making a gift to the Christmas Joy Offering. Please identify the Christmas Joy Offering in the memo line of your check.

Thank you for your consideration.

A quote from a very wise bear:
May Christmas bring you joy in your hearts, smiles at your doorstep, and love and togetherness of friends and family in your home."
Winnie the Pooh

Merry Christmas –
**Karen Schriefer, Clerk
of the Session**





MEANINGFUL GIFT GIVING THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Keeping with the theme of 2020 being a year of doing so many things differently, we hope you will consider giving a gift in celebration of our mission work this season. Some of the outreach activities that we support are the **Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services** and **Chenoa Stock** and **Jed and Jenny Koball's mission work in Peru**.



Please read more about these missions below. Thank you in advance for your generosity! May you be showered with the blessings and joy of Christmastime!

To give a meaningful gift this season, here are so ways you can give this year.

- If you would like to make a gift to **PCHAS**, please send checks to: PCHAS at 1220 N. Lindbergh Blvd. St. Louis, MO 63132, and be sure to note who your gift is in celebration of so that it can be acknowledged.
- If you would like to make a gift to **Chenoa Stocks' mission** in Peru, please make checks payable to the church, earmarked for Chenoa Stock and mail to First Presbyterian Church at 401 Darst Rd., Ferguson, MO 63135.
- If you would like to make a gift to **Jed & Jenny Koball's mission** in Peru, please make checks payable to the church, earmarked for Jed & Jenny Koball and mail to First Presbyterian Church, 401 Darst Rd., Ferguson, MO 63135.

OUTREACH MISSIONS



Presbyterian Children's
Homes and ServicesSM

In the midst of the pandemic, PCHAS programs and services continue to bring comfort to children and families who are more anxious than ever before. There is an even greater need for services which are already designed to help children and families heal from traumatic experiences. In compliance with CDC recommendations, normal fundraising events had to be cancelled. The funds raised through these events are crucial to ongoing operations, but rather than pulling back, we have increased the level of support by also helping families with essential needs (i.e. rent, utilities, food).





PLEASE HELP SUPPORT OUR MISSION CO-WORKERS IN PERU



Chenoa Stock and family

Chenoa Stock serves in Peru as delegations and partnership coordinator for PERUSA, a new program of the Joining Hands Network. Through this program, she works with PC(USA) delegations to foster partnerships with our Peruvian covenant partners, the Evangelical Church of Peru (IEP), and the Joining Hands Peru Network. Chenoa organizes, accompanies, and interprets for visiting delegations, helping to ensure that these visits reflect the mutual mission priorities of the partners. Chenoa feels that there is no greater way to experience God’s presence than to watch God’s hands and feet come together through partnership to work toward a common mission goal. This mutual and transformative mission overflows with God’s unconditional love. Her husband, Jose also helps her in this work.

Much of Peru’s indigenous population lives in poverty, both in remote areas and on the urban periphery. The Joining Hands Peru Network and its member organizations work at the grassroots level, accompanying communities and non-governmental organizations as they empower at-risk communities and challenge systems that generate hunger and cause environmental depredation.

Contributions that go toward Chenoa’s ministry and position do not directly support our Peruvian partners. But through supporting her, it is indirectly supporting those partners' work through our mission work, accompaniment and partnership that we continue to develop and grow.

It’s been a difficult year all around the globe. Peru has been profoundly affected by the pandemic and has been under some of the strictest quarantine mandates we have heard of to date, leaving a huge impact and deficit on the work of Joining Hands. As Chenoa and other mission partners in Peru continue to do their work in more creative ways, we hope you’ll consider a gift to her mission work this holiday season.



Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Presbyterian Mission





PLEASE HELP SUPPORT OUR MISSION CO-WORKERS IN PERU (cont.)

Jed Koball assists the Peru Joining Hands Network (Red Uniendo Manos Peru). Joining Hands, an initiative of the Presbyterian Hunger Program that addresses root causes of hunger in partnership with networks of churches and non-governmental organizations in countries with high poverty rates, lead the struggle against hunger and poverty at the local level and are joined by Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) presbyteries and congregational partners that address the same concerns on the global level. Red Uniendo Manos Peru is a network of eight Peruvian NGOs and churches located throughout Peru that come together to identify the root causes of poverty and injustices and to address them in their local contexts by shaping and participating in strategic advocacy campaigns at the national and local levels. Red Uniendo Manos Peru tackles issues such as environmental contamination from the mining industry, the growing water crisis due to global warming, and trade policies that disadvantage many Peruvians. Jed helps facilitate the partnerships in Peru and the churches and entities in the U.S. to enhance participation in global advocacy campaigns. He resources the national and local work of the network in Peru as needed.



Jed & Jenny Koball with their son

Jenny Koball is the Peru site coordinator for the Presbyterian Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) program, which sends people ages 19 to 30 to serve in communities of need in the United States and abroad. In addition to service, the YAV experience emphasizes living in intentional Christian community, spiritual formation and vocational discernment. Each YAV in Peru is placed with and accompanies one of the eight NGOs or churches that form the Red Uniendo Manos Peru.

Jed & Jenny were planning to make a visit to First Presbyterian Church in 2019 but were unable to leave the country due to the adoption of their son. We hope they will be able to make a visit in late 2021 or 2022.



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

SHARING THE JOY OF THE SEASON!

What a Surprise and Joy to find the beautiful potted plant /flowers on my porch with these painted messages around the top rim.

- You are Special
- You are Loved
- You are a Blessing

- 2- Laura Owens
- 3- Layla Owens
- 7- Reggie Schlueter
- 10- Jeannie Dobrich
- 13- Shirley Gilbert & Maya Owens
- 15- Mike Trautman
- 17- Jonathan Kuhlman, Karen Schriefer, & Drew Tallent
- 18- Kelly Mazzacavallo
- 22- Duane Bibko
- 23- Jane Rauth-Coldewe, Peggy Perry, & Jim Wuertenberg
- 28- Linda Lipka

If someone's birthday is missing or incorrect, please; let the office know.





CONCERN LIST

Betty Allen

Betty Allen's Children– Ken, Patty and Tom

Jean Bird – Bud Panetti's Cousin

Santiago Casas –Great Grandson of Becky Henderson

Joe Cieniceros, Jr. – Nephew of Earleen Lawrence

Robert Elliott – Lovene Hartman's Brother

Nancy Fedorchak

Matt Helm – Betty & Bob Rybacki's Grandson-in-Law

Aaron Hotze

Joan – Jane Rauth-Coldewe twin sister

Karen – Barbara Bowyer's Sister

Delaney Knowles – daughter of James (III) & Lisa Knowles,
Granddaughter of Jim (Jr.) & Patti Knowles

Brian Lamkemeyer – Son-in-Law of Jeannie Dobrich

Steve Langford – Mike's friend

Jerry Miller

Nora – Great Granddaughter of Becky Henderson

Marie Phipps – Paula Bujewski's Mother

David Rutherford – Son of Maureen Rutherford

Sue Schmidt – Friend of Jamie McDonald

Carson Shelley - Mike Trautman's Friend

Todd Shelton- "Big Todd"

Rich Shugert – Brother of John Shugert

Death of Garry Wade's partner Mary Cortney

CELEBRATIONS

The birth of Jack, the Great Grandson of Jane Rauth Coldewe Lee and Eleanor's 60th Wedding Anniversary in November

Please contact the church office if you have additional names.

"A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices" is a lyric from one of my favorite Christmas carols. This year, more than most, we are a weary world with COVID-19, politics and the ever-present racism. But our hope is in Jesus Christ no matter how weary our world becomes. I pray that you, like me, will take this Christmas time to rejoice in Christ's love for us and His plan for our future.

Merry Christmas!

**Becky Combs,
Music Director**





I have greatly missed my church family and friends during this hard time and especially all the kiddos!

I wish each one a very Merry Christmas! Stay safe and stay healthy so we can get back together soon! Remember that we celebrate Christmas because it is when Jesus was born.

We give gifts because God gave us the gift of his son Jesus! We are so blessed and so loved!

**Susie Owens,
Nursery Supervisor**



DO YOU BUY GROCERIES? WE THOUGHT SO!

Schnucks offers e Script Community Cards that donates 3 percent of our member purchases back to our church! Pick up a card from Jan Foster and take advantage of this easy method of adding to our mission. Our account is under the name: 1st Presbyterian Church. While you're at the grocery store, don't forget to pick up a peanut butter for the Food Voucher Program.

Speaking of groceries we have a team in place to deliver groceries to those of you, who may worry about going out to the stores. Contact Mike Trautman if you need those services.





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Church of Ferguson**

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CHURCH STAFF

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