

THE FORECASTER

A publication of the First Presbyterian Church of Youngstown, Ohio.

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From the Pastor's Desk

Welcome to February!

As we look at the world around us, bearing witness to the changes happening and also being made (I think this is an important distinction. Some changes simply happen, other changes are forces into existence), we may find ourselves afraid, hurt, shocked, or in disbelief as we see events happening that shake our understanding of the world and how things should be or should be done.

I am sorry to write in generalities, but I think it helps to recognize that the world itself is facing these things. It is not unique to the realm of American politics. Across the entirety of the world we are witnessing political movements rising, we are witnessing tyrannical or dictatorial leaders making decisions to hurt their own people, subsets of their own people, or the people of other nations. We are witnessing wars and threats of wars. We are witnessing natural disasters and famines.

The reality is that these things are always happening and will continue to happen. The world we live and the people that populate it are not perfect. We haven't had to deal with this type of upheaval domestically for a long time, at least the majority of Americans have not had to deal with it for a long time. Unfortunately, there is a minority in our country where the new reality for many of us is their normal reality. The question for us, is how do we respond? What steps do we need to take? Where is God calling on us to be?

(Continue on page 2)

February 2025 *Inside This Issue*

From the Pastor's Desk	1
FPCYO Vision Statement	2
Communion Dates	2
Clerk's Corner	3
Super Six	3
Mission Coins	3
Scout Sunday	4
Schaff Lecture	4
Flowers for Worship	4
FPC Book Club	5
Lenten Sunday School	6
Ash Wednesday	6
Prayer List	7
February Birthdays	7
February Calendar	8



(continued from page 1)

I believe that God doesn't change. God is who God is. When the Law was written in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, God showed an example of how to live with one another. Care for the widow, the orphan, the alien, the poor, the sick, the prisoner, and all those existing on the margins was encoded into the Law. We bear witness to it later on in the prophets, when God called on and empowered prophets and sent them before the kings to tell them of how they and the society at large were falling short of God's commands to love the poor and marginalized. We can read this in the Gospel accounts and Epistles of the New Testament. It isn't written in coded language for only the select to understand. Jesus commands us to love God with the entirety of our beings, to love our neighbors as ourselves, and to love each other as we are loved. He tells us that to know him is to care for the sick, the widow, the orphan, the prisoner, and all those less fortunate than ourselves.

It is very easy to sit back and think that others are called to this work, that God hasn't called us into the specific ministries that are affected by the constant disorder of both domestic and international politics. It can be easy to say that others are taking care of that thing that we don't want to approach. But can we honestly look at the world and say that we aren't responsible? In his writings on the Ten Commandments, the father of the Reformed movements and Reformed theology, John Calvin, writes that they are not simply negative commands, but positive orders telling us that we are not simply not to do the negative thing (murder, steal, covet, etc.), but that we are also to work for the betterment of our neighbors. We are called to actively support those around us and care for them.

I don't know what that specifically looks like for me as an individual. I definitely cannot speak to what it means for each of you, nor do I know specifically what it means for us as a congregation. I will be in prayer for each of us, and our church as we navigate the reality around us. I ask that you join me in prayer as well. Please call or email me if you are interested in prayer and study resources. Come and sit down with me if you have ideas about what it means for us to engage with what is happening.

Blessings,



Rev. M. Payne Warner

From the Session

First Presbyterian Church of Youngstown Vision Statement

The First Presbyterian Church, an increasingly diverse faith community,

- *opens its heart and doors to all,*
- *serves everyone with compassion,*
- *fosters spiritual growth through scripture-based worship and study*
- *works for racial and social justice for all; and,*
- *models the principles of Jesus' life and teachings in the world.*

UPCOMING COMMUNION DATES FOR 2025

In order to prepare for the celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the following dates have been approved by the Session:

- Sunday, February 2
- Sunday, March 2
- Sunday, March 9
- Sunday, April 6

SESSION UPDATE

Clerk's Corner

The first meeting of 2025 for the Session was held on January 21, 2025 via Zoom because of the frigid weather. A warm welcome was given to the Class of 2027: Patti Keenan and Carol Reed. One of the Session's discussion topics was when to close the church building due to weather. It was decided that the church building will close during weekdays when Youngstown State University closes due to inclement weather. A policy is being discussed to inform the congregation if the church must cancel Sunday worship services due to weather.

Rev. Warner advised a new tenant was going to rent office space in the building; that is The Andrea Mahone Foundation. They would be moving in soon. He added that all other tenants have signed leases for 2025. Rev. Warner also advised that for Ash Wednesday, Eastminster Presbytery will be having a joint-church service at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Boardman – details will be announced. A new Adult Forum Bible study will start for the first Sunday of Lent.

A lot of discussion was held over the building. An update was given on the plumbing repairs in the second-floor restrooms. In an email vote prior to the meeting, Session approved \$20,000 for the repairs. Additionally, \$7,000 was approved for the BEG Committee to purchase audio and video equipment and computers for the Sanctuary. And finally, at the Finance Committee's request, two new check signers were appointed: Glenn Patterson and Chris Soller.

The next meeting of the Session will be on Tuesday, February 18, 2025 at 7 p.m. at the church. Session meets monthly on the third Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m.

Patricia Gruver, Clerk of Session

Mission and Community Ministry

SUPER SIX

The Mission Committee is once again sponsoring a food drive during Lent. We are asking for your help collecting the following items each Sunday:

Sunday, March 9th – Boxed Cereal

Sunday, March 16th – Peanut Butter

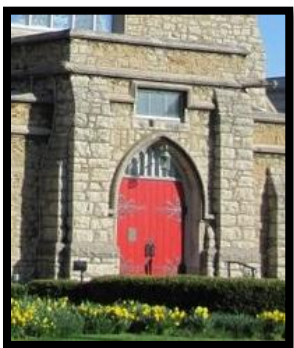
Sunday, March 23rd – Canned Tuna

Sunday, March 30th – Canned Beef Stew

Sunday, April 6th – Canned Vegetables

Sunday, April 13th (Palm Sunday) – Canned Soup

The food will be donated to Protestant Family Service to assist with their food pantry. **THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!**



MISSION COINS REMINDER

We continue to collect coins for the **Red Door Café and Food Pantry at St. John's Episcopal Church**. Your loose change helps provide a meal and groceries to our community neighbors in need. You can help by depositing your coins in the collection plates on Sunday mornings. You may write a check and put in the the memo – RDC.

THANK YOU,
The Mission Committee



Schaff Lecture

The annual Schaff Lecture will be Wednesday, April 23. If you are interested in helping make this event happen, please email Rev. Warner at pastor@fpcyo.org.



Flowers for Worship

We welcome your participation in making the chancel a visual representation of the worship we offer our almighty God each week. If you are interested in helping us keep fresh flowers for the chancel, contact Patty Schuley in the church office.

FPC Book Club

Tuesday, February 11, 2025 at 10 A.M.

Our selection for February is a Classic/Humor – *A Confederacy of Dunces* by John Kennedy Toole-Winner of the 1981 Pulitzer for fiction. Set in New Orleans in the early 1960's. It follows the adventures of Ignatius J. Reilly, an educated but lazy 30-year-old man that is still living with his mother. In his quest to find a job, Ignatius finds himself caught up in hilarious adventures with colorful French Quarter characters. The many subplots that weave through *A Confederacy of Dunces* are as complicated as anything you'll find in a Dickens novel, and just as beautifully ties together in the end. But it is Ignatius—selfish, domineering, and deluded, tragic and comic and larger than life—who carries the story.

We hope you will join us on February 11th in the Parlor of the Church. Please join us even if you haven't finished the book. For more information – call Becky Murray 330-360-7526.

Below are the books we are reading this year.

MARCH – Historical Fiction – *The Book of Lost friends* by Lisa Wingate. Brings to life startling stories from actual “Lost Friends” advertisements that appeared in Southern newspapers after the Civil War, as newly freed slaves desperately searched for loved ones who had been sold away.

APRIL – Nonfiction – *The Spy and the Traitor: The Greatest espionage Story of the Cold War* by Ben McIntyre. Story of Oleg Gordievsky, the Russian whose secret work helped hasten the end of the Cold War. Best Seller NY Times.

MAY – Historical Fiction – *The Women: A Novel* by Kristen Hannah. In 1965, Francis “Frankie” McGrath joins the Army Nurse Corps and follows her brother's path to serve in Vietnam.

JUNE – Romance – *The Paper Palace* by Miranda Cowley Hiller. A story of summer, secrets and lies. In the course of a single day on Cape Cod, one woman must make a life-changing decision that has been brewing for decades. Best Seller, Reese's BC

JULY – Biography – *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy* by Eric Metaxis.

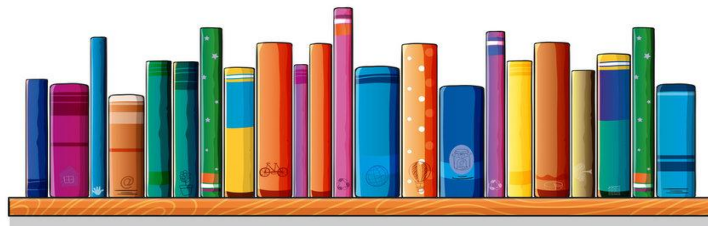
AUGUST – Young Adult Fiction – *The Last Brass Ring* by Liz Hill. Lilli Whitaker spends the summer of 1989 before her senior year with a job at a run-down amusement park, which leads to romance, new friendships, and a long-hidden family secret.

SEPTEMBER – Historical Fiction – *The Butcher: a Novel* by Joyce Carol Oates. A harrowing story based on history about Doctor Silas Weir, a gyno-psychologist at a women's asylum in the 19th century.

OCTOBER – Nonfiction – *Heartwood: The Art of Living with the End in Mind* by Barbara Becker. Becker inspires readers to live with the end in mind and proves that turning toward loss rather than away is the only true way to live life to its fullest.

NOVEMBER – Historical Fiction – *This Tender Land* by William Kent Krueger. The unforgettable story of four orphans who travel the Mississippi River on a life-changing odyssey during the Great Depression.

DECEMBER meeting at Piccadilly Parlour to decide next year's books.



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Lenten Sunday School and Adult Forum

During Lent, we will explore the Gospel of Luke after Jesus turned himself toward Jerusalem. We will explore this turn and what it means for us through the lens of art, music, and stories of where Jesus disrupted the status quo. You are invited to join us in our Sunday School hour beginning on Sunday, March 2, from 9:45 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. for discussion and light refreshments.

ASH WEDNESDAY

We are coming together in conjunction with other congregations in the Eastern side of the Presbytery for Ash Wednesday. The service will be held at 7:00 p.m. at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Boardman on Wednesday, March 5.



Prayer List

Please keep these members of our congregation, our family and friends, our neighbors, our mission partners, and people around our nation and world in your prayers.

- The residents of the Realty Building & International Tower
- The people of the Ukraine
- The people of Israel and Gaza
- Our Mission Partners including Mahoning Valley Association of Churches, Wick Transition Housing, Community Education & Schools (with Taft School), Ethiopian Children (EECMY), Protestant Family Services, CityScape, Needle's Eye, RAHAB Ministries, and Meals on Wheels, the City of Youngstown, our community, and for one another.
- NuShawn Moore (Jackie Rogenski's daughter)
- Carol Reed
- Patrice Hight (Carol Reed's sister)
- Lila King (Lynn Toman's mother)
- Cheryl (Lynn Toman's sister)
- Ron Strasik (Renae Scharf)
- the Sarver family (Lynn Toman)
- Caleb (Barb Altman's grandson)
- Mary MacGregor Neff (Wilma Miller)
- Audrey Frost's family
- Barb Altman
- Pat and Bob Fitch
- Lynne Pebworth
- Leeann Comstock
- Martin Goss
- Rick Benson
- Bridget Benson
- Cindy Milicich
- Janis DePasqua
- Rev. Jim Ray
- Mary
- Jackie Rogenski
- Julius Balogh
- Arlene Wright
- Marien Sue Martin
- Tim Keenan
- Marion Kohler
- Victor Wan-Tatah
- The Pickett family
- Terry Gregory

February Birthdays



2-7	Rick Benson	2-15	Jessica Poteet Clark
2-7	Konnor Clark	2-18	Lynn Toman
2-7	Amanda Frederick	2-23	Chris Soller
2-14	Becky Mallin	2-24	Heather Cooper
2-15	Derrick Amanor	2-24	Rye Dalton



FEBRUARY 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Worship Service 11 am Communion Sunday 		5:30 – 7 pm – NAMI Yoga – HC 6 pm Scouts	11-1 pm Citizens Circle – Parlor 11:30-1 pm – Lunch Time Learning – HC	9-1 pm-OL Hearing Screenings – HC MFHC PT 9 am – 12 pm PT 4 pm – 8 pm 12 pm – Staff Mtg- Parlor DR	1:30 –2:30 pm – OL YSU Fitness - HC	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Worship Service 11 am 12 pm – Worship Committee Mtg – Pastor’s Office		10-11 am – FPC Book Club – Parlor 5 pm – BEG Mtg – Pastor’s Office 6 pm – Mission Mtg Library 6 pm Scouts	6:30 pm – Finance Mtg – Pastor’s Office	MFHC PT 9 am – 12 pm PT 4 pm – 8 pm Clinic – 5 pm – 8 pm	1:30-2:30 pm – OL YSU Fitness – HC 	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Worship Service 11 am	OFFICE CLOSED 	6 pm Scouts 7 pm – Session Mtg Library	10-11:30 am – Saving Our Seniors – HC	MFHC PT 9 am – 12 pm PT 4 pm – 8 PM	10-1 pm – OL Living Well – HC 1:30–2:30 pm – OL YSU Fitness - HC	
23	24	25	26	28	28	
Worship Service 11 am 12-3 pm – Sojourn to the Past Spaghetti Dinner – HC		6 pm Scouts		11-1 pm-ReEntry Coalition Quarterly Mtg – HC MFHC PT 9 am – 12 pm PT 4 pm – 8 PM Clinic – 5 pm – 8 pm 6-7:30 pm – T’ai Chi	1:30–2:30 pm – OL YSU Fitness – HC	