



Newsletter Update January/February 2023

A Message from the Clerk of Session:

While it was a MUCH COLDER Christmas Eve then we have had in I do not remember how many years, it was a warm and most delightful Christmas Eve at our church. A huge THANK YOU to everyone who made our Christmas Eve service not only memorable but also meaningful. Thank you to Shari Gould for taking the lead on organizing and recruiting our young adult readers as well as being the worship leader. Thank you to our readers: Kaley Berger, Kyle Berger, Ryan Kraus, Anna Williams, Maria Insana, and Grace Honeycutt who each did his or her reading with loudness and clarity for all to hear. The music from our talented musicians Gena Shirley, John Shirley, Brian Johnson, Lana Lawton, and Pete Kraus enhanced our Christmas spirit. Thank you to our Choir Director, Mark Brice and Randy Mehlenbacher for directing our FUPC Choir. Thank you to Richard Walker for his audio expertise. Thank you to Sue Johnson for making sure we had bulletins, and to Art Crawford for keeping the sidewalks shoveled and salted and the church building warm and cozy. I hope I have not missed anyone. If I accidently have, please accept my apologies.

As we move forward into 2023, we now turn our attention to what steps are next as we think about our next pastor. I appreciate that Elders Sue Payne and Shari Gould have made arrangements to have our pulpit filled each and every Sunday with either an ordained pastor or one of our own members. It is comforting to know what a strong congregation we have with so many folks willing help out and fill-in where needed. You are much appreciated.

Thank you to Brian and Karly Long for making Sunday afternoon, January 08, 2023, so much fun for the 28 to 30 people who attended the Erie Otters Hockey game. Box seats, food, and fun for everyone.

Monday, January 09, was our first Session meeting of the new year. Our General Presbyter, the Rev. Anita Bernhardt was in attendance. Anita provided much information, listened to our concerns, and answered many well-thought-out questions. She came prepared with much information in printed form. The first task to be completed is a Mission Study to help us reflect on what we feel our needs are in our next pastor. We will be assigned a representative from the Presbytery's Congregational Life committee to walk us through the process of gathering information from each of the groups (Deacons, choir, worship team, children and youth ministry team, and more) as well as individuals. In some previous Mission Studies, we had to gather detailed information about the demographics, etc. of our community. This time our Presbytery office will be able to be a major resource of that piece of important information. The whole process includes much more designed to create a good-fit between us, a new pastor, and our community.

Children and Youth Ministries

It is so exciting as we finished out the year 2022 and in to 2023 that we have a growing number of young families participating in worship and in our special family events. Since we are moving beyond the whole COVID experience, it is important to have the folks leading our family activities to have their required Child Safety Clearances on file in the church office. When I updated one and got the other Child Safety Clearance, it took me about a half hour on my computer and cost me nothing since I signed up as a VOLUNTEER. Many of you already have your Child Safety Clearance which are required for your employment in areas such as education or health care. In this case we need only a copy of your clearances to have in our required files. The clearances needed are as follows:

1. Pennsylvania State Police Criminal History Clearance –
You can use your device's search engine and look for PA STATE POLICE CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK. This will take you to "dhs.pa.gov" where the first thing on the page walks you through the process. When you sign-up, please indicate VOLUNTEER. There is no charge for this.
2. PA Child Abuse History Clearance –
You can use your device's search engine and look for PA CHILD ABUSE HISTORY CLEARANCE. While this will take you to "dhs.pa.gov" it opens up to Child Abuse History Clearance and will walk you through the process from there. When you sign-up, please indicate VOLUNTEER. There is no charge for this.
3. Federal Bureau of Investigation Clearance –
You can use your device's search engine and look for FBI CHILD CLEARANCE FORM FOR VOLUNTEERS. While this will take you to "dhs.pa.gov" again, it opens up to Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Criminal History Clearance and will walk you through the process from there. While there is a charge (\$23.25) for fingerprinting, THIS APPLIES ONLY if you have not lived in Pennsylvania for the last ten consecutive years. I know of no one in our congregation who would need this. There is a form to be signed that states you have lived in PA for the last ten consecutive years and have no crimes against children. I will provide copies of this for the church office.

These clearances DO NOT include things like speeding tickets. It checks for only 26 specific crimes.

While our family events include parents, please keep in mind if a parent steps out of the room for any reason, including to use the restroom, then we are not in compliance with the law. O know all of this sound daunting and scary, but it is the law. **On a personal note, if my life was in a totally different scenario like I was 20-something with small children and married to a military spouse who is deployed and I was in a serious accident and needed someone who could take my children for a few days, I would have no problems with anyone in our congregation providing the care.**

The other part of the child safety requirements is our Ordained Leaders are Mandated Reporters. This involves going to the PA Family Support Alliance website at "pafsa.org" and signing up to watch a three-hour video training that is FREE.

If there are any questions about any of this, please feel free to e-mail (jjzeart@verizon.net) or call me at (814-881-2285).

So looking forward to a positive 2023 for our congregation. Thank you. - *Jan Zeart*

January Mission of the Month:



“Empowered and guided by the Holy Spirit through Scripture, our confessions, and conscience the Presbytery of Lake Erie journeys with congregations, ordained leaders, and others as we live, grow, fellowship and witness to the work of God through Jesus Christ in today’s changing world. Recognizing that we are called to serve all of God’s children, we do this through shared prayer, worship, training, evangelism, and mission to strengthen the dynamic Body of Christ.”

February Mission of the Month: The Edinboro Food Pantry



The Edinboro Food Pantry serves individuals and families from the General McLane School District and from Cambridge Springs. Volunteers meet with the recipients on Thursdays at space provided at a dormitory building on the Edinboro University campus. If you know someone who would benefit from receiving groceries from the program, you or they can contact the coordinators at 814-732-FOOD (3663).

In addition to the grocery items donated and the purchase of food locally, your gifts provide funds to purchase bulk amounts through the Second Harvest program of northwest Pennsylvania. Often for pennies on the dollar, Second Harvest “rescues” food which would be thrown away otherwise, thereby multiplying the hunger-fighting impact of our gifts.

Your contributions to our mission of the month can be made at sanctuary worship or by mailing it to FUPC Mission, P.O. Box 789, Edinboro PA 16412.

Love Packages Project

FUPC and The Women’s Association of the Cochranon Presbyterian Church will be collecting used and reusable religious items for the Christian mission fields abroad. Items may be placed in a box provided in the FUPC east narthex any time before February 12th, For more information contact Kathy Johnston Fish at 814-880-2897 Possible items include: Bibles, Christian Books, Sunday school teaching materials (not busy work papers), religious Daily Devotionals, CDs, DVD, BluRay, Puppets, Nativity sets, etc., Dictionaries, Reference Material.

Kathy Johnston Fish will be speaking at FUPC during worship on February 12th to tell us how these donated materials benefit persecuted Christians around the world.

“First” Wednesday Supper (6:00pm) and Team Meetings (6:30pm) will be held next week, **February 1st**. Please join us for dinner and consider staying to participate in a team discussion. Teams include Adult Ministry, Youth Ministry, Fellowship, Business/Finance, Stewardship, Worship, Mission, Facilities, and Personnel. Fresh input is welcome and appreciated.

New officer ordinations and installation are upcoming

The members which the congregation elected to be our next group of deacons and elders are going through a required time of orientation and conversation during January with our current Session. The formal ceremonies of ordination and installation will be scheduled soon, and these will take place during early February. We will also celebrate the ministry and leadership of the elders and deacons who served us well in the Class of 2022.

Our 2023 Leadership Councils

With the upcoming installations, these will be our Ruling Elders and Deacons for 2023.

Deacons: Ministries of Prayer, Compass and Mission

†2025: Marilee Wnek, Lana Lawton, Harriet Smaltz

2024: Margo Roberts, JoAnn Austin, Jan Schulz

2023: Linda Rummel, Loretta Vanstone

Outgoing 2022: Mary Walker, Marcia Cooke, Marilee Pavolko (including those reelected to 2025)

Elders: Ministries of Leadership, Shepherding and Discernment

†2025: Rick Walker, Brian Long

2024: Sue Payne, Jan Zeart, John Austin

2023: Shari Gould, Milly Williams, Art Smaltz, Doug Roberts

Outgoing 2022: Pauline Kraus, Brian Long (including those reelected to 2025)

† Those to be installed/ordained this month

Ordination is the act of confirming God’s calling to become either an elder or a deacon in the Presbyterian Church (USA). It happens once in a lifetime, for each of the forms of ordained service. Installation marks the beginning of a particular time of service (generally one to three years) on one of our local leadership councils. The questions/vows required by our denominational constitution – made by the officers-elect AND by the congregation – are the same for both, whether stepping into the role for the first time or after being reelected to a new term on the Session or the Board of Deacons.

Thank you for the faithful service of Mary Walker, Marcia Cooke, and Pauline Kraus. Thank you, congratulations, and welcome...to our new and returning church officers.

Please plan to attend the Annual Congregational Meeting on February 5th, where the 2022 Annual Report will be presented. We will also celebrate Holy Communion and ordain and install church officers. Rev. Evon Lloyd will officiate.

“Per capita” offering request for 2023 will be \$33 per member.

One of the ways that the Presbyterian Church (USA) seeks to live out the benefits of its interconnected partnerships is to request a “per capita” gift from each member. Contributions through “per capita” fund some of the administrative services and mission outreach of the various levels of the church – regional presbyteries, multi-state synods, and the national denomination.

The request per member for 2023 will be \$33 in Lake Erie Presbytery. About two-thirds of that amount stays in our presbytery, with the rest designated for the regional, national and international work of the PC(USA). If you would like to give toward this amount, your gift can be payable to FUPC and marked with “per capita”. Those who use our preprinted offering envelopes will find one envelope marked for this purpose. These contributions can be made in a single gift or spread across multiple payments any time during the year.

Ash Wednesday at FUPC

Ash Wednesday is the start of Lent’s 40-day countdown toward Easter Day, and the occasion brings spiritual meaning and helpful faith practices. In 2023, Ash Wednesday falls on February 22nd. (Easter will be April 9th.) You are invited to join with family and friends at FUPC who will launch their Lent with a simple soup and bread meal at 6 pm, followed by the Ash Wednesday Worship Service at 6:45 pm..

Save the date...!!!

Garden of Edin holds a fun Spring Equinox gathering

The calendar say that springtime begins when the Sun moves our direction and crosses the equator. That annual sign of hope and warmth is a prime occasion for the “Garden of Edin” Community Garden to celebrate.

The gardeners who raise the produce in this garden will be at FUPC for a community celebration on Sunday, **March 19, from 2 to 4 p.m.** At this time, people can sign up for garden plots for the 2023 season. It will also be a fun gathering with craft items to buy, free seeds and demonstrations on things like garden yoga.

Even if you are not a gardener or do not plan to request a Garden of Edin plot this year, the people of FUPC are especially encouraged to attend. This is a great opportunity for the people of the church to connect with people from the community who come to our property multiple times throughout the year.

The Garden of Edin now is a self-governing organization. It was started as a mission outreach supported by the people of Edinboro Presbyterian Church and the Presbytery of Lake Erie.

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE



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FUPC has a nice collection of medical equipment to loan out. For many years, Edinboro Presbyterian has provided hospital equipment and home medical items for use by our members and people in the community. Some of these items were donated by people who had them but no longer needed them. Other items were purchased by the FUPC Deacons using open-designation mission funds which our members and friends have given. All items are stored in an unused classroom in the church building. Please take a quick tour to see what all is available to help people. The display area is in the room at the back southwest corner of the Fellowship Hall.

If you or someone you know could benefit from borrowing something from us, please call or e-mail Sue Johnson. We have an extensive collection of hospital beds, wheelchairs, crutches, bedside tables and many other items. No fee is charged to borrow the items.

Just a friendly reminder FUPC still has the old 8' x 3' long tables available for purchase at \$10 each. Please call the church office or speak to Art Crawford if you are interested.

First United Presbyterian Church

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