



First Pres News *monthly*

JANUARY 2023
VOLUME I

Notes from the pastor

Happy New Year! What a wonderful Christmas we had here at First Presbyterian. Our Generation to Generation theme for Advent was hopefully generative for all of us, allowing us to consider again the deep history of God's movement and interaction with humanity since we drew our first breath. The circle of joined hands around the sanctuary filled with the sounds of a wonderful rendition of The Peanut's theme will remain a favorite Christmas Day memory for some time, I am sure.

We will celebrate Epiphany this Sunday, January 1st. I hope you all can be present to participate in communion and the receiving of your star word. Star words are a serendipitous way of listening to God speak to us throughout the year. Sharing the Lord's Supper together on the first day of 2023 seems as good a way to start the year as any.

On January 8th, we will start a new theme for worship, The Beloved's Community. Beginning with the celebration of Baptism of the Lord (Matthew 3:13-17) and ending with the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-9) the theme is bookended by two texts that remind us of God's claiming of Jesus as beloved and through him claiming each one of us as members of a beloved community. The beloved community is a phrase popularized by Martin Luther King, Jr. and one he used to cast a vision of what the community of humanity might look like guided by a Christian vision of a commonwealth marked by peace and justice. We will be guided by Jesus' early ministry (Matthew chapter 3 & 4) and the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5) as we consider the kind of community we are meant to be both locally and globally. Look forward to seeing you as we kick off 2023 together.



716 College Avenue
Racine, WI 53403
262.632.1686

Pastor

Rev. Darren Utley

PastorDarren@FirstPresRacine.org

Parish Nurse

Peggy Taylor

PeggyParishNurse@yahoo.com

Organist and Chancel Choir Director

Alejandro Alumbremos

Piano3842@gmail.com

Handbell Choir Director

Fumi Nakayama

fnakayama@carthage.edu

Music Leader

Mark Paffrath

Mark@MarkPaffrath.com

Media Specialist

Steve Comeau

steve@spliceaudio.com

Sexton

Gloria Zember

Church Office

Office@FirstPresRacine.org

Financial Secretary

Theresa Revis

FSOffice@FirstPresRacine.org

Digital Media Coordinator

Shelley Maurer

shelley@FirstPresRacine.org

[www. FirstPresRacine.org](http://www.FirstPresRacine.org)



Mary Soley's memorial service will be held at Maresh-Meredith Funeral Home on Thursday, January 12, 2023, at 2:00PM, with Rev. Jennifer Gleichauf officiating. Relatives and friends may meet prior to the service 1:00-2:00PM.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to First Presbyterian Church or to a charity of one's choice.

From Theresa's Desk:

The per capita for 2023 remains at \$40 per person. Please remember to make that payment starting this month!

Building COMMUNITY Initiative



A planning meeting will be held during January (date to be determined) so we can continue to offer fellowship opportunities. Suggestions you have given us of what you enjoy will be included as we plan events, as well as exploring new ideas. We hope to work in partnership with the other Initiatives on this. Thank you to all who attended past events and watch your weekly bulletins for further information.

FELLOWSHIP SCHEDULE:

January through April 2, 2023:

Jan. 1 - Reesers
Jan. 8 - Holles, Sharon Campbell
Jan. 15 - Holles
Jan. 22 - Brookes, Bev Eifert
Jan. 29 - Earnests
Feb. 5 - Ritters, Deb Yale
Feb. 12 - Reesers
Feb. 19 - Seversens, Ken Schacht
Feb. 26 - Holles, Sharon Campbell
March 5 - Earnests
March 12 - Brookes, Bev Eifert
March 19 - Ritters, Deb Yale
March 26 - Seversens, Ken Schacht
April 2 (Palm Sunday) - Reesers

Happy Anniversary

Michael & Amanda Grunewald
January 6, 2018

Dave & Ellen Easley
January 26, 1966

Happy Birthday

5th Roberta Moulds
9th Tammy LaMarr
Joshua Nitz
10th Kay Mahl
Sarah Seversen
12th Logan Lehmann
14th Pam Wortley
John Daniels
Amanda Grunewald
20th Lissy Blandford
22nd Cheryl Nitz
23rd Janet Hoffman
John Brooke
24th Shawna Lehmann
26th Dennis Reeser
28th Julia Reeser
31st Ben Wahlen



The 3rd Annual Music & More Holiday Sing-Along Concert was great fun on Saturday evening, December 3. Thanks to Pat Badger for arranging a spirited program of seasonal favorites that featured song leader Mark Paffrath, The Brass Knuckles, organist Jessi Kolberg, and backup singers from The Choral Arts Society and First Pres. The concert opened with a rousing brass fanfare and continued on a high note throughout the evening. It was awesome to have so many singers on the chancel for the closing carols.

We sold more than 100 boxes of handcrafted Christmas cookies at \$10 per box and the proceeds were split between our three M&M youth music scholarship funds (in honor of Rev. Randy Bush, and in memory of Mearl Mahl and Mia Guion). We sold out of our popular spice blend, "Salt of the Earth." Thanks to Shelley and Jeff Maurer for preparing the bottles of spice and making festive gift bags. Donations received in the offering baskets were sent to the Women's Resource Center.

Many people contributed to the success of this Special Edition Holiday Concert!

Dozens and dozens of delicious cookies and candies were crafted by: Meg Daniels, Deb Utley, Pat Badger, Kathi Wilson, Carrie Massey, Royce Earnest, Deb Beuttler, Camille Jensen-Guion, Pam Simpson, Bonnie Eastman, Linnea Brooke, Diane & Ed Lehmann, Nancy Reeser, Nancy DeKraay, Debbie Yale, Elie Hunt, Jen Seversen, and Mark & Amanda Paffrath.

The cookies were boxed, labeled, and stacked high by: Sue Pehlivanian, Ginny Holle, Jen and Sarah Seversen, Elie Hunt, Linnea Brooke, Pam Simpson, and Pat Badger.

Concert night ticket and cookie sellers were Dennis & Nancy Reeser, Jennifer Eastman, Emma DeGroot, Elie Hunt, and Theresa Revis.

Our after-concert reception managers were Ginny & Dave Holle, Debbie Yale, Linnea Brooke, and Jennifer Eastman. Reception cookies were provided by Ginny Holle, Bonnie Eastman, Jennifer Eastman, Elie Hunt, and Linda Schubert.

Volunteers were Nancy DeKraay, Linnea Brooke, John Brooke, Dennis and Nancy Reeser, Elie Hunt, Linda Schubert, Kathi Wilson, Carrie Massey, Jennifer Eastman, Emma DeGroot, and Debbie Yale.

Thank you, thank you, one and all! And special thanks to Shelley Maurer, Theresa Revis, Steve Comeau, and our Buildings & Grounds crew.

With gratitude and best wishes for the New Year!
Georgia Hall



The Artistry of Ellen Cardwell

Featuring Original Artwork & Photos

37 Different Designs

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\$5.00 each

Sales benefit Music & More Youth Scholarships

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Available at the Church**

**First Presbyterian Church of Racine | 262-632-1686
716 College Ave. Racine WI 53403**



Christian Formation Initiative

The Christian Formation team will be meeting on January 3rd at 6:30 pm at the church. We will be finishing the planning for the next 6 months. This is an important meeting as we plan for Sunday School and adult education. We have some programming in place for January and February. Youth Sunday School will meet beginning on January 8th and meet every other Sunday. The youth in Confirmation will meet on the opposite Sunday.

Adult education plans:

- * **January 8th** – A speaker from NAMI will be coming and talking with us about Mental Illness. This will be in the chapel area. Please join us. She will then meet with the middle school and high school students on January 15th.
- * **January 12th** – Pat Badger will lead a discussion on Diversity.
- * **January 15th** – Movie Day after worship
- * **January 19th** - Pat Badger will lead a discussion on Diversity.
- * **January 22nd** – Lissy will present information on her trip to the Holy Land.
- * **February 26th** – A speaker from End the Exploitation program will come and speak to us about the issue of human trafficking in the Racine County area.
- * **March 5th-26th** – Each Sunday in Lent we will have a Bible Study. More info will be out closer to March.

Deacons
Digest

Happy New Year! We will continue to do home communion for those who wish it. We continue to help church members who need assistance with meals or just a friendly visit. Please contact us if you need or want assistance or home communion.



Volunteers are needed! One of my volunteers started a full-time job and cannot consistently help out. Our client list continues to grow. We are averaging close to 130 families a month. We serve all clients that come in regardless of how often they come in. They need the food. This continues to be a large issue in our area of the community. One of the problems we are now having is getting enough food to fill groceries. The Food Banks that provide us with food are not giving us as much as we used to get because they do not have the food either. Companies are not donating as much as they have in the past.

Items we could use:

- ◇ Juice - 64 ounce size bottles. Any flavor except grapefruit
- ◇ Dehydrated or canned potatoes
- ◇ Cereal
- ◇ Rice
- ◇ Pasta meals
- ◇ Canned chili or beef stew

You're invited!

Special Invitation to the Congregation

You are invited to an Open House on Saturday, February 4th, 2023
to celebrate the **90th birthday** of **E. William Anderson**.
It will be from 2:30-4:30^{PM}, held in Ihrman Hall of the church.

Please join his family in celebrating this event!
All church members are invited to the Open House.



MISSION Initiative

Cuba Update January 2023

Kathi Wilson has been in touch with Pastor Beidy, from our partner church in Matanzas. She shared the information with many of you at the “Talk It Over” on Sunday December 18, 2022. The discussion included information about the historically large migration of nearly 250,000 Cuban, approximately 2 percent of Cuba’s 11 million population. Every day Cubans are rescued by the United States Coast Guard, from the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico as they attempt to flee Cuba. These Coast Guard rescues are up 400% from 2021.

Kathi reported that Pastors Ary and Beidy are still trying to secure their passports via Canada to travel outside of Cuba. The Pastors will secure an appointment at the Consulate in about 100 days. Once the Pastors are able to travel to Canada, then maybe the Pastors can secure a VISA to come to the United States.

We also shared at the “Talk it Over” that bi-partisan congressional delegations have traveled to Cuba this fall and early Winter to discuss mutual ways to re-open Cuba to American travel and Commerce. The Cuban Embargo has been in place in some form since 1958. The Embargo is enforced through the Trading with the Enemy Act of 1917 and the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. Fortunately, President Biden allowed Humanitarian aid to be sent to Cuba after Hurricane Ian and the Matanzas Refinery fire in July, 2022. It is a positive sign that our US government is attempting to negotiate better diplomatic relations with their Cuban counterparts.

In the new year we hope to organize a Cuban Sandwich lunch to raise funds to support a visit from Pastors Ary and Beidy. We may also be able to safely send a group to Cuba from our church if our US Embassy is reopened in the new year. Stay tuned for more updates in another discussion about Cuba in the future. Please keep our partnership church in Matanzas Cuba in your prayers.

Please prayerfully consider how you may contribute to our Mission Initiatives in the new year. As we make our new year resolutions and commit to our continued support of our church family keep in mind all the gratitude we have for your continued support. We could not lead mission efforts without your help and support, your prayers, your generosity.

In closing, our world is so much bigger than we even realize. Pray for Cuba, Julian Thomas School, Peru, Iran, Mexico, Haiti, Somalia—the list is endless.

Peace and thanks.

Georgia Herrera and Meg Daniels
Mission Initiative



The Racine Arts Council has some very exciting news to share! Urban Sketching is a global phenomenon! There are Urban Sketchers all over the world, gathering to sketch on location, showcasing the world “one sketch at a time”. We have created a new event titled “Sketch Racine”, to be held September 9 – 10, 2023 to do the same in Racine. We have picked premier locations where sketchers will gather for classes and community sketching; Wind Point Lighthouse, DeKoven Gardens, Frank Lloyd Wright buildings and oh so much more. Along the way, we will be collaborating with other organizations to host sketch educational discussions to learn more about this exciting artform. We hope to start at sketch club at First Presbyterian Church! Might you be interested?! Stay tuned for more information on this.

- **Urban Sketching** is a form of visual storytelling where an artist uses pen, pencil, or other drawing tools to depict scenes from everyday life in a city, urban environment or sometimes even in a natural or rural environment.
- Urban sketches are typically drawn on-site, in the moment, and often capture the energy and character of a place. Urban sketching is a way for artists to document and interpret the world around them and can be a fun and engaging way to explore a city and its inhabitants.
- In addition to its artistic value, urban sketching can also provide a sense of connection and community. When artists come together to sketch on location, they have the opportunity to share their experiences, learn from each other, and build relationships. This can be especially valuable in a world that can often feel disconnected and impersonal.
- Urban sketching can also serve as a form of activism and social engagement. By drawing attention to the beauty and complexity of the urban environment, urban sketchers can help raise awareness of important issues and challenges and encourage others to engage with and care for their communities.
- Urban sketching can be a valuable and enriching activity for individuals, communities, and society as a whole.

