



FIRST DAY !

Weekly News and Opportunities at
The First Presbyterian Church of Howard County
December 31, 2023

TODAY

QUIET BEGINNINGS...

As we enter the sanctuary each week to gather for worship, we enter in a spirit of prayer and quiet preparation. Remember that your neighbor may be hoping for a quiet moment to center themselves, listen to the prelude, and prepare for worship. Take a breath – leave the busy, noisy, hustle-bustle world at the sanctuary doors and listen - God is ready for you!

10:00 a.m. MORNING WORSHIP (in-person and livestream) ONE SERVICE

Our in-person and livestream congregations share worship together. This worship service is being livestreamed to the internet, you may appear on our Facebook page and YouTube channel.

CHILDREN'S WORSHIP: All worship begins in the sanctuary.

At 10:00 a.m.: After the Children's Prayer and Lord's Prayer:

Children ages 4-7 may go with Ms. Kathy Moore to Godly Play. Parents can pick up their children following worship in rooms 110 & 113.

Older children, grades 2-5, who normally attend The Worship Bridge will return to their seats to experience a full worship service with their family.

WORSHIP BRIDGE will not meet TODAY Sunday, December 31, 2023.

WORSHIP BAGS: Worship bags are available to enhance the worship experience for children. Please return everything (except the bulletins) to the bags and return the bags to the ushers at the end of the service.

WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS TODAY:

Liturgist: Bruce (10:00)

Ushers & Greeters: Margot, Mispa, Sara (10:00)

Tech Crew: Jean Robert, Barry, Tracy (10:00)

FELLOWSHIP HOURS, *Sundays following the 10:30 a.m. service*

December 31 – Join us in Lyle Buck Hall following the 10:00 a.m. service for our Annual New Year's Brunch. Ring in the New Year with family and friends as we enjoy a meal of pancakes and sausages!



GUIDE TO PRAYER FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 24, 2023

[INFORMATION CURRENT AS OF DECEMBER 22, 2023]

Please pray for: Ruth, Lea, Dave and Jane, Dylan, Bob, *Ken*, Stacy, Bob and Sarah Jo, Bob and Carol, *Roy*, Maria, Dename and Family, Jim, Ann and Family, *Scot*.

And also for: everyone living in Charlestown, Encore, Millers Grant, Riderwood and Vantage House; the people of Ukraine.

Non-Resident Members: Frank and Betty Akiyama, Barb Murray

Friends & Family: *Wayne's Mom, Terry*; Chris and Matt, Mona, Dan, Maria, and Baby Hailey, Francine and Mary, Armand, Kathy, Kris, Ben, Dean, Al, Joe and Barbara, Paul, Jane, Aaron, Eyler, Rita, *Halle*, Matt, Tom and Sherrie, *Richard*

Recovering from Surgery: *Paul*, Debbie, Dan

Care Center: Virgie, Margaret, Paul, Barbara, Lois, Beth

Bereaved: Arnold & Elisha, Bob; Jen, *Dave and Jane*, Margaret, Kathy, Rosemary and David

PCUSA Mission Coworkers: Jeff and Christi Boyd in Congo, www.PCUSA.org/jeff-and-christi-boyd; Jed and Jenny Koball in Peru, www.PCUSA.org/jed-koball; Leslie Vogel in Guatemala, www.PCUSA.org/leslie-vogel

Please contact the church office, 410-730-3545 or churchoffice@firstpreshc.org with the prayers and concerns that you would like to share.

Friends & Family names are listed for 8 weeks unless requested otherwise.



WORSHIP, ARTS AND MUSIC NEWS

CHOIR REHEARSALS

Choirs will not meet the week between Christmas and New Year's.

Handbell rehearsal: *Wednesday, January 3, 2024* at 7:30 p.m.

Chancel Choir rehearsal: *Thursday, January 4, 2024* at 7:30 p.m.

Contact Director of Music Ministries, Dr. Margaret McGillivray,

churchoffice@firstpreshc.org for more details!

SANCTUARY DECORATIONS

Do you enjoy the decorations in the sanctuary? WAM is looking for people to help decorate the sanctuary. Contact Barb or Nan or churchoffice@firstpreshc.org for more information.

SIGNUP FOR SANCTUARY FLOWERS in 2024

Interested in flowers for 2024? Here's the link to signup:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/flowers2024>

The flowers cost \$35.

Please send a check to the church office or via [PayPal](https://www.paypal.com).

Questions?

Contact Church Administrator, Caroline Smith, churchoffice@firstpreshc.org

ADULT EDUCATION & SPIRITUAL GROWTH

SUNDAY SCHOOL for children, youth and adults will be taking a break on Sundays December 24 and 31, 2023. See you on January 7, 2024 at 9:30 a.m.!

HISTORIES & MYSTERIES OF GENESIS: THE PATRIARCHS AND THEIR TIMES

Taught by Bill

Sundays, January 7-28 at 9:30 a.m. in Room 258

Let's take a look at the ancient history of the middle east during the time of Patriarchs. Let's take a look at the archeological record of that time. Is there evidence that supports movement of Pastoral tribal groups, speaking a Semitic language, migrating from the Mesopotamia to Egypt and the lands between? Why yes, there is.

- 1: Basic overview of Ancient Middle East History
- 2: Semitic speaking pastoralists in Palestine?
3. Where were Sodom and Gomorrah?
4. Moving to Egypt.

WEDNESDAY STUDY GROUPS

Morning and Evening Groups will resume on *Wednesday, January 3, 2024*

Wednesday Mornings, beginning January 3, 2024 at 9:30 a.m. in the Parlor

On the Way with Jesus - The Gospel of Mark

with Rev. Rosemary and Rev. David

You're invited to join the Wednesday Morning Study group in the new year, as we explore the Gospel of Mark. This study will continue through Easter, so come when you can as we journey "on the way" with Jesus. On January 3rd, we'll begin with the first chapter of Mark. Hope to see you there!

Wednesday Evenings at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom

Jesus' Alternative Plan: The Sermon on the Mount *by Richard Rohr*

We will discuss Chapter 6 on *Wednesday, January 3, 2024*

Register in advance for this and future meetings:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0qc-6vqTstGNdMbW4UBdwAfUcwDJiqHjXW>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

SUNDAY SCHOOL for children, youth and adults will be taking a break on Sundays December 24 and 31, 2023. See you on January 7, 2024 at 9:30 a.m.!

YOUTH WINTER LOCK-IN

Saturday, January 6, 2024, 7:30 p.m. to Sunday, January 7, 2024, 10:30 a.m.

5th—12th graders are invited to come to the church to celebrate winter with friends, games, treats, movies & more! On January 7 we will attend the 8:30 a.m. service and Sunday School together. **Bring a snack to share and your signed permission postcard.**

SAVE THE DATE FOR VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

VBS will be next summer during the week of July 22-26, 2024 (Monday through Friday) from 9:00 a.m. until Noon. Children age 3 through current 4th graders are eligible to attend. We also need lots of volunteers! Mark your calendars now because you don't want to miss it!

FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN CHRISTMAS DINNER

Wednesday, January 17, 2024 at 6:00pm in Lyle Buck Hall.

The dinner will be catered by Absolutely Perfect Catering. Cost is \$30.

If the cost is prohibitive, no worries - we have Secret Santa's offering to help.

Please RSVP by Sunday, January 14, 2024 by signing up in the Harris Lower Commons or contacting Carol or Debbie or churchoffice@firstpreshc.org

CHURCH OFFICE NEWS

HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS: The church office and building will be **CLOSED** Monday, January 1, 2024 for New Year's Day. The church office and building will **reopen** on Tuesday, January 2, 2024.

2023 Annual Reports are due *Friday, January 5, 2024*. Please send them to Church Administrator, Caroline Smith, churchoffice@firstpreshc.org Thanks!

STEWARDSHIP UPDATES

ANNUAL RESPONSE PROGRAM PLEDGE STATUS:

As of December 21, 2023

Amount pledged to date: \$626,503

Number of pledges 113

Thank you to those who have responded!

If you haven't already made your pledge we ask that you do it now so that we can finalize the budget for next year.

2024 OFFERING ENVELOPES ARE HERE! Please check the table in the Harris Upper Commons for your offering envelopes. It saves the church a lot of the postage if you take them home with you today! Thank you!

OUR FINANCIAL RESOURCES DOING GOD'S WORK

Actual Income as of December 19, 2023	\$836,228.15
Actual Expenses as of December 19, 2023	<u>842,202.00</u>
Total	(\$5,973.85)

It takes an average of \$2,324.72 to fund the daily budgeted operation and mission of the church

The total surplus/deficit shown above is (3) days ahead/(behind).

[INFORMATION CURRENT AS OF PRINTING ON DECEMBER 22]

LAST CHANCE TO PAY YOUR PER CAPITA FOR 2023 The amount is \$40.00

The amount for 2024 per capita is \$40.00

The "Per Capita" is each church member's share of the expenses of the larger church – the Presbytery, the Synod and General Assembly of the PCUSA. Our congregation is required to pay this amount for each member of the church. *Have you paid your per capita?! Thank you to those 83 people who have paid already!*

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MISSION

COLD WEATHER SHELTER 2024

New Details about the Cold Weather Shelter (CWS): The CWS is a combined effort of Grassroots Crisis Center, Howard County Government and local congregations to provide food and shelter to about 40 unhoused adults and children from late November through March. For December, the Shelter will be in a hotel.

For January through March, it will be at the Day Resource Center (DRC), 10390 Guilford Road, Jessup. Our congregation is signed up to provide meals and evening volunteers for the week of Monday-Sunday, February 5-11, 2024.

Volunteer Opportunities:

- 2 Evening Volunteers each night from 5:30 - 8:00 p.m. to help everything run smoothly
- Groups to prepare, bring, and serve a hot dinner at 6:00 p.m. at the DRC
- Assemble 40 bagged breakfasts - you provide napkins, fruit, and breakfast bars, the church provides all else (bags, drinks, etc.)
- Assemble 40 bagged lunches - you provide napkins, deli meat, and fruit, the church provides all else (bags, bread, cheese, drinks, etc.)
- Note: Bagged breakfasts and lunches need to be dropped off at the DRC by 6:00 p.m. or at the church by 4:00 p.m.

More details are available at Sign up Genius: <https://tinyurl.com/2024CWS>

For any questions or help using Sign up Genius, please contact Margot or Amy or churchoffice@firstpreshc.org

Thank you!

BOOK/CD/DVD SWAP AND GIVE-AWAY!

Discipleship & Caring Ministries is sponsoring a Book/CD/DVD Swap and Give-away on *Sundays, January 21 and 28, 2024*. You don't need to donate something in order to pick up some treasures! There will be a donation jar to benefit PEN America (www.pen.org), a national organization fighting book bans and helping libraries provide inclusive books. **Drop off on the marked tables in Lyle Buck Hall from Sunday-Saturday, January 7-20, 2024.** Please, no textbooks, magazines, cassettes or VHS tapes.

DEACONS NEWS

JUST ONE CAN...PLUS!!! – December – POWERFUL Food

As part of the Deacons' continuing campaign against hunger in Howard County, we are asking for any food contributions for our neighbors. Hunger is an on-going concern for too many of our neighbors especially this year.

The Board of Deacons' campaign in December will focus on donations of POWERFUL protein-rich food for our continuing efforts against Hunger in Howard County. Imagine how hard it can be to have a Happy Holiday when you barely have enough to eat. Recommended items that have the power to bring a smile to a child's face are: Peanut Butter, Beans—Dried or Canned, Canned Meat/Tuna/Chicken, Canned Soups, Infant Formula, Baby & Toddler Foods.

Please leave your donations in the storage box by the back entrance (near the mailbox). Thank you from the Deacons and the Food-Stressed of Howard County.

WEEKLY CALENDAR



Sunday Morning Schedule

8:30 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary
9:30 a.m. Sunday School for Children and Adults
10:00 a.m. First Call on Zoom
10:30 a.m. Worship – In-person & Livestream
Nursery Care for ages 4 and under available 8:15–11:45 a.m.
11:30 a.m. – Fellowship Hour
FACEBOOK www.facebook.com/firstpreshc/live
YOUTUBE <http://www.youtube.com/c/firstpreshc>
Links can also be found on the Website www.firstpreshc.org
The Church Office is Open Monday – Friday, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
(The outside doors will be locked, please call upon arrival for entry.)

Sunday, December 31st

FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

NO SUNDAY SCHOOL

NEW YEAR'S EVE

10:00 a.m. Worship Service – In-person & Livestream
Godly Play

11:00 a.m. Fellowship Hour – New Year's Brunch

Monday, January 1st

NEW YEAR'S DAY

CHURCH OFFICE AND BUILDING CLOSED

Tuesday, January 2nd

1:00 p.m. Staff Meeting

7:00 p.m. Pastor-Parish-Personnel Meeting

Wednesday, January 3rd

9:30 a.m. Wednesday Morning Study Group

1:00 p.m. Knitting Ministry

7:00 p.m. Coordinating Council Meeting

Wednesday Evening Study Group via Zoom

7:30 p.m. Handbell Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, January 4th

7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Friday, January 5th

ANNUAL REPORTS DUE

FRIDAY EMAIL WITH SUNDAY BULLETIN SENT OUT

1:00 p.m. Bulletins Folded

Saturday, January 6th

FIRST PRES PRIDE DAY – WEAR YOUR T-SHIRTS

7:30 p.m. – 8:30 a.m. Youth Lock-In

Sunday, January 7th

BAPTISM OF THE LORD

COMMUNION

8:30 a.m. Worship Service – In-person

9:30 a.m. Sunday School for all ages

10:30 a.m. Worship Service – In-person & Livestream
Godly Play

11:30 a.m. Fellowship Hour

For more events throughout the week at First Presbyterian Church, please check our website at www.firstpreshc.org for the weekly issue of First Day. Also, check your inbox for the weekly issues of Tidings by Ministry Area.

*A Weekly Email is sent every Friday, if you would like to receive it please contact the church office. To submit news or events for the weekly bulletin **First Day!** please email announcements to: churchoffice@firstpreshc.org by Wednesday at 9:00 a.m.*

*To submit articles for Tidings, the church's newsletter sent out weekly by Ministry Area, please send articles by email to: churchoffice@firstpreshc.org by **Thursday, January 11, 2024** for February 2024 events. Then watch your inbox every week!*