



PRAISING GOD
SERVING OTHERS
GROWING IN FAITH

Good News Banner

December 2023

Farragut Presbyterian Church
209 Jamestowne Blvd.
Knoxville, TN 37934
865-966-9547
office@fpctn.org
www.fpctn.org

Office Hours

Monday - Thursday 9-3
Friday 9-1

Worship

9:00 am
Casual Service
Sanctuary

11:00 am
Traditional Service
Sanctuary

<https://tingurl.com/fpclivestream>

We are a diverse and welcoming community of believers, called by God, graced by Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit to serve God through worship in the Reformed tradition, compassionate service to all, and the nurturing of each other so as to grow in faith together.

Reverend Matt Nieman

A Message from our Pastor



The God of Surprises

Advent is underway. Christmas will be here before we know it. Still, though, we must wait. The Christ-child isn't born until we prepare the way during Advent. And with that preparation comes a good amount of expectant waiting.

Waiting is hard. It challenges our strength, patience, and resilience. And in the process of waiting, we are sometimes also surprised.

For the last few months, I have been battling an injury of some sort in my upper right hip area. I don't know what caused it, but it's hampered my ability to exercise since July.

I know this isn't a big deal comparatively speaking. So many of you battle health issues which are far more severe. Still, it's caused me to limit what is an important part of my daily routine—exercise. With some rest and therapy, I think I'm showing signs of improvement—until I don't. Some mornings when I wake up, I'm surprised to feel the pain as bad as it's ever been. And it's discouraging—a setback. Still other mornings, though, I wake up expecting discomfort but don't feel anything. And that is a very pleasant surprise.

Surprises come when we wait.

In an Advent devotional, Dr. Thomas Long writes about the surprising nature of our God:

This surprising God is at the heart of Advent. Like waves breaking on the beach, God keeps "adventing" into our lives in ways that always amaze. Who could have predicted the creation itself? It was a gift that arose ex nihilo, a surprising act of grace that God performed simply for the love of it. What forecaster could have foretold that the Red Sea would have parted for the children of Israel just as the Egyptian war chariots were closing in for the kill? What about those wise men from the East? For all their horoscopes and charts, the new king of the Jews did not turn out to be a ruler in Jerusalem's royal palace as they had predicted, but a humble child found in little Bethlehem in the arms of his mother. And not even the disciples were prepared for the great Easter surprise: an empty tomb and a risen Savior.

What about the ultimate future? In Luke, Jesus tells us there will be future wars, earthquakes, famines, and plagues. Well, knowing history, we could have predicted that. But then he tells us that at the end of all things there is a surprise. Don't look down, Jesus says. Look up, and you "will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. . . . Stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near" (Luke 21:27–28). Who could have imagined that? Only Jesus, the one who has come, is with us now, and is Lord even of the surprising future.

So, this Advent season, be on the lookout. God might surprise you, too, as you wait.

Advent and Christmas at FPC

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT W/ CHRISTMAS COOKIE RECEPTION

December 10th at 10am

SERVICE OF LESSONS & CAROLS WITH RECEPTION

December 17th at 10am

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Morning Worship at 10am

Casual Service at 3pm

Traditional Service at 7pm



My name is Turner Neely, and I am a member of Boy Scout Troop 444 and Farragut Presbyterian Church, sponsor of the troop. I am currently working on my Eagle Scout project for SOS Beagle Rescue located in Knoxville. I will be constructing a retaining wall in the puppy run to fix erosion issues. This will allow the puppies to play in a dirt and mud free environment where potential adopters can interact with the puppies and choose which one to adopt. I expect this project will cost at least \$300-\$500 for supplies of stone, gravel, and grass. If anyone would like to donate to my project, it would be greatly appreciated. Any funds raised above the cost of the project will be donated to SOS Beagle Rescue. For more information on how to donate, see me or go to: <https://tinyurl.com/TNeagleproject>.

Thank you for your support.

Welcome New Members



New member **Connie Foster** moved with her husband Fred Roethlisberger to Knoxville about seven months ago from River Falls, Wisconsin, to be near their son and grandchildren.

Finding a new church home was high on her to-do list, and since she had passed our sign when driving on Jamestowne Blvd, she decided to attend. Our sign lists the early service as starting at 8:30, rather than our new schedule of 9am. She also didn't know it was going to be an outside service. She showed up and found the music ministry group rehearsing but no worshippers yet. This was the next to last outdoor service, which was a very sunny but extremely cold day for late October. However, she persevered!! She dashed for take-out coffee, returned, and with a borrowed chair and blanket worshipped with us. She stayed for Matt's Inquirer Class, and early in November met with Session, transferring her letter from The United Church of Christ in River Falls, Wisconsin.

Connie and Fred have three children: John who lives here, Marie in Madison, and Gus in Long Island, NY. They have five grandchildren, aged 20 down to 5. Connie is a facilitator and consultant specializing in Leadership Development, Organization, Design, Strategy, Innovation and Well-Being. She enjoys reading, running, biking, swimming, and Yoga.



It was an automobile accident that brought **Kathy and Lewis Ransdell** together. Kathy was a part-time worker at Parkwest Hospital while attending UT, majoring in education, when she was severely injured. Lewis was associate administrator at the hospital, and visited her while she was recuperating. Talk about a good deed paying off!

After marriage the number of States where their family moved while Lewis pursued his hospital CEO career included Ft. Lauderdale, FL, through AL, and GA. While busy raising four children, Kathy also volunteered as PTA president and worked as director of a day care center. Their greatest joys are their 12 grandchildren and a great granddaughter. Lewis enjoys supporting his alma mater, Ohio State, as well as golf, woodworking and chess. Kathy enjoys cooking but loves games too: bridge, canasta, and mahjong.

Outreach

BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH GIVING



CHRISTMAS JOY SPECIAL OFFERINGS

LEADERSHIP, PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE



The Christmas Joy Offering provides assistance to current and retired church workers and their families in their time of need, and develops our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.



The Christmas Joy Offering is one of four annual special offerings. The church-wide Special Offerings of the Presbyterian Church (USA) play an important role in defining what it means to be a congregational church in the 21st century, bringing together the diversity of the PC (USA) to focus and take both-biased action on shared concerns. The Special Offerings offer opportunities for partnership, learning, and witness and they profoundly affect the life of the church as a collective witness to Jesus Christ's love for the whole church.

CHRISTMAS JOY SPECIAL OFFERINGS

LEADERSHIP, PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

What child is this?

THE PERFECT GIFT.

WAYS TO GIVE



Through your congregation



Donate by credit card online at pcusa.org/christmasjoy



Text CHRISTMASJOY to 91999 to give or visit pcusa.org/christmasjoy



This particular offering provides assistance to current and retired church workers and their families in their time of need, and develops our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

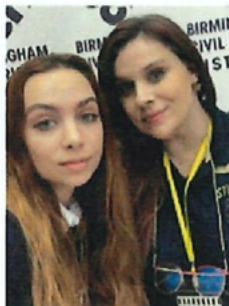
When we give to the Christmas Joy Offering, we share our love with the leaders of our Church — past, present and future.

50%

of your gifts make it possible for students to learn and grow in faith at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

The mother-daughter duo of Carla Louca and Susannah LeMay's respective roads surprisingly led them to study in the same place at the same time, Stillman College — a Presbyterian-related school founded in 1876 by a group of Presbyterians led by the Rev. Dr. Charles Allen Stillman.

"Stillman College has long been the place where students, who do not find easy access in other institutions, can find an opportunity to work on making their dreams a reality," said Dr. C. Mark McCormick, provost and vice president for Academic Affairs. "The fact that they have both flourished in their studies, and their relationship with one another has grown to new breadths and depths, is in no small part due to the nurturing learning community they found here."



50%

of your gifts assist current and retired church workers and their families with critical financial needs.

Sue Anne Fairman spent years — challenging but rewarding years — as a mission worker in Africa. She went on to become a ruling elder, deacon and volunteer in New Wilmington, Pennsylvania. When faced with the financial realities of moving to a continuing care community, Sue Anne felt a growing sense of anxiety. "I was very concerned about living in this new place with the monthly rent going up, and my savings going down," she said.

From a friend, she learned that financial assistance was available for retired pastors and mission workers through the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions, supported by our gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering. "When I got that letter that said I was accepted," she said, "I just cried. It meant that much to me."

PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY...
FOR WHEN WE ALL DO A LITTLE,
IT ADDS UP TO A LOT!



Assist our FPC Outreach with your excess stuff . . .

Earn KARM Cares Gift Cards through "Corners of Your Field" Program

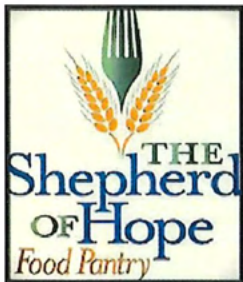


"When you reap the harvest of your land, moreover, you shall not reap to the very corners of your fields nor gather the gleanings of your harvest; you are to leave them for the needy and the alien." (Leviticus 23:22)

Corners of Your Field is a partnership opportunity between local churches and Knox Area Rescue Ministries, started in 2011. The program offers incentives for congregations to donate their used items to KARM stores and, in return, the church receives KARM Cares gift cards to distribute to someone in need for purchase of items in the KARM store. FPC is a partner church with this program. It feels good to hand a fist full of gift cards to someone in need to help them purchase needed items.

If you are not familiar with this programs here's how it works:

1. Individuals or families donate their gently used items to any KARM store in the area. Visit www.karmstores.com to locate a store near you. Drop off hours are Monday - Saturday, 9 am to 6 pm.
2. Tell the KARM store employee your name and FPC as your partner for donations. Donations to KARM are tax deductible.
3. Quarterly we will receive KARM Cares cards based upon donations. credited to FPC. The cards are distributed by the Outreach Committee to a worthy mission. As you start Spring cleaning consider donating to a KARM store.



We have been asked to provide boxes/bags of stuffing mix, cake mixes, and cans of frosting for holiday meals in December for food pantry families. You can place your donations in the Shepherd of Hope shopping cart in the narthex.



The Outreach Committee will continue its monthly commitment of serving lunch at the Volunteer Ministry Center in 2024. If you are interested in this ministry, please contact Jean Peretz (speretz@retiree.utk.edu) or Kirk Morris (kirk.morris58@gmail.com).



People! Look East!!!!

Last year I watched the television coverage of the lighting of the big tree in Rockefeller Center, and indeed, it was spectacular. As the mammoth wired fir lit up the night, an angelic choir burst into Isaac Watt's "Joy to the World," and I strained to listen for my favorite line--Let every heart prepare him room--but Al Roker was shouting "Merry Christmas" so loud I missed it, and then the credits rolled.

On television, and just about everywhere but in the church, Christmas comes early once again, and everywhere but in the church the great hymns become the Muzak behind a culture bent on forgetting "Jesus is the reason for the season." In Advent, a visitor to our church might ask, "Why doesn't your church sing Christmas carols?" I don't begrudge the question.

Christmas carols are everywhere. I assure the visitor to come back on Christmas Eve, the Sunday after Christmas, and the Sunday after that, when we sing every Christmas carol in the hymnal!

Still, we wait, hoping in these few harried weeks to "prepare Him room," comforting ourselves with Advent hymns and carols that are often in a minor key. For these few weeks, we are called to reflect on the spiritual condition of our lives. On Sunday mornings, we heed the dire warnings of the Hagrid of the New Testament--John the Baptist. In the night, we light every candle we can find, and pray for the darkness not to overwhelm us. We punch holes in the night, because we acknowledge how painful and dark our lives can be.

In Advent especially, we yearn for God's presence. As one of our Advent hymns reminds us, we look to the East in Advent, and "make our house as fair as able, trim the hearth and set the table," because "Love the Guest is on the way." In all of this, we prepare in our hearts the room to welcome again, like it were the first time, the gift of God breaking into the world, coming into our history, occupying our time. Yes, that is a moment of great joy, but in these days of long nights, we remember to not fool ourselves, as the culture wants us to do, by proclaiming Christmas comes early. We must wait, on the tiptoes of expectation, before we sing "Joy," and then shout "Hark" as the angels announce the Savior's birth.

One of the many wonderful things we always enjoy during the Advent and Christmas season is the music that enhances our celebration. Our Music Ministry is very proud to offer several opportunities to worship and celebrate together during the upcoming season. On Sunday, December 17 during our special 10:00am worship service, we will participate in our twenty-sixth annual Service of Lessons and Carols in the sanctuary. The Service of Lessons and Carols is a traditional seasonal service of scripture and music. Come enjoy the music of our Chancel Choir, FPC Ringers, Flute Trio and more! Our service will be followed by a sumptuous reception in the narthex.

On Christmas Eve, we offer two 'evening' services. Our Casual Service will take place at 3:00 p.m. At 7:00 p.m., we will enjoy a beautiful candlelit Traditional Service with a special prelude beginning at 6:50 p.m. by Dr. Linda Stutzenberger on harp. If you love singing familiar carols during the season, come and join us in preparation for these special services.

MINISTRIES




Prayer Shawl Ministry

No meeting in December

Join this wonderful group of knitters and crocheters to make shawls for FPC members who need extra comfort during a difficult time. Patterns and yarn are provided.

WHEN YOU NEED SOMEONE TO TALK TO



stephen
MINISTRY.

Call someone who cares

FPC STEPHEN MINISTER LEADERS
BETH MARTIN | MATT NIEMAN
JEANIE OAKLEY | ELIZABETH WILSON
865/966-9547

Presbyterian Women

All circle meetings are held at the church

Circle #1
2nd Tuesday, 10 am
Leaders: Janet Tinder
865-556-8193
Kathy Emmerson

Circle #2
2nd Tuesday, 10 am
Leaders: Becky Thomason
865-607-0727
Linda Nunley

Circle #3
2nd Wednesday, 10 am
Leaders: Mikie Lancaster
865-675-0360
Jo McElhaney
865-966-5424

Presbyterian Women in the Congregation (PWC) groups build community, affirm women's calls to leadership and spiritual growth, raise concerns and channel information to and from Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery. Presbyterian Women is a loving community that can challenge and nurture you, and be a vehicle for making the world a better place for all of God's children. Consider joining an FPC Circle.

Check us out on Facebook: Presbyterian Women in the PC(USA) or on Instagram: PWPCUSA, Inc.
www.presbyterianwomen.org

Men's Bible Study

December 21
8 a.m. / Narthex

The men of FPC gather twice a month for fellowship and a time of bible study. The group meets the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month in the narthex at 8am. If you would like to join us, please contact John Neighbors or the church office to get on the contact list. Breakfast, coffee, and great fellowship provided!

Chair Yoga

MONDAY AND FRIDAY
10:00 - 10:30 AM
NARTHEX

Class designed for those with limited mobility or balance concerns.

TGIF Gentle Yoga

FRIDAY 7:00 - 8:00 PM
FELLOWSHIP HALL

Gentle, slow flow class. Bring a mat and comfortable clothing. For beginner and experienced yogis.

Contact Jenny Trussell at CEDARSTUDIOS4@GMAIL.COM for additional information or a private introductory session!



The event was our annual Thank Offering Gathering which was held in the church Fellowship Hall on November 4. Our speaker (whom you can see at the podium in a couple of the pictures) was Lisa Grugin, owner of Meadow View Garden Center in Lenoir City. She spoke to us about preparing our plants and outdoor beds for winter.



Farragut had an impressive turnout at the October 28 gathering of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of East Tennessee. Here are some of our Farragut women, along with guests from Chattanooga and Tellico Village. Over 60 women attended, representing 17 churches, were there.



EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES



Pastor Matt's Class

Library

We're going to have a multi-week discussion about faith, belief, and the kind of faith and belief we embrace as church-goers in this strange time of religious expression in the western world.

The class will be based largely on reflections of author and pastor Brian McClaren in his book *A Generous Orthodoxy*. You're more than welcome to read the book for yourself, but **YOU DO NOT NEED TO HAVE READ IT TO ATTEND AND PARTICIPATE IN THE CLASS**. We won't review the book in totality, but I'll use some of his concepts in our discussion.

Youth

Cafe (Parlor)

Led by Mason Warren

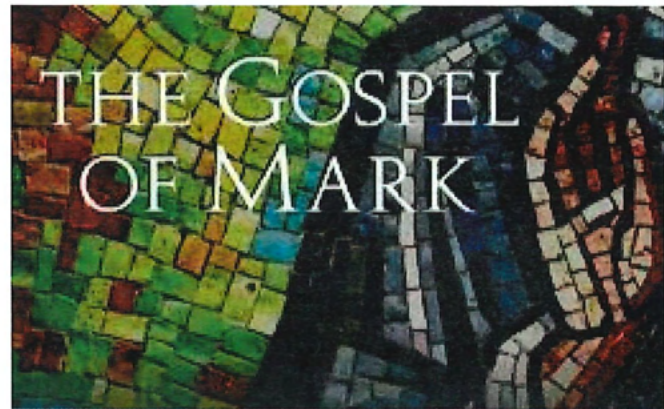
The youth Sunday School class meets to "DIVE IN to the Old Testament!" Each week throughout the school year, youth explore a specific book of the Old Testament utilizing videos and discussion.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Outdoors/Room D

Led by Elizabeth Wilson

This class will discuss the weekly Lectionary text. There's an optional lesson handout, but you can also join us for the conversation.



Thursday Evening Bible Study

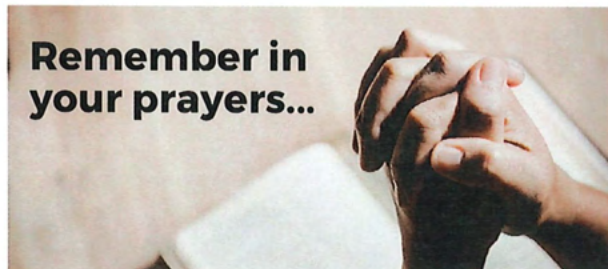
Meetings on Zoom at 7pm

Led by Elizabeth Wilson

Having finished the longest book of the Bible last year, we're turning to the shortest Gospel this year. The Gospel of Mark is the second of the four canonical gospels and one of the three synoptic Gospels. It tells of the ministry of Jesus from his baptism by John the Baptist to his death, burial, and the discovery of his empty tomb. If you're interested in an in-depth look at the Gospel of Mark, we'd love to have you join us (even if you can't make every week). For more information contact Elizabeth Wilson, the church office, or any of the current members.

December Anniversaries

12/07 Bob and Judy Alexander
12/07 Gary and Pam Heidinger
12/07 Allen and Mary Lutz
12/14 Gary and Laci Marks
12/16 John and Connie Begovich
12/17 David and Leah Key
12/21 Ron and Ginger Grunke
12/26 Dean and Lucy Fleming
12/27 Michael and Liza Wright



Andy Andrew, Candy Blake, Sue Burton, Lois Burris, Sara Cho, Denise Damelio, Kathi Damelio, Kathy Emmerson, Billy Fain, Chuck Foriska, Frank Guess, Paul Hanson, Bill Lester, Bron Lewis, Beth and Jimmy Loyless, Irma McGuffey, Maria Medina, Bill Nelson, Tami Newsom, Dee Robinson, Kathryn Robinson, Steve Tinder, Helen Weaver, Kent Williams

Military

Joshua Meador, David Sparks, Mark Wurth

Bereaved

FPC member, Dianna Lynn Daw, who died suddenly on November 18th. A memorial service will be held here on Sunday, December 10 at 3pm in the sanctuary.

<https://www.rosefuneraltn.com/obituaries/Dianna-Daw/#!/Obituary>

If you have updated information about our prayer recipients you would like to share, please email office@fpctn.org or call the church office at 865-966-9547.

December Birthdays

12/01 June Zachary
12/01 Zetty Bell
12/01 Beth White
12/02 Bev Lomax
12/03 Heather Robinson
12/03 Susan Harbin
12/04 Darrell Sparks
12/05 Liz Preston
12/06 Andy Andrew
12/06 Lois Burris
12/06 Karen Jones
12/07 Carl Farwell
12/09 Lori Patterson
12/09 Mark Hare
12/09 Sandra Bohlken
12/12 Martha Edington
12/12 Melody White
12/14 Betsy Starr
12/16 Bob Alexander
12/17 Linda Ewald
12/18 Peggy Stange
12/20 Wayne Walls
12/21 Matt Nieman
12/21 Miki Vanderbilt
12/21 Dean Honey
12/22 Evie Taylor
12/26 Denise Damelio
12/26 LisaKay Matchen
12/28 Landon Eiffert
12/29 Carolyn Neighbors
12/30 Emily Loveday
12/31 Audrey Richards
12/31 Janet Upchurch
12/31 Beth Allen

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

No meeting this month

Financial Report as of October 2023

	Actual for October	YTD October	YTD October Budget
Operating Income	\$63,156	\$618,579	\$559,010
Big Fish Academy Income	\$2,000	\$16,500	\$17,000
Total Income	\$65,156	\$635,079	\$576,010
Operating Expenses	\$56,992	\$540,706	\$578,474
Total Expenses	\$56,992	\$540,706	\$578,474
Total Income less Expenses	\$8,163	\$94,373	(\$2,464)



STAFF

Pastor

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matt@fpctn.org
 402-660-2451 (call or text)

Dawn Zilles

Office Administrator
office@fpctn.org
 865-966-9547

Lori Corbett

Bookkeeper
bookkeeperfpc@gmail.com

Mason Warren

Director of Family Ministry
masonwarren@fpctn.org

Dr. Angela Batey

Director of Music
abatey@utk.edu

Tami Newsom

Associate Director of Music
tnewsom3@utk.edu

Sandra Porter Bohlken

Music Director, Casual Service
singsandrab@gmail.com

Get Social!

Farragut Presbyterian is live on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

Have something to post?

Send to our social media coordinator, Emily Sweetland,
 at social@fpctn.org or text 865-567-7636



<https://www.instagram.com/farrgutpesbyterian>



@FarrPres



<https://www.facebook.com/FPCKnox>



KARM STORES
 The Thrift Store with a Mission

When donating used items to KARM tell the employee the name of the church. The church will receive gift cards to KARM Stores that can be given to someone in need.



Support FPC Christian Ed with Kroger Community Rewards Program. Link your Kroger reward card to FPC. Sign up at: Visit <https://www.kroger.com/account/enroll> CommunityRewardsNow/ Our organization number is YU915.

SESSION

Administration

Kirby Purjet
 Kathy Emmerson

Christian Education

Denise Griffin
 Beth Honey

Church Life

Jeff Thode
 Gayle Williams

Outreach

Kirk Morris
 Bill Nelson

Property

Mark Allen
 Darrell Sparks

Worship and Music

Sharon Koch
 Catherine Manning

Clerk of Session

Janet Tinder