

THE MESSENGER

FIRESTONE PARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



FEBRUARY 2023

THOUGHTS FROM PASTOR FRANCIE...



“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.” (Galatians 5:22-23)

There are those who say that if we wanted to summarize all the teachings of Jesus in one word, that word would be “love.” When the apostle Paul listed the fruits of the Spirit, the first one he listed was love. When writing to the church in Corinth, Paul elaborated on the value of love by describing it with these words:

“Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. ... And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.” (1 Corinthians. 13:4-8,13)

When I was a child, one of the first Bible verses we memorized in Sunday School (probably because it was a short verse and easier to remember!) was 1 John 4:19:

“We love because he first loved us.” We are able to love others and God because God loved us first, and God built within each of us the ability to love. When we love others, we are also learning more about the character of God. As the first of the fruits of the Spirit, love is a fruit that flows out of us from the Spirit of God that is within us.

So... as individuals and as a congregation we will seek ways to love our neighbors and to love each other: loving them by forgiving, encouraging, listening, and providing help in difficult times. Every time we show love, we strengthen our connection with God.

Blessings, Francie

FPPC FINANCIAL REPORT

Submitted by Sherry Priest, Treasurer

Our General Fund Income and Expense through December 31st is as follows:

	Total Income	Total Expense
Jan 31	\$8,411	\$4,822
Feb 28	\$3,385	\$10,610
Mar 31	\$13,986	\$7,529
Apr 30	\$6,073	\$4,508
May 31	\$14,473	\$5,805
Jun 30	\$4,709	\$9,751
Jul 31	\$4,010	\$3,990
Aug 30	\$3,959	\$9,533
Sep 30	\$26,944	\$4,914
Oct 30	\$6,089	\$10,762
Nov	\$22,969	\$9,100
Dec	\$12,767	\$9,075
YTD	\$126,776	\$88,719

As of December 31st, we have \$135,657.48 in the bank, of which \$119,274.94 is available in the General Fund.

Please keep in mind that the flood repair work is not yet complete, and that we still owe the contractor \$20,486 upon completion of this work. In December, we received a \$2000 reimbursement payment from the City of Akron for over budget items in our Backpack Program. We also received a \$1000 donation from Little Discover's Day Care.

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

Submitted by Karen Babri

Thank you to the members and friends of Firestone Park Presbyterian Church for your generous contributions to the Christmas Joy Offering. A total of \$520 was received by December 31, 2022. With an additional \$100 being received by January 8. This offering honors previous generations of pastors and church workers by helping with financial needs. The offering also looks to developing future pastors and church workers by providing scholarships to minority students for theological studies. Your generous donations combined with those of other congregations make a difference in the life of many.

COMMUNITY BLESSING BOX

Submitted by Jona Rohrs, Community Blessing Box Coordinator

“Take what you need, Leave what you can”

As we entered these cold weather months, we have made a concerted effort to fill the box daily with breakfast items, soups, crackers, hats, gloves, and socks. At this point, we can still use donations of soup, crackers, pancake mix, syrup, apple sauce, toilet paper and bar soap. Monetary donations are welcome as well.

One day when I was filling the blessing box, I had the opportunity to carry on a conversation with a lady helping herself to a few items. She is experiencing medical issues and is now unemployed. She was very, very grateful for the blessing box and mentioned how much it helps her on a weekly basis. I asked her what she needed, and all she needed was toiletries. I went back in the church and filled a bag for her. Due to her medical issues, there are foods she no longer can eat so she brings them to the blessing box for others. Such a humbling experience.

There is a real need in our community and our blessing box continues to impact people's lives in ways we can't imagine.

ACME CASH BACK PROGRAM

Submitted by Kitty Johnson

A big **THANK YOU** to all who participated in the 2022 Acme Cash Back Program. The Cash Back totals have now been submitted, and we should receive a check for \$154.50 from Acme before the end of March. With the additional monetary contributions of \$125.00 designated for the program, we will be able to give **\$279.50** toward food and non-items for our Blessing Box.

Offering our help to our brothers and sisters in the community through the Blessing Box is one way of showing we are a “missional” church. Our above contribution will help to be part of that community support.

EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

THIS MONTH'S WORSHIP SERVICE SCHEDULE

Here's the February/March Sunday worship schedule for you to clip and save:

All services are at 10:30 AM, alternating between the Allenside Presbyterian and Firestone Park Presbyterian buildings. Allenside Presbyterian is located at 410 Rexford St. Services are also offered on Zoom.

- February 5: Allenside (followed by an Adaptive / Innovative Ministries Project for the Firestone Park Church immediately after worship)
- February 12: Firestone Park, followed by luncheon and Firestone Park Annual Congregational Meeting
- February 19: Allenside
- Wednesday, February 22, 6:00 PM: Firestone Park – Ash Wednesday (Communion)
- February 26: Firestone Park – First Sunday of Lent (Communion); followed by "Getting to Know You" event for both churches
- March 5: Allenside
- March 12: Firestone Park
- March 19: Allenside; followed by "Getting to Know You" event for both churches
- March 26: Firestone Park

To join our services by computer/tablet/smartphone, click this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5118335841?pwd=Z3VFQktHYUINa1RoTEhGU2p2WTErdz09>

To join via phone:

Phone number: 1-646-558-8656 (this is a New York number– note it is not toll-free)

Meeting ID: 511 833 5841 (then key "#"), No participant ID (key "#"),

Password required: 4430144314 (then key "#")

KEEPING YOU INFORMED

HYMNBOOKS FOR ZOOM WORSHIPPERS

Submitted by Pastor Francie Fischer

If you worship with us via Zoom and would like copies of our hymnbooks at your home so you can join us during the singing of the hymns, please contact the church (fppchurch@gmail.com or 330-724-2740) and we will arrange to get copies of the hymnbooks to you. When we stopped printing the words to the hymns in the bulletin, we took hymnbooks to all the shut-ins, but we want to provide them for any others who join us via Zoom.

THANK YOU FROM REV. CATHY ULRICH

Submitted by Pastor Francie Fischer

On January 8, we celebrated the ministry of General Presbyter / Stated Clerk, Rev. Cathy Ulrich, as she prepares to retire at the end of February 2023. Cathy preached and led the service of communion, and we presented her with a bouquet of yellow roses and had a reception in her honor following the service. Cathy sent us the following thank-you note about the event:

Dear Francie and the saints of Firestone Park,

Thank you so much for the lovely reception, delicious cake, and beautiful flowers last Sunday, January 8. Yellow flowers will always remind me of the sun shining through the windows of Firestone Park, and the light that you shine for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thank you for including me in your church family.

May God's blessings continue to surround you in all seasons of your ministry.

Blessings and peace,
Cathy

EXPANSION OF BUILDING USE

Submitted by Pastor Francie Fischer

During the last few months, we have experienced some changes in our building.

The repairs to deal with the flooding in the Nursery and the Little Discoverers Daycare Office are nearing completion. Our insurance coverage paid for all these repairs except for the \$1,000 deductible.

Little Discoverers approached us about renting another room to support their growing program, so the Session has approved renting them the Nursery to use as their office, and the room they formerly used as their office will become an additional classroom. If we ever have a need for a room for children during worship on Sunday mornings, we will use the classrooms.

Prevail Church has requested use of the upstairs room that was the old Preschool office, and Session has approved their use of this room. Prevail Church will periodically have the carpet scrubbed in the Fellowship Hall, and they will do additional cleaning of the Fellowship Hall and upstairs restrooms.

We are blessed to have Little Discoverers, Prevail Church, and Eastminster Presbytery share our building with us. We are grateful for the service they provide, as well as the financial benefit they provide to our congregation as we seek to maintain our church building in an effective manner.

UNSUNG HEROES OF THE MONTH



We all know what the various FPPC committees do. But FPPC is full of unsung heroes who don't serve on a committee but use their time and talents to keep the church functional and interesting. This month, we're shining a spotlight on our Openers/Closers - Steve Rohrs, Frank Tilenni, Rick Ereth, and Larry Shaw

Thanks, guys, for making sure the lights are on, doors are opened and sound system works. Thanks also for acting as security during worship.