



First Presbyterian News

Aiken, SC
PC(USA)

December 2024



Adding New Chapters to an Old Story...

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Pastor/Head of Staff
Parish Associate
Director of Operations and Media
Director of Christian Education
Director of Music
Director of Finance
Preschool Director
Office Manager
Organist/Accompanist
Finance

Rev. Dr. Christopher Erde
Rev. Dr. Beth Yarborough
Joanna Hamilton
Tamra Erde
Daniel Hamilton
Cassie Buchanan
Mary Maddrey
Debby Dugan
Kathy Clark
Suzanne McCleod

Address: 224 Barnwell Avenue NW, Aiken,
SC 29801
Phone: (803) 648-2662

E-mail: aikenpresbyterian@aikenpresbyterian.org
Website: www.aikenpresbyterian.org

If you are not receiving the Weekly Connections on Friday, please contact the church office.

PUBLICATIONS:

The deadline for the January 2025 monthly newsletter is 12:00 PM on Wednesday, December 18th. We would love to hear your story! Please send your information via email to

Joanna Hamilton at

joannah@aikenpresbyterian.org

Watch for Weekly Updates in your email!

Please follow the church:

Facebook - [facebook.com/aikenpres](https://www.facebook.com/aikenpres)

Instagram - [@aikenpres](https://www.instagram.com/aikenpres)



"The Book Group"

Start the Year off
with a good book!
Please join the
Book Group at
their next
meeting.

January 27

James

by Percival Everett
and

Huckleberry Finn

by Mark Twain

Wednesday Dinner

December 4
In the Fellowship Hall
5:45-7:00 PM.
The dinner
will be catered.
Children will
head out after
dinner for
games.

Thursday Lunch Bunch

December 12
A catered
lunch in the
Fellowship Hall
at 12:00 PM for
a short lesson
and discussion.

Puzzling from
11:30 to 2:30 PM
with lunch
included

Christmas Breakfast

December 22
A congregational
meal in the
Family Life
Center at 9:30
AM. Please bring
a breakfast dish
to share.



GIVING *together* STORE



We need volunteers for store appointments during the Christmas store week, **December 8-13**. We need cashiers in 2-hour shifts on **Sunday from 12-6** and **Monday- Friday from 4:30-8:00PM** please contact the office at the church.

Alternative Gifts Christmas 2024

Honor family and friends with simple gifts of hope. Agencies sponsored this year include,
Children's Place, Inc.
Cumbee Center

Fellowship Camp & Conference Center
Standing at the Crossroads
The Community Medical Clinic of Aiken
County
The Honduras Agape Foundation
/ Mwandai
The Presbyterian Mission Agency

Brochures are available in the Narthex and the office hallway; please return by December 23rd.

"This is Christmas" December 15, 2024

The First Presbyterian Choir, will be presenting a service this Advent season featuring a versatile and unique offering for the holidays. This one-of-a-kind carol compilation is designed to inspire listeners to reflect on refreshing new arrangements during this special season.

Christmas Eve Service December 24, 2025 5:00 PM

Join us for our candle light Christmas Eve Service. We will have a live nativity portrayed by our younger church members. If your child would like to participate, please arrive in the parlor by 4:30 PM that day to pick out a costume. If you have any questions please contact Tamra Erde.



Service of Comfort and Hope

You, your loved ones, and friends are invited to attend the Service of Comfort and Hope on Sunday, December 8, 2024, at 5:00 PM in the sanctuary. Child care will be provided during the service. This quiet meditative,

communion, and candle lighting service provides a worship experience for those who face the holidays in their own season of sadness.

A light supper will be served following the service in the Fellowship Hall.



Interested in Stephen Ministry?

We're looking forward to a new Stephen Ministry training class starting the first of the year. Informational packets are available for you to learn more about Stephen Ministry.

Please contact any of the following Stephen Leaders:
Gayle Gordon
803-507-7725
Karalee Kludzuweit
803-335-8632
Julie Taylor
803-979-9919

We would be grateful for prayers from the congregation to be with those who will be training.

**MARGOT
SALZMON**



*Art
Wall*

**OPENING
DATE
JANUARY
5TH**



Education- BFA Michigan State University,
Ceramics & Printmaking
Other skills – card making, hand-dyeing fabrics,
wool applique', and knitting

Quilting- I started quilting about 40 years ago. Coming from a clothing background, I had to learn different skills to cut and sew flat square, precise quilt blocks to fit together accurately. Long ago I learned that; "COLOR gets all the credit, VALUE does all the work". That is a good reminder for all types of artistic pursuits.

A quilt is two layers of fabric with batting in between, held together by machine or hand stitching.

Painters can mix colors. Fabrics need to be collected over time to have a large palette to choose from.

I like the challenge of working with a prompt or theme, and learning different techniques. I usually make smaller pieces rather than full size quilts, as they are easier to design and finish. Quilts, like other physical items, are made by drawing, drafting, engineering, designing, measuring, collecting fabrics, cutting and sewing. Sometimes a quilter will use a purchased pattern by a quilt designer. Quilt patterns are like a good recipe with suggestions of elements that work well together. Most of my quilts are original designs. I like to machine piece, and applique'. All these parts together become an expression of the reaction to an idea or prompt, and executed in fabric.

Many of my quilts have won awards in our local guild annual quilt show. Each quilt is an individual piece.

FPCA is excited to announce we are ready to accept book donations for the parlor library.

Please limit donations to 6-8 books per household. Books may be dropped off with Debby Dugan in the main church office.



Presbyterian Women

The PW morning gathering will meet on Wednesday, Dec. 11 and continue our Bible study, led by Chris Erde. Following the study and fellowship, we will enjoy the annual cookie swap. Our ladies bring holiday cookies and treats, wrapped in packages of half a dozen or more delicious offerings. Then we swap and share our goodies. This activity is one of PW's most anticipated events for the holidays.

During November and December, Presbyterian Women are collecting items to give to the residents at the Presbyterian Home in Clinton. Some of the residents there have outlived their family members or have no family members, and we help with stocking stuffers and treats for them

at Christmas. Toiletry items, postage stamps and note cards, puzzles and books, calendars, umbrellas, flashlights, and pens are suggested items on our list. This is the 5th year for our participation and delivery of these items, and we look forward to helping spread love and joy with them.



WELCOME NEWBORN BABIES!

Please be sure to let us know if you are expecting a new baby, grandbaby, or great-grandbaby in your family! Some of our Presbyterian Women have made beautiful knit baby items which we'd like to share with you for your new family member! Let us know before the arrival time, so you'll have the gift ready to deliver at your convenience!

Please contact Robbie Knox to ask about getting baby items or with your questions and suggestions.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

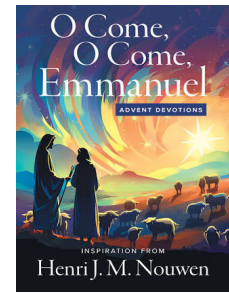
Please join us for one hour on the third Tuesday of each month. We will be meeting from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. in the PW Productions Room (#27) on December 17th. We can get you started on making a prayer shawl while we share ideas, tips, fellowship, and prayer! You can also be a part of this ministry through your handwork at home. Please call for details.

Our Prayer Shawl Ministry started in the fall of 2007, and so far we have made over 933 prayer shawls, and over 901 have been given away. We continue to pray for all those who have received a prayer shawl. Prayer shawls are available to give to anyone -- church members and those who are not members of our church. Please let us know of someone who might enjoy receiving this special gift from our church.

Please contact Robbie Knox to ask about getting a prayer shawl or to see how you can help!

A free Advent devotion booklet is available in the Narthex and the office hallway this year, entitled "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel". Advent signifies the special season of preparation for the coming of Emmanuel, God-With-Us. This collection of devotions and Bible passages is based on the writings and insight of Henri J. M. Nouwen and invites readers into a deeper intimacy with Jesus.

Please pick up a copy for your family and spend some time seeking quiet moments amid the busyness of the weeks leading up to Christmas.

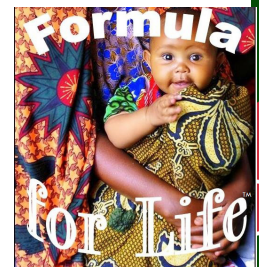


Formula For Life^(tm)

STOCKING STUFFERS AND MORE
Looking for stocking stuffers? Look no further than the Formula for Life display in the Adult SS wing. We have necklaces, coasters, kitchen scrubbies (a favorite of many), pocket-size wood crosses, and more. All made by members or friends of FPC, the proceeds of which support the purchase of life-saving formula for infants in Mwandi, Zambia. Also available are an assortment of tote bags, dining scarves (to protect the clothing of those with mobility issues), and walker bags.

MATCHING GIFT CAMPAIGN

In fifteen years, we have saturated the market with our necklace sales. Formula for Life is still an incredibly important mission. Sponsors have come forward with \$7500 to match donations to the fund. As of November 15th the goal has passed the half-way mark! A big "Thank you" to those who have contributed. If you have not made a donation and would like to be part of this wonderful program, please mark your donation as going to Formula for Life.



Dates for the sacrament of holy communion during the morning worship services will be printed in the bulletin, newsletter and in Weekly Connections. If you are a home viewer for worship, you may participate at home with your own bread or cracker and juice. If you are unable to attend the worship service due to illness, recovery or mobility issues, the pastoral staff will bring communion to you.

Please call the church office and let Debby Dugan know if you would like to have extended communion brought to you.

Next Date: December 22nd



For a gift that keeps on giving, stop by the Mustard Seed Garden bulletin board near the front office to purchase an apron or tote bag. Everyone on your Christmas List is sure to enjoy them!

- Tote bags - \$5
- Lime green short aprons \$20
- Purple long aprons \$20
- Note cards - \$15





JAM

During the morning worship service on December 8th, JAM kids (4k-5th grade) will leave after the children's message and go to room #3. We will learn more about Advent and the coming celebration of the birth of Christ.



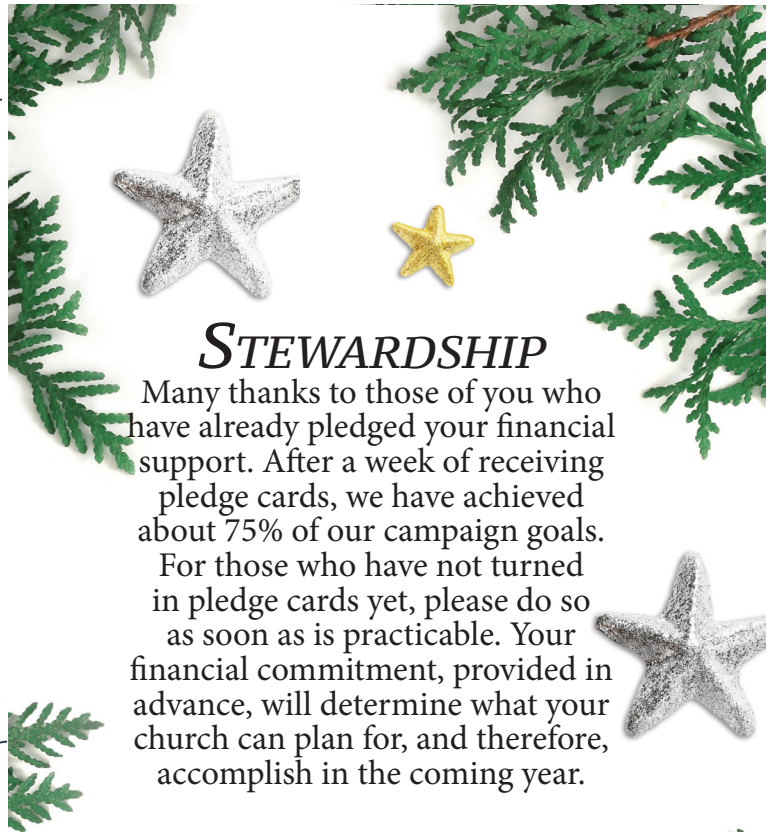
SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School will not be meeting on December 22nd, 29th, and January 5th. We look forward to restarting class in the new year!



YOUTH

December 8 5:30-7:00PM
December 15 5:30-7:00PM
Christmas Party
at the Erde's House



STEWARDSHIP

Many thanks to those of you who have already pledged your financial support. After a week of receiving pledge cards, we have achieved about 75% of our campaign goals.

For those who have not turned in pledge cards yet, please do so as soon as is practicable. Your financial commitment, provided in advance, will determine what your church can plan for, and therefore, accomplish in the coming year.

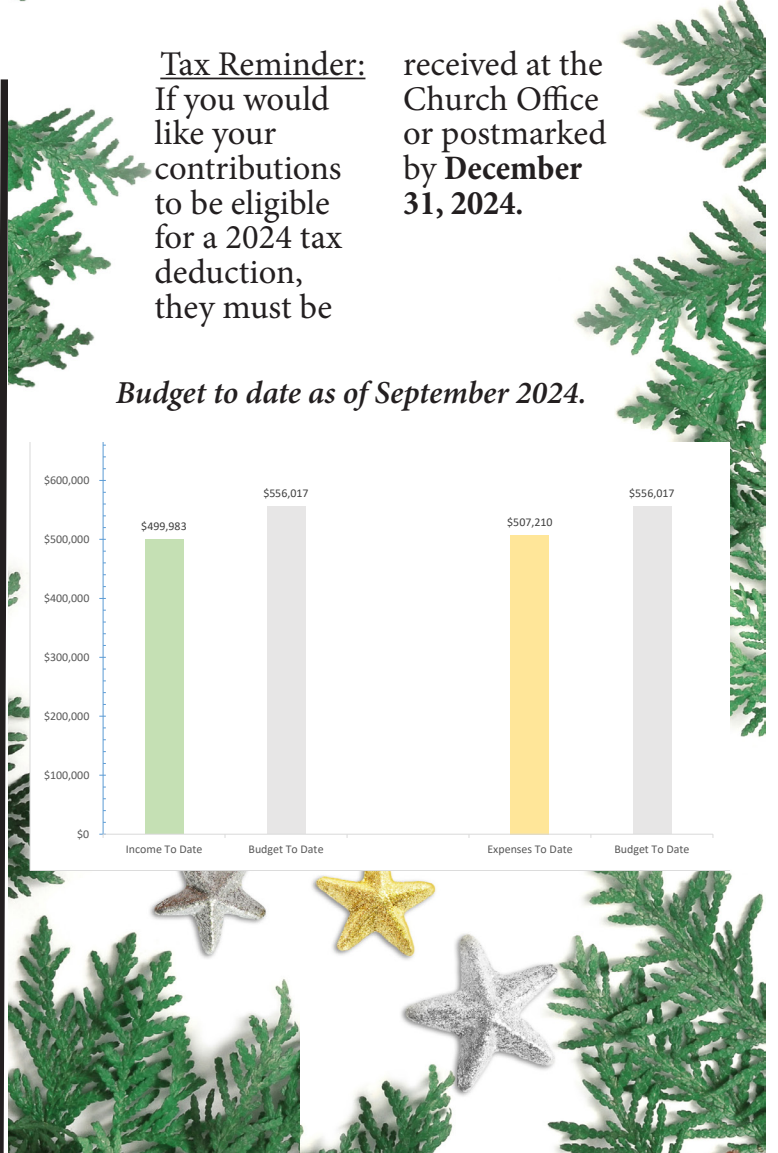
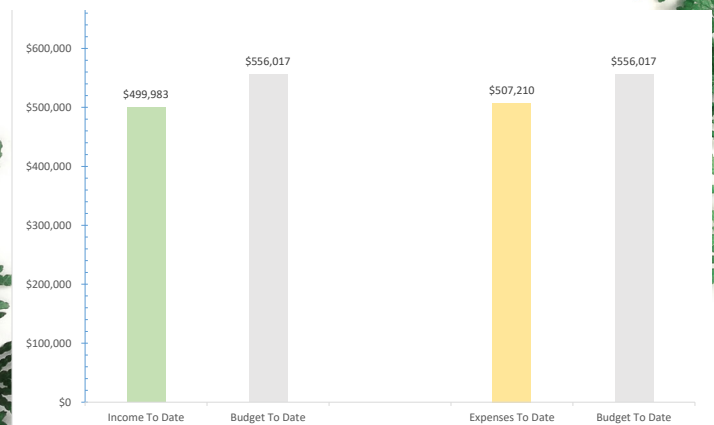


Tax Reminder:

If you would like your contributions to be eligible for a 2024 tax deduction, they must be

received at the Church Office or postmarked by **December 31, 2024.**

Budget to date as of September 2024.



Minister's Thoughts

It's the Season of Advent, the time of year when we prepare ourselves for the arrival of the Christ. We decorate the sanctuary, we sing familiar Advent/Christmas hymns, we light the candles of the wreath, we read the scriptures that tell the story of God with us, Emmanuel.

It's the Season of Christmas, that time of year when we cheerfully greet each other with a, "Happy Holidays!", or a, "Merry Christmas!", it's the time of year when we are each a little better to one another, a time of generosity and peace, patience and grace.

During this season of giving and sharing let's all do our best to remember that the nicest gift we can receive, or give, is the gift of genuine love and kindness, the form of love and kindness that Christ taught us to gracefully share and gratefully accept. Let's do our best to be good to one another, let's not let the busyness of the season lead us to places of stress and gloominess. Let's not be drawn in to silly arguments about "proper greetings" or "true meanings", let's instead do our best to breathe in the Holy Spirit and share the Spirit's peace with others. Let's remember that this is a divinely joyous season, and the joy of Christ is meant to be both appreciated and shared, so let's be people who share Happiness

this Holiday Season!

It's the Season of Advent, so let's prepare ourselves for a Spirit filled and worshipful Merry Christmas!

It's the Season of Holiday Joy, so let's all go forth and share the joy that is the peace and grace of the Christ Child...Emmanuel...our Lord! Merry Christmas to All!

Chris



Thank you Notes

Dear FPCA,

Thank you to everyone who came out to our Day of Service on Saturday October 26. We had a great turnout, and more importantly, we got a lot of work done at the organizations we worked with that day. Whether it was planting flowers, cleaning up storm debris, making soup, sorting and organizing items, or donating a pint of blood, a lot of good things happened that day. I would also like to personally thank the people who were the project coordinators at each site for making sure things went according to plan.

We are all tremendously blessed in our lives both inside and outside of our church family. This was a way to extend those blessings to our community.

Thanks again! Tommy Patterson

Dear friends at FPCA,
Thank you so much for the beautiful bouquet in honor of our grandson Aaron Bert Barton. He's our precious angel in the arms of Jesus. Thank you all for all your prayers too. Austin & Adalae are doing great.

Thank you Jesus,
The whole Crandell & Bartman Family

Dear women's group of FPCA,
Thank you so much for the beautiful baby blanket! Ruby loves being snuggled up in it! We are loving life with Ruby and are so thankful you thought of us during this season.

Hayden, Callie, & Ruby Ploeger

Dear FPC Family

I have been overwhelmed with your care and support following my knee replacement surgery. The beautiful flowers from the worship service, delicious food (gluten free even!), lovely cards, and thoughtful calls have all warmed my heart and lifted my spirits. Most of all I appreciate your prayers. They do make a difference, and I have been progressing well. Thank you!

Dear FPCA

With love, Robbie Knox
A big thanks to the 'crew' who helped rake and pick up yard debris from the back of my house. It was such an unexpected blessing!

Thanks,
Dee

December 2024

Sunday, December 1, 2024

9:15 AM - 9:30 AM Coffee
 9:15 AM - 11:30 AM Nursery
 9:30 AM - 10:15 AM Sunday School
 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM Worship
 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM Indoor Soccer
 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM Men's Basketball

Monday, December 2, 2024

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool
 5:16 PM - 6:45 PM Pickleball
 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM Stephen Leaders

Tuesday, December 3, 2024

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool
 9:00 AM - 9:15 AM Preschool
 Chapel
 5:16 PM - 6:45 PM Pickleball
 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM Stephen
 Ministry Mtg.
 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM Boy Scouts
 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM BSA Girls Troop

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool
 8:45 AM - 9:15 AM Morning Prayer
 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Staff Meeting
 5:30 PM - 6:30 PM Handbells
 5:45 PM - 7:00 PM Wednesday
 Dinner
 7:00 PM - 08:00 PM Choir

Thursday, December 5, 2024

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool
 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM Pickleball
 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM BSA GA-CA

Friday, December 6, 2024

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool

Saturday, December 7, 2024

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM Memorial Service

Sunday, December 8, 2024

8:20 AM - 9:15 AM Men's Breakfast
 9:15 AM - 9:30 AM Coffee
 9:15 AM - 11:30 AM Nursery
 9:30 AM - 10:15 AM Sunday School
 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM Worship
 12:00 PM - 6:00 PM ACTS
 Giving Together
 Store

2:00 PM - 4:00 PM Indoor Soccer
 4:45 PM - 7:15 PM Nursery
 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM Service of
 Comfort & Hope
 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM Dinner-
 Service of C&H
 Youth Group
 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM Men's Basketball

Monday, December 9, 2024

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool
 5:16 PM - 6:45 PM Pickleball
 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM ACTS
 Giving Together
 Store
 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM Covenant Britt

Tuesday, December 10, 2024

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool
 9:00 AM - 9:15 AM Preschool
 Chapel
 11:30 AM - 3:00 PM Staff Christmas
 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM Art Wall
 5:16 PM - 6:45 PM Pickleball
 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM BSA Pack 110
 5:30 PM - 6:30 PM Ask, Seek,
 Knock
 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM ACTS
 Giving Together
 Store
 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM Boy Scouts
 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM BSA Girls Troop

Wednesday, December 11, 2024

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool
 8:45 AM - 9:15 AM Morning Prayer
 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM PW BibleStudy
 Cookie Swap
 5:30 PM - 6:30 PM Handbells
 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM Mission
 Committee
 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM ACTS
 Giving Together
 Store
 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Choir

Thursday, December 12, 2024

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool
 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM Thursday
 Lunch Bunch
 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM Pickleball
 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM ACTS
 Giving Together
 Store

Friday, December 13, 2024

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool
 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM ACTS
 Giving Together
 Store

Sunday, December 15, 2024

9:15 AM - 9:30 AM Coffee
 9:15 AM - 11:30 AM Nursery
 9:30 AM - 10:15 AM Sunday School
 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM Worship
 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM Indoor Soccer
 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM Youth Group
 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM Men's Basketball

Monday, December 16, 2024

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool
 5:16 PM - 6:45 PM Pickleball
 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM Covenant
 Hunter
 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM Stephen Leaders

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool
 9:00 AM - 9:15 AM Preschool
 Chapel
 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Prayer Shawl
 5:16 PM - 6:45 PM Pickleball
 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM BSA Pack 110
 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM Stephen
 Ministry Mtg.
 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM Boy Scouts
 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM BSA Girls Troop

Wednesday, December 18, 2024

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool
 8:45 AM - 9:15 AM Morning Prayer
 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM PS Christmas
 Program
 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM Staff Meeting
 5:30 PM - 6:30 PM Handbells
 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM Session
 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Choir

Thursday, December 19, 2024

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM Preschool
 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM Pickleball

Sunday, December 22, 2024

9:00 AM - 10:30 AM Christmas
 Breakfast
 9:15 AM - 9:30 AM Coffee
 9:15 AM - 11:30 AM Nursery
 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM Worship
 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM Indoor Soccer
 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM Men's Basketball

Monday, December 23, 2024

5:16 PM - 6:45 PM Pickleball

Tuesday, December 24, 2024

9:00 AM - 3:00 PM Office Closed
 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM Christmas Eve

Wednesday, December 25, 2024

9:00 AM - 3:00 PM Office Closed

Thursday, December 26, 2024

9:00 AM - 3:00 PM Office Closed
 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM Pickleball

Friday, December 27, 2024

9:00 AM - 3:00 PM Office Closed

Sunday, December 29, 2024

9:15 AM - 9:30 AM Coffee
 9:15 AM - 11:30 AM Nursery
 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM Worship
 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM Indoor Soccer
 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM Men's Basketball

Monday, December 30, 2024

5:16 PM - 6:45 PM Pickleball

Tuesday, December 31, 2024

12:00 PM - 3:00 PM Office Closed
 5:16 PM - 6:45 PM Pickleball
 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM Boy Scouts
 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM BSA Girls Troop

FPCA Jigsaw Jamboree

January 25, 2025,
9:00 AM-Noon,
Fellowship Hall

Team consists of 1-4 players:
\$50 per team

Whether you are "in it to win it" or just there for fun, come support our youth and enjoy this time of fellowship.

Coffe and snacks will be served.

prizes for
1st, 2nd,
and 3rd place
teams

We have an oportunity for you and your team members to come practice before the big Jamoree. Puzzling practice from 11:30 AM - 2:30 PM on December 12th, lunch included!

The event gives you an Opportunity to:

- Contribute to Youth Scholarship Fund
- Meet new church members
- Invite neighbors and friends to enjoy our church family
- Introduce yourself to the members that sit on the "other side" of the sanctuary during worship

Please detach the registration form on the back of this sheet and return to church. Sign up sheet also available in the Narthex.

**Piece
be with
You!!!**



Jigsaw Jamboree

January 25, 2025,

9:00 AM-Noon,

Fellowship Hall Coffee and snacks to be provided.

Whether you are “in it to win it” or just there for fun, come support our youth and enjoy this time of fellowship.

Team consists of 1-4 players: \$50 per team

Prizes for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place teams

Registration Form:

Team name: _____

Team members/contact email:

1. Team Captain _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Teams can pay their \$50.00 entry fee by cash, check or online.
Please note Jigsaw Jamboree, in your check memo line.

Deadline to register: January 22, 2025