

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF WARREN

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Church Growth, Advent, and Christian Education Committees welcomed about 100 community members to a warming station at FPC for the Warren Hometown Holidays event. Families enjoyed hot chocolate and a chance to write letters to Santa.



Some of Miriam Esther Circle ladies decorated the new Parlor Christmas tree on Thursday, December 4.



THE SPARE



ISSUE 2026 VOLUME 1 JANUARY 2026

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF WARREN

CAROLING ON DECEMBER 14



ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING



Holly Taylor and her sons, Indy and Watson, volunteered to be one of the families to light the Advent Candles this year. Other families who participated were: Bromley/Lehman, Torrence, Welke, and Trowbridge families.

LOVETREE 2025



FPC members and friends purchased gifts for 80 students in need at Willard School. Thank you for your continued generosity!





The FPC Crafters made decorations that were included with the Deacons' gifts for our Special Care members. Bags were delivered before Christmas.

Children from the Chickadee Preschool sang Christmas carols to entertain people attending the Free Community Lunch.



DEACONS' NEWS

Happy New Year! The Deacons met on December 10 for our final meeting of 2025. As we welcome 2026, we will continue to focus on the needs within the congregation and the local/global community. The support of the congregation allows us to continue our activities and services.

During the December meeting, the Deacons agreed to support the Mission Committee's proposal to help several local charities. We agreed to support the Salvation Army Kettle Drive with a monetary donation. We approved funds to support the Shepherd of All God's Children organization. This group serves children with autism, and they requested help to provide holiday gifts for their students. As we have for several years, we supported The Wings with a donation to be used to purchase paper products for the apartments. We agreed to split the \$1234.80 proceeds of our 2-Cents-A-Meal collection between Bread for the World and the FPC Food Pantry. Thank you for your contributions throughout the year. Your generosity makes our support for these organizations possible!

December was a busy month for the members of the Congregational Care Committee. They continued to send birthday cards and sweet treats to members of our congregation. Committee members, with assistance from the FPC Crafters, prepared gifts for our Special Care members. We were able to deliver some of the gift bags during the annual Caroling event on December 14.

The Grocery Distribution and Community Lunch took place on December 16. A hot lunch consisting of ham and cheesy potato casserole, salad, and a delicious dessert was served to forty-three of our neighbors. During the luncheon, the students from the Chickadee Preschool passed out gift bags to the diners and sang Christmas carols. They are always a big hit! Fifty-four bags of groceries were also distributed. Fresh produce, and baked goods were available to add to the bags.

Wishing you and your family a truly blessed New Year! Cindy Athya, Recording Secretary



From the Pastor

“Próspero año y Felicidad!” (however it is, that your New Year starts)

To the detriment of Northern Hemisphere denizens to stand out in bitterly cold weather as one year changes to another – be that in Times Square or any of the other “First Night” styled festivals – our culture now marks New Year's Day on January 1. So, we have a calendar page to turn now, be that digitally or by switching to a new visualization of our year that is still printed on paper.

It wasn't always this way.

Across the centuries, across the millennia, we have marked our years based on a full range of systems. Time Magazine's research found that, not surprisingly, agricultural seasons told us when a new year had started: the barley harvest (Mesopotamia), the start of the growing season (China), or the midsummer floods of Nile Valley farmland (Egypt). In other places, it was the rise of a new military/government leader (Roman Empire) or religious occasions (Arabia) that determined when New Year's Day would be. Many of those calendars ended up wildly off, even from themselves, because they were based on moon phases. They accumulated problems because moon-months are in reality 29.5 days long.

We here, though, are heavily influenced by western European culture. Ever since a proclamation by Pope Gregory XIII (*no relation!*) fixed some of the inaccuracies in matching the calendar to the orbit of the earth, January 1 became the start of 1582. However, the American colonies took until 1752 to make the switch from springtime to January.

So now, here we are with another new year dawning. I think we miss out, those among us who do not have a wall calendar or a desk calendar or something stuck to the front of the refrigerator. Whether a calendar has 12 pictures of puppies or mountainscapes or Far Side cartoons or pics of the grandkids, the annual ritual of switching from one year's booklet to the new one has *spiritual* significance.

Setting aside the previous twelve months, closing out a year, there is benefit to tangibly separate the past from the future. The celebrations and blessings of 2025 will continue to be fond memories and motivate worthwhile appreciation of our accomplishments. Simultaneously, to physically or symbolically switch from one calendar to the next helps us to draw a line between the past (disappointments, sadness, mistakes, missed chances) and turn toward the new opportunities the new publication opens.

It was the year 1970, when José Feliciano came out with the every-December Christmas hit “Feliz Navidad.” The Spanish lyrics nudge us out of our primary language and our primary methods. Even if we mumble the words we don't know, there is something about the bouncy upbeat tune which boosts our moods. My prayer – my wish for you – is that 2026 will be a “prosperous year and happiness!” May it be so, in your household, for all our members and families, for the neighbors and guests we will serve in the twelve months ahead. I can foresee that 2026 can be happy and prosperous and faithful for this Church, springboarding FPC into the second quarter of the 21st century!

Let us revel and shout with Joy, Greg





TWO-CENTS-A-MEAL OFFERING The Deacons will be collecting for the 2¢-A-Meal offering on **Sunday, January 4, 2026**, during our regular worship service. This program helps the hunger crisis.

CONGREGATIONAL CARE If you or someone you know would like a visit or assistance from the Pastor or the Deacons, please call the Church Office.

LISTEN TO US EVERY SUNDAY MORNING at 10:00 a.m. on 1570 AM or 97.7 FM or watch us on Face-book at First Presbyterian Church of Warren.

LOOKING FOR A DAILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE? The January/February issue of the Upper Room is now available in the hall by the Church Office. These free magazines are compliments of your Board of Deacons. Large-print copies are also available.

THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED on **Monday, January 1, 2026**, in observance of New Year’s Day. Happy New Year from the staff of First Presbyterian Church!

SANCTUARY FLOWER CHART – The Sanctuary Flower Chart for 2026 is in the Church Office. Please re-serve your date or dates now for 2026.

MIRIAM ESTHER CIRCLE will discuss Lesson 4 of “Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity” **Thursday, January 8**, at 11:00 a.m. in the Parlor. Lunch will follow at 12. Please bring a bag lunch.

SPIRE DEADLINE will be **Thursday, January 22**. Please email your photos and articles to Kathie at kathietrowbridge@fpcwarren.org.

OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY is extended to the Taylor family on the death of Dr. Robert Taylor on December 9. Robert Taylor was a 54-year member of FPC and served as an Elder and Deacon.

SINCERE CONDOLENCES are extended to Marilou and Publio Zampedro on the death of their son, Jeffrey.

A YOUTH LOCK-IN will be held on **Friday, January 2, from 6:00 p.m. through Saturday, January 3, at 10:00 a.m.** for students in grades 7 through 12. Games, Bible lessons, music, food, Church tour, hide and seek, and much more will be offered. For information, please contact Marissa Welke.

DE-DECORATE THE CHURCH – Join us on **Sunday, January 4, after worship**, when we will share our Christmas memories as we pack away the Christmas decorations. Afterwards, lunch will be provided in Fellowship Hall.

A \$35 gift each January funds regional and national work of our Church.

To fund the work of the regional and nationwide expressions of the Church, each member of our 8,400 congregations is encouraged to make a special gift near the beginning of each year. For 2026, the request for our Presbyterian Mission gifts (sometimes called the “per capita” request) will be **\$35** per person, every adult and teen who has become a member of the Church. This amount covers the bulk of the annual investment to advance the ministry of our presbytery (five counties), synod (two states), and denomination (1.04 million members nationwide).

At FPC, there is a special yellow envelope at the front of every box of offering envelopes. You also can make a contribution for this purpose (with a gift of any size) by marking “per capita” on your own envelope to the check’s memo line. You should know that almost 60% of these funds stay in our local presbytery to carry out our mission and support of our Christ-centered life together here in northeast Ohio.

Inclement weather processes for Sunday Worship (and other FPC events)

Here is your reminder of how we are likely to handle things if it is wise to cancel in-person Sunday worship or close the building to other activities.

A prime consideration is that there is no way we can know the conditions for all the neighborhoods, roads, and highways for all the people who are spread across a very wide radius out from downtown Warren. Therefore, you must use your own best judgment about travel from your location to and from the church building. Even if the building is open, consider staying home due to the situation on your routes, your personal comfort level on icy/snowy roads, and the benefits of participating in our virtual options.

If the designated leadership group determines it would be best to limit or cancel in-person worship or other activity for everyone, we will do our best to take the following steps, hopefully no later than 7:45 a.m., and perhaps the Saturday evening before, although fast-changing weather or technological problems may limit that advance notice.

We will text you, if you have a text-capable number for at least one phone per household.

Check your e-mail. If we have an updated email address, a series of notices will go out.

We will ask TV channels 27 and 21 and 33 to add our news to their lists. (See wytv.com and wfmj.com.)

Call 330-393-1524. We will give you a “Yes” or a “No” and further information. (If you hear the “regular” outgoing message, this would not be a guarantee that we are open. It might be that we are unable to record a new message remotely that day.)

You can **call one of the current Session members after 8:15 a.m.**



Snow emergencies, dangerous cold, flooding, power outages, severe spring and summer storms, and other crises might mean it is best for us to call off an event. Please do not be “heroic” to try to get here, whenever it is safer and wiser to join us virtually. A live or prerecorded worship service will usually be available at facebook.com/FPCWarren or youtube.com/FPCWarren.

Alternative Gift-Giving Report 2025

“The joy of brightening other lives, bearing each other’s burdens, easing others’ loads and supplanting empty hearts and lives with generous gifts becomes for us the magic of Christmas.”

(William Carey Jones)

It is with deep gratitude that the Alternative Gift-Giving Committee announces the wonderful response to this year’s mission (total as of Dec. 15):

Animal Welfare League - \$1835.00	Pink Leads the Way - \$1125.00
FPC Wish List – ACTS Fund - \$540.00	Second Harvest - \$375.00
Free Indeed Ministry - \$840.00	Water for the People - \$690.00
TOTAL - \$5405.00	

The FPC family and friends once again demonstrated their generosity and spirit of giving. On behalf of the six organizations that benefitted from this year’s mission, the AGG Committee thanks everyone who participated. Happy New Year!

FPC January Birthdays

- 01/05 Acea Lipscomb
- 01/07 Hannah Buzulencia
- 01/09 Paige Odille
- 01/10 Andrea Nadenichek
- 01/11 Linda Scala
- 01/12 Jayda Hayes
- 01/14 David Snyder
- 01/15 David Fitzgerald
- 01/16 Hayley Buzulencia
- 01/20 Jim Dennis
- Marilyn Pogue
- Candy Falkner
- 01/21 Lane Hurd
- 01/26 Melanie Box
- 01/28 Judy Ward
- Chris Chuirazzi
- 01/29 Melanie Vlad
- 01/31 Linda Brodell
- Benton Beerbower

If we have overlooked anyone's birthday, we apologize. Please contact the Church Office, so that we may update our records.



FPC JANUARY 2026



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 New Year's Day Church Office Closed	2 Church Office Closed 6:00 pm Youth Lock-In	3 10:00 am Youth Lock-In 11:00 am AA, MC
4 Communion/2¢ A Meal Epiphany Sunday 8:30 am Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am Worship 11:15 am De-decorate the Church/Lunch	5 10:00 am OA, P 5:30 pm Girl Scouts, B 7:00 pm AA, MC	6 Epiphany of the Lord 9:00 am Al-Anon, MC 5:00 pm Girl Scouts, FH 5:30 pm Girl Scouts, B 7:00 pm NA, MC	7 6:30 pm AA, MC	8 11:00 am Miriam Esther Circle, P	9 Church Office Closed 4:00 pm Chickadee Workshop FH	10 11:00 am AA, MC
11 Baptism of the Lord 8:30 am Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School 11:15 am Bell Practice 11:15 am Gathering w/Greg	12 10:00 am OA, P 11:00 am Lake Vista Group 5:30 pm Girl Scouts, B 6:30 pm BGA Meeting, FH 7:00 pm AA, MC 7:00 pm Voices of Micah Mtg.	13 9:00 am Al-Anon, MC 7:00 pm NA, MC	14 5:00 pm Someplace Safe Meeting, B 5:00 pm Girl Scout Info Meeting, FH 6:00 pm NAMI Meeting, P 6:30 pm AA, MC	15 12:00 pm Dessert & Dialogue Women's Study, P 7:00 pm Worship Meeting	16 Church Office Closed	17 11:00 am AA, MC
18 8:30 am Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School 11:15 am Deacons Meeting, B 11:15 am Bell Practice	19 MLK Day 10:00 am OA, P 5:30 pm Girl Scouts, B 7:00 pm AA, MC	20 9:00 am Al-Anon, MC 11:00 am Free Lunch & Grocery Distribution 5:00 pm Girl Scouts, FH 5:00 pm Finance Meeting, P 5:30 pm Girl Scouts, B 7:00 pm NA, MC	21 1:00 pm Crossroads Bereavement Grp., P 6:00 pm Relay for Life, FH 6:30 pm AA, MC	22	23 Church Office Closed	24 11:00 am AA, MC
25 8:30 am Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School 11:15 am Bell Practice 11:15 am Deacon Reception	26 10:00 am OA, P 5:30 pm Girl Scouts, B 7:00 pm AA, MC	27 9:00 am Al-Anon, MC 7:00 pm NA, MC	28 5:00 pm Someplace Safe, B 6:30 pm AA, MC 7:00 pm Session Mtg, FH	29	30 Church Office Closed	31 11:00 am AA, MC