



First Presbyterian Church of Harborcreek

6724 Buffalo Rd.
Harborcreek, PA 16421
Telephone: (814) 899-1031

Email: office@hcpresbyterian.org
Website: hcpresbyterian.org

Live-Stream Worship: [Facebook@firstpresbyterianchurchofharborcreek](https://www.facebook.com/firstpresbyterianchurchofharborcreek)

December Newsletter Volume 2024, Issue 11

Church Leadership

Pastor.....Rev. Mike Wilson
Music Director.....Chris Thomas
Organist.....Joyce Kriner
Secretary.....Mary Stewart
Custodian & Librarian.....Eileen Kriner

Committee Chairs—2023

Co-Clerks of Session.....Gil and Marlene Long
Membership Care &
Development.....Brian Griffith
Mission/Outreach.....Ann Nesgoda
Nominating & Training.....Don Duckett
Personnel.....Sue Kellerman
Property.....Bob Kellerman
Spiritual Formation.....Jennifer Wedzik
Stewardship & Finance.....Bob Kellerman
Worship.....Scott Shunk
Recording Secretary.....Cindy Skladanowski
Treasurer.....Barbara Griffith

Deacons

Chairperson.....Bill Nesgoda
Vice-Chair.....Nancy Way
Secretary.....Nancy Way
Treasurer.....Peggie Smith
Caring Tree.....Nancy Way
and Bill Nesgoda
Correspondence.....Linda DeAngelo
Flower Coordinator.....Sally Wakeley
Funeral Dinners.....Sue Beighley
and Deacon of the Month
Greeters/Liturgists.....Deacon of the Month
Prayer Chain.....Pat Feddersen
and Nancy McNally



First Presbyterian Church of
Harborcreek



I remember years ago being asked by someone from a different faith tradition why we put the sermon in the middle of the service. Why not put it at the end (where it was in their church) because it's the most important thing. It should be the last thing people hear so that they'll remember it. This month I'm continuing my series on Presbyterian things with an overview of worship in which I'll answer that question. And it's not a bad question. Worship is our most common and shared experience. In our tradition the faith, life and worship of the Church are inseparable. And while most churches follow an established order of worship, often with little variation Sunday to Sunday, our Directory for Worship in the Book of Order not only allows for but encourages diversity and variety. But that doesn't mean that our worship is without structure. And that structure gives meaning and purpose to our worship...and it explains why the sermon isn't at the end.



I like to think of our order of worship as a frame on which we hang a variety of elements. As long as the frame is secure, the elements need not be the same or even similar week-to-week and yet there will still be a feeling of flow and cohesion. The frame of worship

comprises five movements: we **gather** around God's Word; we **proclaim** God's Word; we **respond** to God's Word; we **seal** God's Word upon our hearts; we **bear** God's word into the world.

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On a typical Sunday **gathering** begins with our informal greeting and conversation prior to the “official” start of worship and continues with a welcome, announcements, prelude, call to worship, and opening hymn. Our prayer of confession and assurance of pardon are also part of our gathering; confession and assurance make us ready to hear and receive God’s word written and proclaimed. This is where the passing of the peace happens in many churches because that action is seen as an expression of reconciliation with each other after we’ve once again been assured of our reconciliation with God. This is also an appropriate place for the sacrament of baptism.

Next, we **proclaim** God’s word, beginning with a prayer for illumination in which we ask the Holy Spirit to participate in the reading and proclamation of scripture. It’s usually around here where many churches include a children’s message because that is seen as part of the proclamation. Most weeks we include a reading from both the Old and New Testaments and most preachers try to have some connection between the two. And while often a lay reader will present the first reading, the passage on which the preacher is preaching is usually read by the preacher and either right before or as part of the sermon. There are two reasons for this. One is that the scripture and sermon are inseparable and should be heard together. The other is that *how* the passage is presented – the performance of the reading – is also part of the interpretation and should be left to the one doing the interpreting. It’s during this movement that we also include choral or instrumental music; these offerings are also part of proclamation.

After proclamation, we **respond** to God’s Word and most often do so beginning with a hymn or song. The hymn text here should be closely aligned with message of scripture and sermon, elaborating or amplifying them. We also respond to the Word in prayer, usually a pastoral/intercessory prayer that includes specific petitions offered by the congregation. And as with the hymn, the prayer might also include language, images and sentiments from the scripture and sermon. Our self-offering is also a response to God’s word and is usually expressed by an offering of monetary gifts.

We also might present special offerings of food for the poor and even bring the communion elements to the table as an offering. Here we might also include an affirmation of faith that, like the hymn, reflects the message of scripture. And, finally, we might also include baptism here because that sacrament is a response to God’s initiative.

Sealing God’s Word comes next and is most often expressed with the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper because we consider communion to be a “sign and seal” of God’s grace. It should always be preceded by the reading and proclamation of scripture. And, while few Presbyterian congregations do so, we are encouraged to celebrate frequently, “as a regular part of the Service for the Lord’s Day.” (BOO W-3.0409). Many churches keep a plate and cup on the communion table at all times to remind us of the importance of the sacrament.

Finally, we **bear** God’s Word into the world. Usually this includes a closing hymn, a charge and a benediction. And in the absence of communion, sealing and bearing become a single movement. But we also reserve this movement for commissioning people for mission trips or work in the community, or to offer blessing upon people leaving the congregation be they are bear the spirit of our community with them.

So perhaps you can see now why we don’t put the sermon at the end. We put it in the middle because God’s Word is at the center of our worship. We point to and prepare for it and then we respond to it. It is one element among many and not always the most important one. And a sermon is not the only way to proclaim. It might be done through choral music, drama, dance, community conversation or liturgy and much more. And I hope you can also see why I try to craft services in which the elements relate to each other; where the liturgy and hymnody aren’t random, but intentionally connected through language, imagery, theme and tone.

Next month (because you’ve been reading long enough and I have more to say), I’ll continue the worship conversation and talk more about our liturgical cycles and what is and isn’t permitted or acceptable in Presbyterian worship (hint: very little is not permitted). Until then...

Grace and peace,

Mike

Worship News...



We will have a brief **congregational meeting** immediately after worship on Sunday, December 15 to elect ruling elders and deacons for 2025. All members are encouraged to attend.

Advent and Christmas Eve Special Music

Sun. Dec. 1 1st Sunday of Advent
Candle Lighters: Linda DeAngelo
and Nancy McNally
“The Candle of Hope”
Choral Anthem: “The Promised One”

Sun. Dec. 8 2nd Sunday of Advent
Candle Lighters: Alisabeth Goetsch
and Pat Feddersen
“The Candle of Peace”
Choral and Handbell Anthem:
“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silent”

Sun. Dec. 15 3rd Sunday of Advent
Candle Lighters: Jasmine and Forest
Mosier
“The Candle of Joy”
Children’s Christmas Program
“Christmas Hallelujah”

Sun. Dec. 22 4th Sunday of Advent
Candle Lighters: Sue Beighley and
Cylie Schrimper
“The Candle of Love”
Chancel Choir Choral Cantata
“The Ballad of Bethlehem”

Tues. Dec. 24 Christmas Eve
Candle Lighters: David and Jenn
Wedzik
“The Christ Candle Light”
Handbells
“Carol of the Bells”
“Christmas Collage”
Chancel Choir
“Rejoice, Rejoice!”
“The Joy of Christmas”



December Worship Leaders

	Liturgists	Greeters
Sun., Dec. 1	Christine Thomas	Sue Beighley
Sun., Dec. 8	Bob Kellerman	Ann Nesgoda
Sun., Dec. 15	Dave/Jenn Wedzik	Linda Blum
Sun., Dec. 22	Brian Griffith	Carol Mulvin
Tue., Dec. 24	Gil Long	The Graffs
Sun., Dec. 29	Kyle Foust	Peggie Smith

Lectionary Readings December 2024

Below are the readings suggested by the Revised Common Lectionary for these months.

Sunday, December 1 <i>Jeremiah 33:14-16</i> <i>1 Thessalonians 3:9-13</i>	1st Sunday of Advent <i>Psalms 25:1-10</i> <i>Luke 21:25-36</i>
Sunday, December 8 <i>Baruch 5:1-9</i> <i>Luke 1:68-79</i> <i>Luke 3:1-6</i>	2nd Sunday of Advent <i>or Malachi 3:1-4</i> <i>Philippians 1:3-11</i>
Sunday, December 15 <i>Zephaniah 3:14-20</i> <i>Philippians 4:4-7</i>	3rd Sunday of Advent <i>Isaiah 12:2-6</i> <i>Luke 3:7-18</i>
Sunday, December 22 <i>Micah 5:2-5a</i> <i>Hebrews 10:5-10</i>	4th Sunday of Advent <i>Luke 46b-55 or Psalm 80:1-7</i> <i>Luke 1:39-45, (46-55)</i>
Tuesday, December 24 <i>Isaiah 9:2-7</i> <i>Titus 2:11-14</i>	Christmas Eve <i>Psalms 96</i> <i>Luke 2:1-14, (15-20)</i>
Wednesday, December 25 <i>Isaiah 62:6-12</i> <i>Titus 3:4-7</i>	Christmas Morning <i>Psalms 97</i> <i>Luke 2 (1-7), 8-20</i>
Sunday, December 29 <i>1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26</i> <i>Colossians 3:12-17</i>	1st Sunday after Christmas Day <i>Psalms 148</i> <i>Luke 2:41-52</i>

Spiritual Formation and Events

Advent Wreath Candle Lighters

Sun., December 1	Linda DeAngelo and Nancy McNally
Sun., December 8	Alisabeth Goetsch and and Pat Feddersen
Sun., December 15	Jasmine and Forest Mosier
Sun., December 22	Sue Beighley and Cylie Schrimper
Tues., December 24	David and Jenn Wedzik



Birthday Sunday



Birthday Sunday is December 8th which will also feature some Christmas craft time. Please plan to join us for some great Advent fellowship. Birthday Sunday for January will be on the 12th.

Brunch and a Movie

Brunch and a Movie continues with a new series starting December 15 on Searching for the Historical Jesus, running thru January 5th. Come and learn very interesting things about the birth of our Savior. There will be no brunch or movie on December 29th.



Fourth Tuesday Gathering

December due to the fact that the fourth Tuesday falls Christmas Eve, we will not be having a December gathering. Watch the bulletin and newsletter for future gatherings.

Wine the Word

Reminder...Wine and the Word will resume on January 12th at 6:00 via Zoom. All are welcome to attend.



A Commemorative Wendell August Forge Ornament/Medallion

We have more of the Wendell August Forge ornaments available, depicting the First Presbyterian Church of Harborcreek. This collective ornament celebrates the rich history of our congregation and anticipates the exciting future that is upon us.

This two-inch handmade ornament is the perfect way to commemorate the church's years of worship and service to our awesome God.

The creations of Wendell August Forge, Grove City, PA embodies quality American craftsmanship. Each piece is specially handcrafted by their metalworkers, bringing a legacy of time-honored traditions from their family to ours.

The ornaments will be available at cost on Sundays before and after worship for \$14.00 each. For more information, please call Sue Kellerman at 717-586-8357.

Harborcreek 2024

Light Up Night being held on Friday, December 13th from 6-8 p.m. just west of the HC Municipal Building. There will be Santa and Mrs. Claus, live reindeer, horse drawn trolley rides, holidays crafts and a presentation by HCCET "Swiftly Wrapped in Holiday Cheer: A Taylor Swift Photo Experience." There is so much more; check out the poster at the back of the



This and That...



Reuse
Recycle
Repurpose

We are still receiving donations for special mission projects. This is an easy way to make a big difference in the lives of people in our community and around the world! Just collect and drop off at church.

♥ **Aluminum Cans** for the Dick Smith Fund to benefit community members with emergency needs.

♥ **Travel Size Personal Care Products** to be given to the homeless at The Upper Room.

♥ **Cancelled Stamps** The Mission Committee is again saving cancelled postage stamps for a great cause. Please place your **cancelled stamps** in the box provided at the back of the sanctuary and they will be given to the Trinity Lutheran Church in Erie for processing. The stamps will be trimmed and sent to an organization who sells them to buy bibles in other languages.

♥ **Used Greeting Cards** to be sent to be sent to St Jude's Ranch for them to repurpose and sell in their gift shop and on their website. Please do not cut cards or change cards in anyway. They need them whole for them to be transformed.



Join us for our

Christmas Eve Celebration Of the birth of our Savior

on Sunday, December 24

at 5:00 p.m.

featuring Chancel Choir and
Handbell Choir favorites.



Church Office Hours

Pastor Mike is usually in the office on Mondays and Wednesdays around 9:00 a.m.

If you have a pastoral emergency,
please call Mike at 412-298-9196.

The secretary's regular office hours are: Monday, Wednesday and Friday
mornings from 9:00 a.m. to noon.

There may be times that the hours may be changed; please call the church office to verify.

Church Office Phone number: 814-899-1031
New Email Address: office@hcpresbyterian.org Website: hcpresbyterian.org

Church Family News...



Dec. Birthdays

- 1 Andrea Maille
- Chris Thomas
- Jennifer Fannin
- Bob Lyon
- 4 Dave Anthony
- 5 Holly Hedlund
- 9 Linda Erickson
- 9 Mike Wilson
- 11 Mary Louise McCullough
- 22 Troy Barker
- 22 Ashley Palmer
- 23 Marie Cahoon
- 24 Jim Bemis
- 26 Esther Noonan
- Patrick Cuneo
- 27 Barb Bemis
- 29 Katelyn Beighley
- 31 Joyce Kriner

Dec. Anniversaries

- 28 Dave & Betsy Roseto



Prayer List:

For the Lake Erie Presbytery & its leaders; for our pastor, Mike Wilson, for church members, family & friends, we pray.

If someone can be removed from the prayer list or if you have someone to add, please call or email the church office with the information.

- | | | |
|-----------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Barb Bemis | Joan Graham | Rich Smith |
| Claudia Brown | Derf Hopsecger | Sandy Spangler |
| John Brown | Family of Judy Johnson | Carl Steiner |
| Margaret Crider | Morgan Johnson | Marge Suter |
| Robin Cuneo | David Lyon | Tina Wasiela |
| Dick May | Mellish Family | Zanita Zacks-Gabriel |
| Dave English | Yvonne Peters | |
| Pat Feddersen | Wilda Resinger | |

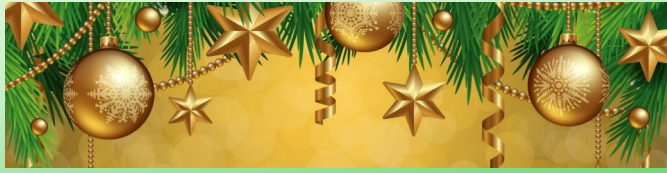


Remember Our Homebound

Some of you have asked about what you can do to keep connected to those who struggle to come to worship or participate in church activities. Listed below are some of those you could send a card or a note of encouragement.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| Margaret Crider
Twinbrook Room 212
3805 Field Street
Erie, PA 16511 | Jessie Dennison
Wellmore Unit 4129
580 Robert Daniel Drive
Daniel Island, SC 29492 | Jacque Foust
8467 East Lake Rd.
Erie, PA 16511 |
| Dick May
6568 Iroquois Avenue
Harborcreek, PA 16421 | Peggy Nelson
2 Gibson St. Apt. 102
North East, PA 16428 | Esther Noonan
7554 McGill Road
Harborcreek, PA 16421 |
| Yvonne Peters
41 W. Gore Rd. Rm.113
Erie, PA. 16509 | Wilda Resinger
5456 East Lake Road
Barnabas Court South
Room 120
Erie, PA 16511 | Sandy Spangler
227 W. 22nd Street
Room 9
Erie, PA 16509 |
| Carl Steiner
c/o Heather Steiner
4847 Tamarlac Lane
Erie, PA 16505 | | |
| Ron Washe
4147 Bell Street
Erie, PA 16511 | | |





December 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>8</p> <p>9:15 a.m. In-Person & Live Stream Worship</p> <p>Brunch and a Movie following worship</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Women's AA 5:00 p.m.</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>  <p>Choir Rehearsal 6:00 p.m. Handbell Rehearsal 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8</p> <p>9:15 a.m. In-Person & Live Stream Worship</p> <p>Birthday Sunday following worship</p>	<p>9</p> <p>DEACONS Deacon's Meeting 2:00 p.m.</p>  <p>Session Meeting 6:30 p.m.</p> <p>Women's AA 5:00 p.m.</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p>  <p>Choir Rehearsal 6:00 p.m. Handbell Rehearsal 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>15</p> <p>9:15 a.m. In-Person & Live Stream Worship</p> <p>Brunch and a Movie following worship</p> <p>Kid's Christmas Program</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Women's AA 5:00 p.m.</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p>  <p>Choir Rehearsal 6:00 p.m. Handbell Rehearsal 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>22</p> <p>9:15 a.m. In-Person & Live Stream Worship</p> <p>Brunch and a Movie following worship</p> <p>Choral and Handbell Cantata</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Women's AA 5:00 p.m.</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>  <p>Choir Rehearsal 6:00 p.m. Handbell Rehearsal 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29</p> <p>9:15 a.m. In-Person & Live Stream Worship</p> <p>Brunch and a Movie following worship</p> <p>Serving Lunch at the Upper Room</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Women's AA 5:00 p.m.</p>	<p>31</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>Elder of the Month: Scott Shunk (717) 453-3803</p> <p>Deacon of the Month: Nancy Way 814-899-2828</p> </div>			

Christmas Blessings

E G F A M I L Y G A T H E R I N G S M B G J K F
 N G T M E C A E P F G D M B Z J E U U A N Z B W
 X K V G N Q O D K Y E U P S T C Z E J R X U H H
 V R M X I Q Y H A M U K T N E E Y Z M N R A O B
 C L L I W D O O G S S N M E G W Q C X H L L A M
 F B G G O B A E B Y E E K F G P N S E L I M S P
 G F L Z U C V Y L S N G V W N H L S M E P Y F J
 D Y J I X O Y M E E A E G C O H P A O Y W N I E
 G F O E L G S R M L C U W N G X R F U Y B J L G
 U E F J B W P I Q Z Y N Q H O K P M X D B O L R
 O Y E O V P G M L F D U Y V M I B Z N K O Z Z C
 B Q X Z A A Z N Y V N W O O T X S S H K P X X I
 A Q V D A Y P B L L A S V D Q P T S S K F L Z N
 C P K W K E H S I Q C I W Z E U D U A V P B N L
 X Y P I H N D N M B E Q I T R C S L V P S A T L
 H A T O N E A U A S A W S K L E O G N N M C N N
 T T P I I D P M F P E Q E T J A K R E W D O F U
 I E I Z S R N K V Y W Y K Y H G U R A N S T C H
 U H D A K O G E C E P J B O I G D G D T V P D B
 U M J M F T R U S R L A W T E L I T H K I B F W
 D P H V U R F E D S B C Z B I O R L J T Q O Z C
 O W P O P K M Q N E L F N H Z Z Q Q Q O E T N Z
 N N E O P X G E P E L V C J Q P Y F N J T R K S
 A R G L X R Z L Y G G I X N H F C J U S T I C E

Baby Jesus candy canes children compassion
 decorations eggnog faith family family gatherings
 generosity goodwill Hallmark movies ham
 hope joy justice kindness laughter lights love
 peace presents smiles turkey

