

In Touch with FPCR



January 2025

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

I have been pondering this quote:

"By words we learn thoughts, and by thoughts we learn life." —Jean Baptiste Girard

When we lived in Clinton (WI), we were good friends with one of the police officers and her family. One day I had their two little girls and they were explaining VERY CAREFULLY to me that IF they get a pony, they would do various things—like feed it and ride it. “Gosh, there is power in words girls” I said. “I think you should say WHEN you get a pony.” Ever after they bugged their parents saying Cathy said WHEN WE GET A PONY—so can we have one now?” I was popular with the girls, not so much with their parents.

I very much believe in the power of words—there are words I grew up with—there are words that I use differently after experiencing the world and studying for a super long time. I understand that we all have a different theology BUT words do matter. I certainly understand that some of the words I use don't fit with your theology and that is fine. I VALUE your thoughts and want you to discuss what you are thinking and feeling. This is a two-way street, ministry—it isn't my way or the highway and it isn't your way or the highway. We are in this TOGETHER. So much of society today doesn't want to rationally discuss different ideas—there is far too much avoidance of discussions—look at the quote above—we LEARN LIFE by sharing our thoughts—our words.

As long as I am with you on the journey, let's all use our opportunity to learn from each other.

May you be blessed in 2025. May FPCR also be blessed.

Cathy

***Remember to love always and
all ways.***



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Slinger Food Pantry Update	2
Joy Offering Update	2
Happy Birthday/Anniversary	3
Next Bible Study	3
Gingerbread House	3
Annual Congregational Meeting	4
Possible By-Law Changes	4
Advent at FPCR	4

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

Mark your calendars to attend FPCR's services weekly during January: **January 5, 12, 19, and 26.**

The **FPCR website** contains up-to-date announcements. Check it if you have questions about a service or deadline.
www.FirstPresbyofRichfield.com

UPCOMING SERVICES

All are welcome for 10 am Sunday Services with Pastor Cathy Manthei.

JANUARY 5

Communion Service
Message:

That Troubling Star

JANUARY 12

Message:
Baptism

JANUARY 19

Message: **TBA**

JANUARY 26

Message: **TBA**

The Annual Congregational Meeting will follow the service.

Additional and updated information is posted on the website:

www.FirstPresbyofRichfield.com

ELDERS AND BOARD OF DEACONS

Elders

Debbie Heppe
Jackson Kujawa
Melissa Kujawa
Ken Schmidt
Cheryl Weber

Clerk of Session

Elaine Schmidt

Deacons

Cathy Romanski
Rick Romanski

THE SLINGER FOOD PANTRY IS GRATEFUL FOR YOU!

December was a busy month for the Slinger Food Pantry and FPCR. Cathy Romanski reported that the Pantry clientele increased by over 30 families between Thanksgiving and Christmas! It seems there are always more people in need of FPCR's donations. To help address this increased need, FPCR repeated the 2023 "Reverse Advent" Food Drive. One needed item a day was placed in a box during Advent and resulted in a wonderful box of staples, and even a few "goodies" for the Pantry shelves.

FPCR's "Peanut Butter/Canned Goods Tree" netted 94 items and FPCR's 2024 Reverse Advent drive added another 434 items for a total of **528** food items to help those who are hungry this winter. Additionally, **\$720** was sent in monetary donations for the last quarter of this year!

The Food Pantry and its clients are very appreciative of your thoughtful giving and are continually amazed by the level of your generosity. **Thank you to each and every one who has donated to or helped the Pantry in some way during 2024.** That includes purchasing, counting, loading and delivering as well as writing checks!



Donations for the Reverse Advent Drive were collected on December 15 and delivered on December 16.

Left: **Ken Schmidt** adds donations. Right: **Rick Romanski** collects boxes before the service. Thankfully, Rick WAS able to see out of his car windows for the drive home.



SLINGER FOOD PANTRY
GREATEST NEEDS:
Cereal
Chunky Soup



A "Bye" on 2025 First-Class Postage Hikes!

On January 19, shipping rates will increase BUT NOT the price of a stamp. First-Class stamps remain at 73 cents for the first ounce.

Happy New Year

Wishing You All God's Blessings in 2025!



Thank you for your donations to the **JOY Offering** held in December. FPCR is able to send **\$405** to PC(USA) as a result of your giving to this special offering. The JOY offering assists retired church workers and their families.

TENTATIVE VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS ROLLED OUT TO CONGREGATION

On December 29, 2024, the Visioning Committee described the process they went through to develop their idea of what First Presbyterian Church of Richfield looks like in the future. They captured their ideas for the future of the church in the Tentative Vision Statement (right). To support the main elements of the Vision (people, relevancy, stability), they also developed a Mission Statement to spell out what we will do to accomplish the Vision.

As its next step, the Committee is looking for additional input from the congregation. Your comments and suggestions will be used to modify the Statements that will be considered for implementation by the Session. If you were not able to attend the meeting and want to get involved, please check in with Keith Clark, the Visioning Committee Facilitator. A brief conversation with him will get you up to speed.

The Visioning Committee: Debbie Heppe, Melissa Kujawa, Cathy Romanski, Rick Romanski, Jean Schoeni, Deanna Wojcieszak, and Keith Clark (Facilitator).

Tentative Vision Statement

First Presbyterian Church of Richfield is a growing, giving family, relevant to the community, where all are welcome to come and worship God.

Tentative Mission Statement

- We will continually grow the membership of the First Presbyterian Church of Richfield.
- We will take responsibility for becoming more relevant to our community.
- We will explore more avenues to finance our outreach and stability.

Links for Meeting Handout and Presentation Slides

To access the above documents, either [click here](#) OR navigate to www.firstpresbyofrichfield.com and then select Vision Project from the top menu.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY to the following individuals with a birthday in **January**. We wish you many years of God's blessings.

24 - Scott Schoeni

27 - Shelley Schoeni

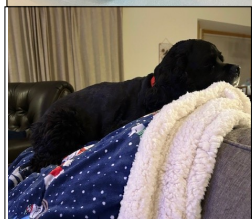


Happy Anniversary to **Scott and Shelley Schoeni** who are celebrating their wedding anniversary on **January 15**. May the Lord bless you and keep you for many years to come!

SPONSORING A MERRY CHRISTMAS



In December, the FPCR family generously donated \$975 to the Gingerbread House Holiday Gift Giving Program, an initiative of the Youth and Family Project in West Bend, WI. With the \$975 you contributed, Cathy and Rick Romanski and their grandchildren reviewed suggestions and holiday sales. They budgeted and shopped using provided suggestions from the families when possible.



The project required discussion among the group as to the most appropriate gifts for the individuals of the two families and whether the requests were affordable, equitable, and within the organization's guidelines. Bluey merchandise, art/craft supplies, blankets, household items, clothing, and even undergarments were purchased as

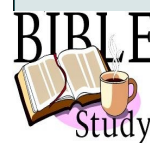


well as gift cards for local food and gas. Once purchased, the items were wrapped, appropriately marked, and ultimately delivered to the Gingerbread House Dropoff Point in West Bend for pickup by the families prior to Christmas.

After everything was completed, a \$279 check was written, representing the balance of your donations not spent on these two families. The check was given to the Gingerbread House to help additional families. Please talk with either of the Romanskis to hear more. FPCR and the Gingerbread House owe Rick, Cathy, and their grandchildren a debt of gratitude! What a caring task the Romanskis took on during an already busy Christmas season! Thank You!

Pictures: **Top Left:** Reviewing a variety of family gifts. **Bottom Left:** Tucker, the Romanskis dog, is having none of this Christmas nonsense! **Top Right:** A "gift wrap pro" in the making. **Bottom Right:** The gifts are ready for delivery.

NEXT BIBLE STUDY



After cancelling during the business of December, the Zoom Bible Study covering Lesson 5 in

the Heaven study guide will be held on Wednesday, January 15, at 6 pm. A link will be sent by **Cathy Romanski** prior to the session. Let Cathy know if you would like to be included for the first time on January 15.

HELP THE ENVIRONMENT AND FPCR'S BUDGET ...

REQUEST AN ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

Please email **FirstPresbyofRichfield@gmail.com** with your preferred email address so we are able to send you an electronic copy of this newsletter rather than a paper copy.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING DATE SET

On **Sunday, January 26, 2025**, immediately following the service, the Annual Congregational Meeting will be held.

All members of the FPCR congregation are encouraged to be at the meeting to discuss and vote on business important to FPCR.

If there is anything you would like included on the agenda for this meeting, please contact **Elaine Schmidt**, Clerk of Session, in person or via email at **FirstPresbyofRichfield@gmail.com**.

First Presbyterian Church of Richfield

Location:
2281 Highway 164
Richfield, WI 53076

Mailing Address:
PO Box 22
Richfield, WI 53076

Website:
<https://www.FirstPresbyofRichfield.com>

Email:
FirstPresbyofRichfield@gmail.com

BY-LAWS UPDATE SET FOR DISCUSSION AT ANNUAL MEETING

At the February 11, 2023, Annual Congregational Meeting a motion was made to decrease the number of elders on the session since there are only 33 members at FPCR. After some discussion, the motion was tabled for the 2024 Annual Congregational Meeting which will be held on Sunday, January 26, 2025.

There has been discussion by the session as well as others in the FPCR congregation both for and against this motion.

You will be receiving additional information including the wording of the present by-laws section and the wording being proposed over the next few weeks via the Sunday announcements, the church website, and your email.

Please feel free to ask questions of **Elaine Schmidt, Pastor Cathy Manthei**, or any of the **session members** listed on page 2 of this newsletter. Full copies of the present by-laws may be found in the bookcase in the narthex. Feel free to take one.



ADVENT AT FPCR is a time of anticipation and reflection. Aside from worshipping together at beautiful Advent and Christmas services, the FPCR family enjoys giving and reflecting, along with the anticipation of Christmas. In other sections of this newsletter you read about the Reverse Advent Slinger Food Pantry Drive, Christmas gifts for families in need through the Gingerbread House in West Bend, WI, and generosity toward retired church workers and their families via the Joy Offering sponsored by the Presbyterian Church (USA). Above are a few pictures of additional events held during Advent.

Top Left: Deanna Wojcieszak works to decorate the tree in the Sanctuary. **Top Middle: Ken Schmidt and Cheryl Weber** hang decorations. **Top Right:** The front of the Sanctuary is ready for services.

Bottom Left: The Peanut Butter/Canned Goods Tree "built" during Advent. **Bottom Middle: Debbie Heppe and Melissa Kujawa** serve at the spaghetti luncheon they organize. **Bottom Right:** FPCR's family and friends thoroughly enjoyed the delicious meal at the luncheon.

Watch for Carol Frank's salad recipe on the table at FPCR's narthex.