



THE PROCLAIMER

January - February 2023

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DOC) – MONONGAHELA, PA

Message From Your Pastor:

Happy New Year, Christians! 2022 has ended with applause for all the accomplishments FCC has achieved. In addition to those written about in previous newsletters, November and December saw many accomplishments:

Passing of the budget (See new 2023 budget summary inside).

Election of Officers, Elders, and Deacons (Arlene Schmeltz has been added to the Diaconate).

Five thousand dollar grant received from the National Benevolent Association for the Food Pantry and Hot Meals Monday.

Community Christmas Cantata (Dale and Audrey Minjock, Barb Henderson, and I participated.) To view, go to [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...), First Baptist Church, Monongahela and open the Community Christmas Cantata.

New Monongahela Ministerium President elected: Yours Truly!

A Strategic Plan created for 2023 with each Ministry Team working on completing goals and objectives for 2023.

Patty Miller working as interim secretary until Barb Henderson can fill the role in February after her retirement from Penn Highlands Hospital in Monongahela.

Greeting cards with stamped envelopes were collected and delivered to Chaplain Mike Pierson at the Washington County Corrections Facility for distribution to inmates.

Much done, and much still to do in 2023. As we make New Year's resolutions, let us also commit to continue our support to our denomination Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and its identity statement and goals:

Our Identity

We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world.

As part of the one body of Christ, we welcome all to the Lord's Table as God has welcomed us.

Our Vision

To be a faithful, growing church, that demonstrates true community, deep Christian spirituality and a passion for justice.

– *Micah 6:8*

Our Mission

To be and to share the Good News of Jesus Christ, witnessing, loving and serving from our doorsteps "to the ends of the earth."

– *Acts 1:8*

May we be beacons of light spreading the good news of Jesus Christ in 2023.

In His Service,

Pastor Janet



THE PROCLAIMER

Pursue Jesus — and your passions

If you struggle with making and keeping resolutions, you're not alone. It can be discouraging to focus on what you're doing "wrong" and all the difficult changes in store. Yet January offers great opportunities to listen to God's direction. After all, Jesus came to give us abundant life and wants us to pursue him.

As you review the previous year, ask: What brought me joy? How did I grow? How did I help others? What did I do that no one else could have done? Whether your list includes spending time outside, mentoring or coaching young people or making crafts to give away or sell, continue doing what brings you joy. God gives us each unique gifts and circumstances, so live passionately for him this year!

—Janna Firestone



Leave the light on

"We'll leave the light on for you," a motel chain once promised. In other words, they were expecting you and looking forward to your stay. During the time of the high priest Eli, "the lamp of God had not yet gone out" (1 Samuel 3:3). Eli oversaw the tabernacle, so some people say this refers to an actual lamp. But the passage could have a deeper meaning. Although Eli had turned a blind eye to his sons' sins and neglected his duties, God knew that Eli could still be a divine instrument. God knew not to turn off Eli's light. God was expecting Eli to still shine brightly for him, and eventually Eli figured out that Samuel, his young charge, was hearing God's voice. So if your light seems dim or even burned out, be assured that your pilot light remains on! God has left the light on not just *for* you but also *in* you.

—Julie Lee

Dates to Remember

JANUARY

- 1 New Year's Day
- 9 Board Meeting
- 12 Praise & Worship
- 16 Martin Luther King Jr Day
- 25 Elders' Meeting
- 26 Praise & Worship

FEBRUARY

- 9 Praise & Worship
- 13 Ministry Team Mtg
- 20 Presidents' Day
- 22 Ash Wednesday
- 22 Elders' Meeting
- 23 Praise & Worship



Christian symbol



VALLEY—Valleys symbolize life’s dark or low points; for example, Psalm 23:4 refers to “the valley of the shadow of death” (ESV). But valleys also symbolize people who find God’s favor because they’re lowly and meek. As a result, valleys can be places of blessing. God lifts his people out of despair and rewards their faithfulness. He also promises to “level” conditions by raising up valleys and bringing down mountains (see Isaiah 40:4).

ELDER’S PRAYER

Almighty Father, our days have been spent in busy preparation for the holidays: you have prepared our hearts for your coming into our lives. May Christ’s presence in our lives be a source of Joy, Hope and Peace. Help us, O God, to rise up and say “Joy to the world, the Lord is come!!”

We come into your presence at the beginning of another year to praise and to give thanks. Grant us, O God, the insight to see more clearly the path you would want us to follow in the coming year. Be with us in our efforts to know your will and also to serve you more faithfully.

In Jesus’ name, Amen

Joe Mancinelli

BIBLE QUIZ



How old was Abram when he followed God’s call to leave Haran and travel to a new land?

- A. 25 B. 50 C. 75 D. 100

Answer: C (See Genesis 12:4.)



“Light trumps darkness, every time. You stick a candle into the dark, but you can’t stick the dark into the light.”

—Jodi Picoult



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I am convinced that love is the most durable power in the world. It is not an expression of impractical idealism, but of practical realism. Far from being the pious injunction of a Utopian dreamer, love is an absolute necessity for the survival of our civilization. To return hate for hate does nothing but intensify the existence of evil in the universe. Someone must have sense enough and morality enough to cut off the chain of hate and evil, and this can only be done through love.



—Martin Luther King Jr.



OPEN BOOK — A book symbolizes the Bible, the written Word of God. When shown open, a book represents truth or revelation. Apostles and saints are often pictured holding an open book, understood as the New Testament writings of the early Christian church.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Dear Church Family.

Many thanks for the generous Christmas gift. I am blessed to have such a supportive congregation.

Love in Christ,

Pastor Janet

"Always be kinder than you feel."

—Unknown



JANUARY

- 5 Barbara Henderson
- 5 Cathy Young
- 9 Nathan Petrosky
- 10 Peggy McLaughlin
- 13 Audrey Minjock
- 18 Dennis Petrosky
- 24 Rodger Young
- 26 Tom Kahl
- 29 Carol Coulter

FEBRUARY

- 1 Arthur Hruby
- 2 Patty Gamble
- 4 Dorothy Cowan
- 4 David L Petrosky Jr.
- 11 Paul Hochendonner
- 16 Marsha Davis
- 21 Donna Hochendonner
- 24 DJ Fogiato
- 27 Katie Minjock
- 28 Irene Leyda



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Dale Minjock received the following text from Mike Pierson, facility chaplain of the Washington County Correctional Facility. Let's continue to support this ministry in 2023 by placing new greeting cards (for all occasions) in the card donation box located in the narthex.

Hi Dale. Really appreciate all the stamps and cards for the men and women housed here. Please give your church a huge thank you for me. Merry Christmas.

HOT MEAL MONDAY

The Monday Meal crew members (aka "The Christian Cookers") are looking forward to the beginning of a new year. We served over 1,400 meals in 2022, and new people continue to find their way to the outside food pantry and to our door for a warm meal.

This year, we are hoping to make the task a little easier by purchasing a new refrigerator and stove for the upstairs fellowship hall. The new appliances will be housed in the room's alcove where tables and chairs are now being stored. During the past year, we have had to use the ovens in the downstairs kitchen or a borrowed roaster oven to keep the food warm. Crockpots have often lined the serving table as well. It has been challenging and has, at times, limited the types of meals that we could serve.

The purchase of the new appliances is possible due to a grant from the National Benevolent Association that was applied for by Pastor Janet. The Association uses funds "to provide grants for projects serving older adults and educating youth and young adults." Through Pastor Janet's efforts, the church was awarded a \$5,000 grant.

Of course before moving forward, we need to see what the addition of the new appliances will entail. We will keep you posted on the progress. -The Monday Meal Crew

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me... Truly I tell you, whatever you did for the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25:35-40 NIV



WORLD OUTREACH

The World Outreach Committee recently met to plan for the upcoming year. Plans include contacting area high school students to find “helpers” to shovel sidewalks this winter for those needing help.



Donations made recently were as follows:

- The Salvation Army
- K-LOVE Christian Radio Network
- City Mission
- Peru ministry

Our yearly purchase and donation to Children & Youth Services of Washington County was delivered to the organization on December 1st. Kathleen Mancinelli is our “shopper”, purchasing winter wear at the Emporium in Charleroi (and they also donate generously). She also delivers these items plus the “Sock & Mitten Tree” contributions and some toys. Thank you, Kathleen!! Also, some “angel” gifts were purchased by members of the church for CYS children.

We have made a donation through the Monongahela Woman’s Club for the purchase of clothes for the Ringgold Elementary School’s “clothes closet”.

The outdoor food pantry continues to be utilized daily and is restocked very often. We have also received donations of warm socks, hats, gloves, jackets and sweatshirts. These items are very much appreciated.

The free hot meals are continuing on Mondays and has been very busy. We thank all our cooks and our helpers.

We’ve have had a good, busy year and are so very grateful to be able to continue these outreach programs. We appreciate all the love, support and prayers for this ministry.

“God put us here to help each other.”

May God bless you always,

The World Outreach Committee



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2023 Approved Budget

| Category | 2023 Approved Budget |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Pastor | \$56,000 |
| Administration | \$21,550 |
| Property | \$35,770 |
| Evangelism/Membership | \$7,000 |
| Worship | \$2,925 |
| Stewardship/Finance | \$4,655 |
| Christian Education | \$1,950 |
| World Outreach | \$17,800 |
| Total Annual Budget | \$147,650 |

Biblical Love Notes

The following compliments from the Song of Solomon may not go over well on Valentine's Day: "I compare you, my love, to a mare among Pharaoh's chariots" (1:9). "Your hair is like a flock of goats, moving down the slopes of Gilead" (4:1). "Your teeth are like a flock of shorn ewes that have come up from the washing" (4:2). "Your neck is like the tower of David, built in courses" (4:4). "[Your] eyes are like doves beside springs of water, bathed in milk, fitly set" (5:12). "Your navel is a rounded bowl that never lacks mixed wine. Your belly is a heap of wheat" (7:2). On the other hand, how about this one: "You are altogether beautiful, my love; there is no flaw in you" (4:7).



Beyond Candy Hearts and Roses



The first half of February seems dominated by pink and red, cards and candy. But people not in a loving romantic relationship can sometimes feel left out of the festivities. Of course, all people need love — and certainly love is not limited to the romantic kind. Author Leo Buscaglia, who became known as "Dr. Love" for writing about the topic, said, "Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around." Jesus taught that loving one another is second only in importance to loving God (Matthew 22:37-40), and that when we love one another, God lives in us (1 John 4:12). There are so many ways to do that — beyond candy hearts and roses! But Valentine's Day is as good a reminder as any.