

# FAIRPLAIN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## JANUARY NEWSLETTER 2024

*Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LIVING GOD has risen upon you. (Isaiah 60:1)*

Dear friends,

We are moving once again to the beginning of a new year. I wrote last year about the practice of looking back on the year that was with an irritation and relief, and how nostalgia seems to take a few years to polish up and make us long for “the good old days” we were so glad to see gone as they ended.

This year, before I made any judgments about 2023, I took my own advice to heart and renewed a practice I began at the beginning of the year, of looking back over journal entries and Facebook posts and photos taken. As of this writing, I've only gotten to June, but I suspect I have warmer feelings about 2023 than a lot of folks who are glad to see it end because they only remember the bad of it.

I got to be your pastor again for another year, and I took my kids on bike rides and took so many pictures of them and told so many stories about them. I read a novel in my hammock and preached more than a few sermons that I liked, and learned more about how to care for myself and be kinder and gentler to myself and, hopefully, to others. I grew just a little bit, and Kristen and I celebrated our ten-year wedding anniversary. I found a new preacher whose sermons I liked hearing. At, through, and after the CREDO conference, I grew as a pastor.

And, I suspect you had some growth too. I hope some of it was inspired by one or another of my sermons, but I know God is responsible for the growth in our hearts, so I'll be glad to hear about growth, however God did it in you. You learned things, and hopefully found ways to be kinder to yourself and others, too.

At the same time, last year was a very difficult year filled with hardship and challenge and loss that we never want to experience again, and I don't want to discount that. We lost beloved church members and friends we cared about. And alongside that hurt, there was also the good and beauty I talked about earlier.

I hope you can look back on your life in the year that was, not only with a sense of “good riddance,” but also with kindness and gratitude for all the good God has given you, and with gratitude for God bringing you through all its challenges.

With blessings on your memory of the year that was, and on your living of this new one,

Rev. David Schell



## BIRTHDAYS

2: Don Myers

27: Dick Machalleck

22: J. Michael Hall

29: Ryan Schell

## PRAYER REQUESTS

If you have a prayer request that you would like to leave as a voicemail to be played on Sunday morning, you can call 269-332-1118 to leave a message.



On December 18 we served 93 scalloped potatoes with little sausages from the Food Pantry, and received several compliments. We also served mixed greens, applesauce or mixed fruit cups, Cheez-its and cookies along with juice.

## PER CAPITA

The Presbytery of Lake Michigan reports that our Per Capita per active member for 2024 is \$40.05: General Assembly \$9.80, Synod \$3.25 and Presbytery \$27.00. Checks should be made payable to Fairplain Presbyterian Church, memo: Per Capita 2024. The deadline to submit is January 14, 2024.



## CLERK'S CORNER – DECEMBER 2023

It seems like the years roll by so quickly that I can't keep up. I wish you a happy, healthy, productive 2024.

We have 41 members as of this writing, and usually around 37 attending our worship services either in-person or on streaming. We actually have more people streaming than attending. Some are attending from far away like Texas, Wisconsin and heaven knows where. Others are close by, and I would like to encourage you to come and attend at least once a month, for example on communion Sunday. We still have 15 members who cannot get to church as they are home-bound.

Our general budget did not allow for money to pay our overseas missionaries. After our specified December collection, I'm very happy to announce that we are able to pay the Rach's \$1,500, which is what we usually contribute to them, and \$2,094.00 to the missionaries in Iraq, to whom we usually contribute \$2,500. Thank you so very much to all who contributed. The PW Women contributed just over \$1,000 of that total amount, and the rest came from you very generous folks.

We have had a problem in the bathrooms with some of the faucets not turning off when one thinks they are off. Our Mishkan Daviyd renters have stepped in once again to handle repairs in the building. They repaired all the spickets, regardless of whether they were dripping or not. There are two still not working and those will be completely replaced. Thank you to our friends for fixing those.

If we happen to have really bad weather on a Sunday morning, tune in to WNDU (16) South Bend to listen for closings. Also, you can turn on WSBT TV (22) Mishawaka and they will announce closings.

Peace of Christ

Marlene Smith-Clerk



## MUSIC NOTES - JANUARY

Greetings to all from Psalm 98:4-6

***“Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth, burst into jubilant song with music. Make music to the Lord with the harp and the sound of singing, with trumpets and the blast of the ram’s horn. Shout for joy before the Lord, the King.”***

The busiest month of the year for families with children is over. We look forward to a slower pace from January.

There were 5 Sundays in December. The following groups and volunteer soloists enhanced our Sunday church worship experience:

December 03 – Chancel Choir and Family Slavujevic Chimes, Bells and Voices

December 10 – Angelica & Liliana Pena with Lilly Vajdic

December 17 – Chancel Choir (2 songs)

December 24 – The Praise Band “Wherever Two ...” (2 songs)

December 31 – David, Aaron and Rebekah Gordan

In addition to our regular Sunday morning services, there was a special Christmas Eve program on Sunday, December 24 at 4:00pm. Unlike Christmas Eve 2022 when we had to cancel the service due to a snow storm, this year the weather was mild. It was a Service of Stories, Carols and Lessons. There was something new introduced that evening. We were able to hear stories behind various carols we sang that evening. Many participated as readers including Ana and Marina. We wish to thank Leslie Gilreath for putting a lot of her time and effort in preparing this material.

All our organized music groups participated: Chancel Choir, Family Slavujevic Chimes, Bells and Voices, and The Praise Team “Wherever Two ...” Melissa Gilreath Cobb was in town visiting her mother. It was a real treat to have her sing in our choir that evening as well as listening to her 2 vocal solos. Towards the end of the program Robert and Marlene played on their guitars and led us in singing “Silent Night, Holy Night” while the candles were lit between visitors. It was special. The postlude was supposed to be a pure organ arrangement of Handel’s “Hallelujah Chorus” from “Messiah.” Instead several of us (led by Melissa) started singing along that famous composition from memory. It was totally spontaneous and uplifting.

In January 2024 I will start my 10<sup>th</sup> year as a Director of Music at Fairplain. There were more “ups” than “downs” and more “summits” than “valleys.” In brief I am pleased with what we accomplished during the past 9 years as a team. We pray that in 2024 we will not lose any member of our organized music groups and will continue to have various volunteer musicians (my music students) coming to enrich our worship experience with their musical talent.

May God bless us all abundantly, grant us protection, guidance, good health, prosperity, and an opportunity to be a blessing to others.

Vladimir Slavujevic  
Director of Music

# CHURCH SUPPLY

## WISH LIST

Last Spring we published a Church Supply Wish List and so many of you have donated items for church use to offset the 2023 budget and we thank you for that. This list is ongoing so if you'd like to donate again, or for the first time, we welcome your donations.

Please see the list below and contact Linda in the church office to confirm your donation.

Thanks in advance for your continued support.

	<u>Packaging type</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Size</u>
Office	by the package (ream)	8.5 x 11 copy paper	20 lb. letter size
	by the package (ream)	8.5 x 11 color copy paper	20 lb. letter size
	by the package (ream)	8.5 x 14 copy paper	20 lb. legal size
	loose	3 <sup>rd</sup> cut manila folders	letter size
	by the package	5160 Avery labels	letter
	5 x 7	padded mailing envelopes	
	by the box	Pentel Oh! Gel black pens	
	by the roll	Clear mailing tape	
<b>Paper &amp; Coffee</b>	loose	coffee cups	8 oz.
<b>Supplies</b>	loose	clear plastic punch cups	9 oz.
	by the package	paper napkins	cocktail or dinner
	by the roll	paper towels	
	by the package	paper plates	luncheon or dinner
<b>Custodial</b>	Individual	bathroom spray/deodorizer	
<b>Supplies</b>	individual	glass cleaner	paper towels
	large	hand soap	

## DEACONS

**THESE DAYS DEVOTIONALS:** These Days devotionals, large print copies, are available on the cart in the narthex.

### **YELLOW PEW ENVELOPES**

The yellow envelopes have been reprinted for your donations toward Deacons General/Funeral Fund and Food Pantry/Soup Kitchen and are in the pews.

### **Deacons General Fund:**

Goes towards the purchase of communion cups, oil for candles, Advent wax candles, flowers for homebound (Christmas and Easter), printed support materials for members: These Days devotional, Care Notes (various topics), greeting cards and postage for members; CD players for shut-ins.

### **Deacons Funeral Fund:**

Goes towards any funeral luncheon expenses that are not reimbursed by the family.

**Checks for donations to the Deacons General Fund and/or Funeral Fund should be made payable to Fairplain Presbyterian Church. Include "Deacons" in the memo line.**

### **CHURCH STAFF**

The Rev. David Schell, [pastor@fairplainpc.com](mailto:pastor@fairplainpc.com)

Linda Cogswell, Church Secretary – church email: [office@fairplainpc.com](mailto:office@fairplainpc.com)

Vladimir Slavujevic, Director of Music – email: [vladimirslavujevic5@gmail.com](mailto:vladimirslavujevic5@gmail.com)

Robert Smith, Treasurer – email: [robertlynsmith@gmail.com](mailto:robertlynsmith@gmail.com)

Jody Pauley, Nursery Attendant – email: [jodypauley1@gmail.com](mailto:jodypauley1@gmail.com)

Jill Wendel, Financial Secretary – email: [jillannwendel@yahoo.com](mailto:jillannwendel@yahoo.com)

Bud Cornelius, Custodian

### **CHURCH OFFICE HOURS**

Linda Cogswell, Church Secretary, is in the church office during the following days/hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 8:30 am-noon and 1:00-3:00 pm

Wednesday: Church Office closed

Friday: 9:00 am-11:30 am