



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH THE COLUMNS

FEBRUARY 2025

I wrote the following article one year ago. When I reread it today, I was struck by how much I needed these words again this year. I pray it will be a blessing to you as well.

Blessed Light

This time of year can be very difficult. It is cold and the sun does not come out very much. I have seen many people expressing their exhaustion, higher frustration, and a longing for the light and warmth that seems very distant right now. Seasonal Affective Disorder is a real form of depression that many feel at this time of the year. We are longing for the light.

As we move into the second month of the year, knowing that there are still cold and dark days to get through before spring, my prayer is that we will connect with the light that is present, even in the darkness, and pray for enough to see our next steps. Let me leave you with this poem from Jan Richardson (*Circle of Grace, A Book of Blessings for the Seasons*).

Grace and Peace, Daren Hofmann

How the Light Comes

I cannot tell you
how the light comes.

What I know
is that it is more ancient
than imagining.

That it travels
across an astounding expanse
to reach us.

That it loves
searching out
what it hidden,
what is lost,
what is forgotten
or in peril
or in pain.

That it has a fondness
for the body,
for finding its way
toward flesh,
for tracing the edges
of form,
for shining forth
through the eye,
the hand,
the heart.

I cannot tell you
how the light comes,
but that it does.
That it will.
That it works its way
into the deepest dark
that enfolds you,
though it may seem
long ages in coming
or arrive in a shape
you did not foresee.

And so,
may we this day
turn ourselves toward it.
May we lift our faces
to let it find us.
May we bend our bodies
to follow the arc it makes.
May we open
and open more
and open still
to the blessed light
that comes.

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 1ST

**LEADERSHIP
RETREAT**

9:00 AM—NOON FELLOWSHIP HALL

*All current Elders and Deacons are
asked to please attend.
Light breakfast provided.*



February 2nd

*First Sunday
Fellowship*

*8:30 a.m.
Fellowship Hall*

**NEW OFFICER ORDINATION
AND INSTALLATION**

ELDERS AND DEACONS
TOGETHER WITH THE CHURCH

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 2ND

DURING 10:00 AM WORSHIP SERVICE



You're Invited!

Join us to spread love to our members at Westminster Village

Westminster Village - Village Room

Sunday, February 2nd

Open House 3:00-4:00

We welcome all to come enjoy fellowship in
celebration of Valentine's Day.




*Stitchers
Group*

*Crochet, cross-stitch, knit, needlepoint,
sew, quilt, etc. If you don't know how,
we will teach you!*

Thursday February 6th

9:30 AM-11:30 AM Lounge



Dee Dah Day
Women's Book Study & Prayer Group

February 14 & 28, 10:00 AM
First Pres Church Lounge

*If you have questions, please
contact Barb Ottinger,
765.289.4080
lkbaott59@comcast.net.*

♥ happy ♥
Valentine's
 ♥ day ♥

THURSDAY
 FEB 14

Walk a Mile in My Shoes 2025
 SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15
 MUNCIE FIELDHOUSE

REGISTRATION 8:00 AM
OPENING CEREMONY 9:00 AM




<https://secure.gqiv.com/event/walkamileinmyshoes2025/>



H A P P Y
PRESIDENTS DAY

MONDAY
 FEB 17



Monday
Feb 17
9:30 AM
Kitchen



Ministry Guild

Please note, in lieu of our regular monthly meeting in the lounge, we will gather on **Feb 17th at 9:30 a.m. in the main kitchen** for our annual re-organization project. New members welcomed and encouraged!

Many hands make for quick



PAPA MURPHY'S
 TAKE 'N' BAKE PIZZA

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN PRE-K

DINE&DONATE

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20
 12:00 PM-7:00 PM




Third Thursday
Lunch & Talk

Feb 20 12:15 pm
Fellowship Hall

Guest Speaker: Chuck Horvath
"What is the real purpose of business? A Social Capital Approach"

Sign up at the Welcome Desk to reserve your seat!



FEB 22
Doors Open 5pm
Trivia Starts 6pm

Prizes for best table décor & costumes!

The Lodge at River Valley Farm
12701 E. CR 100 S. Yorktown

Join First Presbyterian Pre-K for a night of complimentary hors d'oeuvres, Cash Bar, Raffle Prizes and games, 50/50 drawing
RESERVE YOUR TABLE NOW USING THE QR CODE BELOW
\$100 PER 8 PERSON TABLE

Questions? Jami Jones
 765.751.7960
 prek@firstpresmuncie.org



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Art Exhibit

April 6, 2025

All members, youth and friends of the First Presbyterian Church, are invited to show your talents and skills in the upcoming art exhibit. Our church family wants to learn more about you, and to appreciate your artistic creativity!

Here is additional information about the event:

- ◆ It will be held in the church Lounge, both before and after the service, with an artist reception and visitation at both times.
- ◆ You may enter up to five pieces.
- ◆ It is preferred that entries are recent work, having been completed within the last few years.
- ◆ Two-dimensional entries must be matted or framed, ready for display. If you have an easel or stand, please bring it, too.
- ◆ Table space is available for three-dimensional work.
- ◆ Each piece must have a completed entry form.
- ◆ You may include an artist statement to let us know more about you.
- ◆ Entry forms and instructions for dropping off work will be available in March.
- ◆ All original artwork or craft items are welcome.
- ◆ It is not a juried exhibition; no prizes are given and artwork is not for sale.
- ◆ Eligible media includes the following: drawing, painting, sculpture, ceramics, jewelry, calligraphy, bookmaking, artistic journaling, poetry, altered books, collage, papermaking, graphic art, digital artwork and photography, fiber/textile art, needlework, sewing, quilt making, knitting/crocheting, floral arranging, glasswork, handmade ornaments and miniature houses/arts. (If your medium is not listed, please check with the church office.)

Lewis Gishler Scholarship



Applications for the Lewis Gishler Scholarship are now available at the Welcome Desk. High School Seniors and College Undergraduate students may apply.



Application deadline: March 1, 2025



2025 Per Capita Expense

Please help offset First Pres' Per Capita expense to Presbytery for 2025 by reimbursing the church for the per capita (\$45.05) of each FPC member in your family. Checks should be made payable to *First Presbyterian Church*, memo: "Per Capita".

February 2025: Of all our local mission partners, South View Elementary receives the most financial and volunteer support. This month, Bill and I interviewed Principal Dr. Casey Smitherman and Assistant Principal Shawn Davis to get an update about their two years at the helm. Dr. Casey on the left and Shawn on the right have remarkably similar backgrounds but had never met each other before being hired.



Dr. Casey describes herself as a trailer park kid. Shawn says she was one of nine kids raised by her Grandma. Their life experiences and backgrounds help them relate to the South View children and families. Both were the first in their family to go to college. In addition, both had extensive experience as Principals of 4-Star Schools and became known as strong leaders who could turn failing schools around.



MISSIONAL OUTREACH SPOTLIGHT:

SOUTH VIEW

Changing the Culture: Most of the statistics for South View and its neighborhood were a cause for concern. South View is the largest low-income school in the district with the average family income of \$19,600. Based on test scores and absenteeism, CSI (Comprehensive School Improvement) rated South View in the lowest 10% in the state. With all of this bad news, Dr. Casey and Shawn believed that many students, families, and even teachers had given up. However, rather than blame the children's traumatic backgrounds and use that as an excuse, the leadership team emphasized education as a way out of poverty. Slowly, there has been buy-in from teachers, students, and families.

1. Every time there is a new principal, there is teacher turnover. The one silver lining was that the leadership team used this as an opportunity to choose teachers and support staff who shared their goals for the school and surrounding community.

2. Amy Heath was added to the staff as a Master Teacher and is an integral part of the school. She works with the teachers to help them become proficient in all areas of the curriculum so they, in turn, can help their students become proficient. Amy has also developed close working relationships with many South View families.

3. The teachers have more support in their classrooms because of partnerships developed with Ball State and the community. Ball State nursing, psychology, and education students spend time in South View classrooms. Ball State has a new student teaching program in which students are a paid intern in the class for the first semester and student teach in the same class second semester. Our volunteers are part of this partnership!



Accomplishments: 1. Last summer there were only 4 teacher turnovers, one of whom was getting married and moving out of state and one who found a band directing job close to home. 2. For the first time ever, all the kindergartners passed the test which showed they were ready for 1st grade. 3. The school's third grade IREAD scores have gone from 38% to 52% to 70%. 4. Most important, this year absenteeism has declined and scores have increased enough that the school anticipates being removed from the CSI list.

Vision: Community Hub It all started with a relationship between Master Teacher Amy Heath and a South View mom. The mom started volunteering at the school. As Amy got to know her better, she found out her friend had not completed high school and did not have a driver's license. With no license, her friend could not go to the GED classes at Ivy Tech, so Amy found her a quiet space where she could study online. That led to the leadership team's vision of having in-house GED and driver's license classes at South View. As Shawn says, "It's hard to get a job if you don't have a GED and if you don't have a license. If you have a job, you have to get up in the morning, and you get your kid to school!"

Proud to be a partner with the great people at South View Elementary,
Jan & Bill McCune for the Missional Outreach Committee



February Sermon Series:
"Jubilee"

Feb 2	"Release"	<i>Luke 7:36-48</i>
Feb 9	"Sight"	<i>Luke 18:35-43</i>
Feb 16	"Liberation"	<i>Luke 13:10-17</i>
Feb 23	"Jubilee"	<i>Luke 7:18-35</i>



Adult Sunday School Classes

8:30 a.m.
Fellowship Hall

1 Peter Bible Study

Led by Chuck Horvath
 Feb 9: 1 Peter 3.8-22

"Be Prepared"

Feb 16: 1 Peter 4.1-19

"Living for God"

Feb 23: 1 Peter 5.1-1

"Final Advice"

MARILYN MCENTYRE

WORD

by

WORD

a daily spiritual practice

Midweek Ecumenical Lenten Lunch and Learn

Wednesdays: 12:30-1:30

Book Study: Word by Word by Marilyn McEntyre

Please sign up at the Welcome Desk if you plan to attend.

March 12: *Listen*

Hosted by Saint Andrew Presbyterian Church

March 19: *Let Go*

Hosted by Hazelwood Christian Church

March 26: *Resist*

Hosted by Community of Hope UMC

April 2: *Be Still*

Hosted by Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

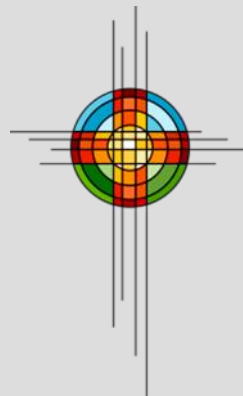
April 9: *Welcome*

Hosted by First Presbyterian Church

First Presbyterian Church

1400 W. Riverside Ave.
 Muncie IN 47303

Phone: 765.289.4431
www.firstpresmuncie.org



SUNDAY SERVICE TIMES:

- 8:30 a.m. Adult Sunday School Jan. 12-Feb. 23
- 9:30 a.m. Sunday Children's Nursery
- 10:00 a.m. Sanctuary Worship Service
- 11:00 a.m. International Congregation Service, Chapel

The 10:00 a.m. Worship Service is available online via our church website, Facebook page, and First Pres Church YouTube channel.

The Rev. Dr. Daren Hofmann Senior Pastor

daren@firstpresmuncie.org

The Rev. Dr. Myungku Lee Associate Pastor

9brights@firstpresmuncie.org

Jami Jones

Director of Pre-Kindergarten

prek@firstpresmuncie.org

Lisa Ulrich

Business Administrator

lisa@firstpresmuncie.org

Rebecca Reese

Administrative Assistant

office@firstpresmuncie.org

Nathaniel Barber

Building Superintendent

ncbarber11@gmail.com