

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Web Address: www.1stpreshnewark.com
Office Hours: Tuesday-Thursday 9-2pm

Rev. Steven Brand, Pastor
Sheri Bogardus, Sec./Treas
Gary Collins, Custodian
Thom Ogilvie, Choir Director

December 2020





"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his

government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this." – Isaiah 9:6-7

I have three overarching principles that guide my theology. Three things that I believe are true and are always true.

1) God wants what is best for us. 2) God loves us. 3) We live in the in-between time; the time in-between the fall and the redemption. They seem pretty simple, but they really help me. They help me because; so much of life depends on the situation or the circumstances. **These do not!**

In a world full of gray, these are black and white. God wants what is best for us, God loves us and we don't live in the world God wanted for us. These overarching principles help me because *they work as a litmus test* for all other ideas and theologies about God. I use these as a first way to test whether or not an idea or theology about God is right. If someone tells me they believe that God acts in a way that is not loving or is not in the long-term best interest of people; then I do not believe they are accurate.

These three ideas help me because *they reassure me*, especially when I do not understand, or cannot comprehend. Sometimes I do not understand why something the Bible calls a sin, is a sin; but I believe that God wants what is best for me, and so something about that act or idea must be hurtful to myself, to others, to creation or to God. Sometimes I cannot comprehend

the un-redemptive pain people experience here on earth. But I believe that it is a direct product of the fall. Pain that devastates and destroys does not come from God; it is not God's will. Instead it has its' roots in the fallen creation, and the sins of humanity. (God sometimes gives us circumstances that help us grow. He sometimes allows us to suffer the effects of sin. He does not bring evil upon us or punish us.)

These ideas help me because *they tell me why*. I have found that the 'why' of everything can truly be traced back to one of these three truths.

Why is there evil and hideous pain? The fall.

Why do we exist? To be the recipient of God's love.

How are we to live? In a way that reveals God's love to others.

Why do I do so well sometimes and so poorly other times?

Why do people treat each other with so much love sometimes and so much hate other times?

Why is so much of life beautiful and fulfilling and so much of life beyond difficult and ugly?

Because we experience God's love, God's guiding hand and the results of the fall all mixed together.

Christmas and Easter are the best proof of this I can offer. **Why in the world would God go through all of this, if He did not love us?** If He did not want what was best for us? If He did not have to?

We live in a fallen world that God is REDEEMING or MAKING NEW.

God always wants what is best for us; ALWAYS.

God loves us, He loves ALL of us and he ALWAYS loves us.

Have a very Merry Christmas!

Rev Steve

SERMONS

December 2020 Sermons A Prophecy Fulfilled Series:

Dec 6 - Baptizing in the Desert
Dec 13 - Make Straight the Way of the Lord
Dec 20 - The Holy Spirit Brings Birth
Dec 24 - Nine Lessons and Carols and Communion
Dec 27 - Jesus at Home

Did You Know that Most Sermons are Available Online? Past sermons are available on our church's YouTube Channel. You can find our channel by searching YouTube for First Presbyterian Church of Newark Ohio or by following the link from our church website.



VIRTUAL CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

Service of Nine Lessons & Carols' that was first done in 1880. The service originated in Truro, England by Edward Benson the Archbishop of Canterbury and has been a Christmas Eve tradition in Truro ever since.

Nine Lessons & Carols features a series of nine readings of Scripture that tell the story of humanity's fall, the promise of the Messiah and the birth of Jesus Christ. After each Scripture a carol is sung. The same Scriptures have been used since 1880 and each of the carols only has two options.

This service is very similar. It will feature the same nine Scriptures and will have nine carols throughout. However, we do the songs we enjoy.

HERE IS THE ZOOM LINK NEEDED FOR OUR CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE.

Service is at 7:00pm but social time is at 6:30pm.

Topic: Christmas Eve Worship 12/24

Time: Dec 24, 2020 06:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82564563678?pwd=NWlaVmF4Q0hqcEtYTW5QbFJpdk5Edz09>

Meeting ID: 825 6456 3678

Passcode: 412246

to join by landline or cell dial 1312-626-6799 US

FROM THE OFFICE

Office Hours are Tuesday – Thursday from 9-2pm. Sheri, the church's secretary, will regularly be there during those times.

Church Emails – Every Wednesday, a church wide email is sent out with announcements, prayer requests and other information. Please send your email to firstpresofc@gmail.com if you are not receiving these emails.

Worship CD or DVD? – We are compiling a list of individuals that would like a CD or DVD of the services mailed to them. Please call the church office at 740-345-1480 or email firstpresofc@gmail.com to be added to that list.

Tithes and Offerings:

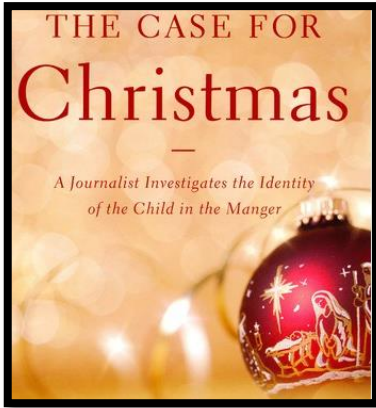
We have online giving available if you want to go to the website and click on this button. It takes you directly to a safe way of giving.



Our new mailbox is a locked box so mailing in your offerings, or dropping them off, is very safe!

SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Adult Sunday School class began the Advent season on Nov 29th using Lee Strobel's "Case for Christmas", a 4-week DVD-based study looking at the evidence behind the Christmas story. This study is a result of Strobel's search to "separate the holiday from the holy day, the facts from the fantasy, and the



truth from the tradition". They explored

- What the Bible actually says about Jesus' birth and how we can know it is accurate
- Whether the Christmas story actually happened or

developed from the myths of the day

- The Bible's claim that Jesus was born of a virgin and why it is important to our faith
- How Jesus—and only Jesus—fulfilled hundreds of biblical prophecies about the Messiah

Please join us via Zoom. Click on the link below beginning at 9:00 a.m. (class begins at 9:15) for an hour. Contact Peggy (liebsp@gmail.com) if you need assistance in using Zoom. If you don't have internet access or prefer a different way to join us, you can also call in from your phone [the phone number is below]!

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89361830814?pwd=TkVnYlE1eDFrSTZiTiNiVjhxbFo5QT09>

Meeting ID: 893 6183 0814

Passcode: 477565

To join by phone (landline or cell), dial 312-626-6799

Special guest speakers during the Sunday School hour on December 27th

On **Sunday, December 27th** Mike & Nancy Mahon (SAM Missionaries to Peru) will be Zooming in lieu of the regular Adult Sunday School class. They have fascinating stories to share of how the Corona Virus has impacted the people of Peru and their ministry – you

won't hear this on the evening news! You can join on your computer, smartphone or telephone using the information below. Feel free to share this link with anyone that might like to hear about the Mahons. The link opens at 9:00 am, class runs 9:15 – 10:15.

Here's the Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89361830814?pwd=TkVnYlE1eDFrSTZiTiNiVjhxbFo5QT09>

Meeting ID: 893 6183 0814

Passcode: 477565

To join by phone (landline or cell), dial 312-626-6799

EVANGELISM AND OUTREACH



CANDLEWICK COMMONS

We made 42 Christmas bags to be given to the residents and staff (pictures are attached) and a whole lot of other very nice items were given to the staff to be able to assemble Christmas baskets as prizes when they start their Christmas drawings. You also gave \$245 in donations for this project.



Sandy Noland and E&O Team





There were approximately 170 Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes wrapped and sent this year. It was harder to keep count this year because we didn't have the usual packing party. There was also \$1200

donated for shipping costs plus some sent their money in separately. This was amazing! I don't think we have ever come close to that amount in the past.



We collected \$1,075.00, along with several gift cards to be given to the Mahon Family to use at their discretion. Continue to pray for them as they are home for a little time of relaxation and getting some necessary things done.

Sunday, November 8, SAMAIR Peru suffered a significant loss: a floatplane destroyed by winds.



Around 2pm a strong storm rolled in from the east. One of the wind gusts picked up the roof over the

floatplane and slammed it back down, crushing the airplane and damaging it most likely beyond repair. There was other significant storm damage around the aviation base but none as catastrophic as the destruction of our plane.

These flights have included carrying Bible school students back-and-forth from villages, transporting missionaries to and from ministry venues, and providing air ambulance services for medical emergencies. She can even boast being the birthplace of a baby boy during one such medical flight, as well as being used to rescue two missionaries who had been missing deep in the heart of the Amazon for over a month.

These and many other examples are why this floatplane is so important to the people of the

Amazon region of Peru. As I write this, there are multiple ministry teams depending on us to provide critical transportation into some very hard-to-reach places.

We are compelled to find a way to continue to serve. We are not sure how we are going to accomplish this. **However, we do know that God is great and that he can overcome all of these setbacks that we have suffered.** It has been amazing to see the outpouring of love and concern coming from so many different quarters as we have been getting phone calls and emails from literally all over the world expressing dismay and support following the loss of this airplane. Obviously many lives have been touched through the ministry that OB-1467 made possible.

Our immediate goal is to temporarily convert one of our two wheel planes over to floats to fill the gap until we can replace the OB-1467 floatplane. We will have to operate with a minimal fleet for a while until we raise the needed funds to purchase a replacement aircraft. We also need to replace the destroyed floatplane hangar.

- Pray for wisdom as we make big decisions regarding plans going forward, including assessment of costs and wise budgets.
- Please pray that we will not need to ship parts from the US to make this float conversion, which will allow us to get a floatplane back in service much quicker. This will depend on if the damaged floats are repairable with what we have here. We won't know until we are able to safely extricate the aircraft from under the collapsed roof. Pray for safety as our team works in these coming days to free the airplane.
- Also pray that the Lord will provide financially as we seek to raise funds to replace OB 1467. Due to sky-high insurance costs, our insurance coverage was minimal and we estimate it will only cover about 25% of the replacement. If you feel compelled to respond with a donation, visit SAMAIR Peru's ministry page at: www.southamericamission.org. **Your money is doubled when donated in December.**

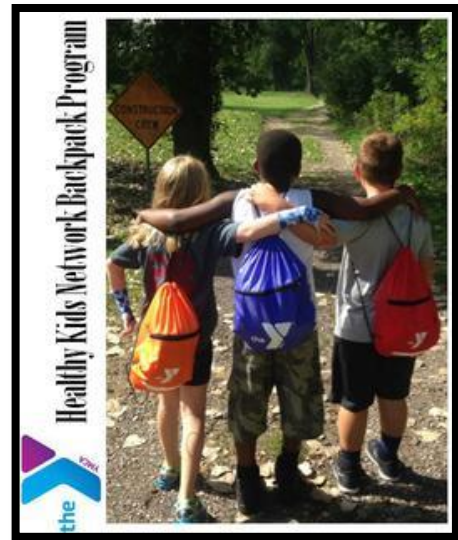


We received a letter from Anna Jackson, Director of Montana de Luz. She shared the following with us: Within 13 days Honduras suffered 2 category 4 hurricanes. 25% of the Honduran population has been displaced. They are living in churches, schools and on the streets. Damage is believed to be 5 billion dollars, and the death toll is unclear until the flooding subsides. 70% of the people had lost their jobs already due to the pandemic, and they continue to fight the pandemic.

The plans of Montana de Luz had been to reunite two of the children, Loida, 11 and Jamie, 17 with their families. Unfortunately, the roads to their communities have been eroded and their family homes have been destroyed. Their family homes need to be rebuilt, so there is no plan to reunite these families until there is a stable home for them to return to.

If you are in a position to donate, the following are sites to donate to this situation: www.montanadeluz.org/give or P.O. Box 410 Worthington, Ohio 43085.

As we enter into this holiday season, please remember our missionaries both near & far. Pray for their protection, health & endurance, as they spread the good news of Jesus Christ to those who live in the darkness; giving thanks & all glory to God our Father!



Dear Friends of the First Pres Newark,

The Food Pantry Network team of volunteers officially surpassed the 5 million pounds distribution today. Last year, as an agency we distributed 4,801,308 pounds of food. With the increase in food distribution to those families who have been affected this year by the government shutdown, layoffs and stay at home orders, our board and staff expected and began planning on making sure we secured as much food as humanly possible to meet that demand within Licking County. Today we can say that we have been able to meet that need and will continue to work to make sure we meet the hunger need throughout 2021.

We want to say "Thank You". If you are receiving this email, you in some way, shape, or form have contributed to our success. We have had donors step up and support our efforts. We have had organizations who stepped up to do additional services. We have had volunteers who stepped up and continued working through the pandemic so that food was still being distributed. We had companies, foundations, and organizations offering additional assistance to help us meet the need. The Ohio Association of Foodbanks and Mid-Ohio Foodbank staff have worked non-stop in helping secure additional food for our agency and those we serve.

I could not be prouder than I am today with the effort our staff and volunteers have put in to make the Food Pantry Network a success in serving the community.

Thank you for your part in helping us feed hungry families throughout Licking County!

Chuck Moore

Executive Director

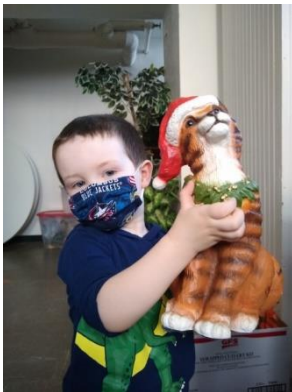
Food Pantry Network of Licking County

Phone: 740-344-7401

Website: <https://foodpantrynetwork.net/>

Donations: <https://foodpantrynetwork.net/donations/>

The mysterious Christmas Cat appears again!



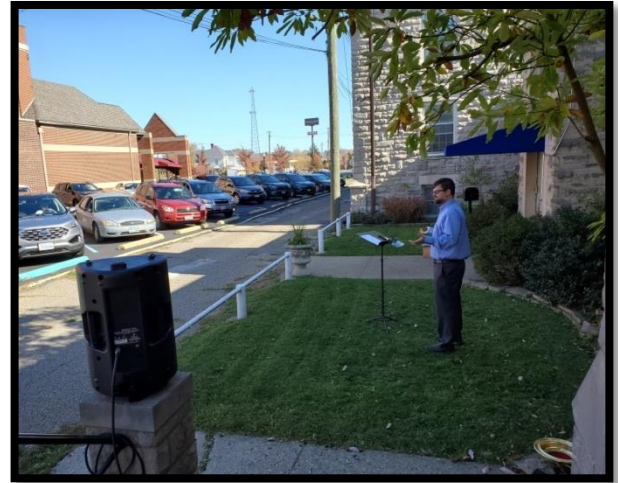
You never know where this infamous cat will show up next. Maybe under the tree, maybe on the lectern, in the window or tucked away till next year. I hope this brings a smile to your face, not a frown!

SCRIP

THE SCRIP PROGRAM IS CONTINUING EVEN THOUGH WE ARE NOT MEETING TOGETHER IN PERSON. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO ORDER GIFT CARDS, PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR ORDER AND PAYMENT TO PEGGY NO LATER THAN JANUARY 3RD. THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION THIS PAST YEAR.



LOOKING BACK



Drive In Church was a huge success and we want to thank Pastor Steve, Sam Lieb, Ed Jobs and Thom Ogilvie for all your hard work making this happen.

40 Years of Service Congratulations to Forrest Smythe

Ohio State – Licking County 4-H



Pictured are Forrest and his wife Thelma.

Forrest was recognized for 40 years of service during the 2020 Ohio 4-H Awards Recognition Event. Forrest serves as an advisor for the Licking County 4-H Band!

The recorded program continues to be available online at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b5SeSw2hzFc&feature=youtu.be>



Happy December Birthday!

Sarah Bowles 12/02
Matt Cain 12/02
Steve Keck 12/03
TJ Detrick 12/04
Ed Jobes 12/09
Tim Cain 12/10
Blake Brand 12/10
Keegan Hare 12/13
Diane Higgins 12/13
Sharon Wills 12/17
Noah Brand 12/23
Kim Dershem 12/31

Happy January Birthday!

Cathy Cain 01/10
Kenita Keck 01/12
Keith Hare 01/14



Happy December Anniversary!

Gary and Mona Clark 12/14

Happy January Anniversary!

Diane and Jeff Dodson 01/06
John and Carol Denison 01/20



SILENT NIGHT

SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT,
SHEPHERDS QUAKE AT THE SIGHT;
GLORIES STREAM FROM HEAVEN AFAR,
HEAVENLY HOSTS SING ALLELUIA!
CHRIST THE SAVIOR IS BORN,
CHRIST THE SAVIOR IS BORN!

SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT,
SON OF GOD, LOVE'S PURE LIGHT;
RADIANT BEAMS FROM THY HOLY FACE
WITH THE DAWN OF REDEEMING GRACE,
JESUS, LORD, AT THY BIRTH,
JESUS, LORD, AT THY BIRTH.

SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT,
WONDROUS STAR, LEND THY LIGHT;
WITH THE ANGELS LET US SING,
ALLELUIA TO OUR KING;
CHRIST THE SAVIOR IS BORN,
CHRIST THE SAVIOR IS BORN!

SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT,
ALL IS CALM, ALL IS BRIGHT
ROUND YON VIRGIN MOTHER AND CHILD.
HOLY INFANT, SO TENDER AND MILD,
SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE,
SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE.



Have a very Merry Christmas
and a happy New Year!