

# First Presbyterian News



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## Pastor's Column

## Financial Stewardship

When I was a young child, Saturdays were allowance day. Each child would be given a given certain amount calibrated to that individual's age at the time. It was the only time in a normal week we would be given any money.

That part of it was key because many were the times in our younger days when my brother and I would take our allowance with us and walk a mile to the Superette (a small neighborhood grocery store) where we would spend magical minutes looking over all the candy on display, joyfully and carefully calculating our options until we would finally decide on our purchases, typically blowing through our entire allowance. Then we would enjoy an exquisite walk home, devouring our loot.

But there were many times when one or both of us would arrive at home with all of our candy and all of our money entirely gone. Then we would be forced to endure seven long days before we would get another allowance.

That was how we slowly learned the finite nature of finances, the need to make wise choices and the power of saving.

There was another aspect of allowance day as well. In addition to the money each of us was given to keep, we were also given a certain

amount to place in the offering plate the next day. I suppose it could have been a temptation to keep those offering gifts, but that never happened. We understood that that was our Dad's money and it was our responsibility to give that to the church. So we would carefully set it aside and dutifully put in into the offering the next day.

Isn't that really what financial stewardship is all about? That is, a recognition that the skills we develop, the intellect we are given and even the life we have been granted are all gifts from God. Certainly we work hard to earn our money, but without those gifts, we could do nothing.

Despite granting us those gifts and so many others, God doesn't demand anything from us. However, he hopes that we will expand our focus from merely concentrating on our own wants and needs to thinking about and acting on the real needs of those struggling on the fringes of society. In fact, in Matthew 25, Jesus tells us that we will ultimately be judged on how well we treated others. As Peyton Conway March says, "There is a wonderful mythical law of nature that the three things we crave most in life — happiness, freedom, and peace of mind — are always attained by giving them to someone else."

## Upcoming Events in November

### All Saints Day

All Saints Day is an ancient religious observance that happens annually on November 1<sup>st</sup>. That's why Halloween — originally called All Hallow's Eve — occurs the day before. All Saints Day is intended to celebrate all people of faith who have left this world to be in the nearer presence of God. To use the old terminology, they have joined the "church triumphant."

We normally celebrate our annual memorial service on the Sunday closest to All Saints Day. However, this year — to avoid an overlong service with the memorial service and communion, I moved the memorial service to October 25.

### Fall Back Position

Daylight Savings time will end at 2 am on Sunday, November 2. That means you will have an extra hour to luxuriate in bed before coming to church, so you won't have to sleep during the sermon!

### We host the United Churches of Galena

We will host the United Churches of Galena on Thursday, November 6 at 10:30 am. If you've ever wondered what that organization does, this is an excellent opportunity to find out.

### Dubuque Rescue Mission

As mentioned last month, the Dubuque Rescue Mission no longer serves meals on Sundays. So we have now selected an alternative date for our second meal there this year. It will be Saturday, November 15, starting at 11 am. Signup sheets for those willing to offer food or donate their time to help serve the meal are available in the back of the sanctuary.

## November Lectionary

11/5: Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4

Psalm 119:137-144

2 Thess. 1:1-4, 11-12

Luke 19:1-10

11/12: Haggai 1:15b-2:9

Psalm 145:1-5, 17-21

or Psalm 98

2 Thess. 2:1-5, 13-17

Luke 20:27-38

11/19: Isaiah 65:17-25

Isaiah 12

2 Thessalonians 3:6-13

Luke 21:5-19

11/26: Jeremiah 23:1-6

Luke 1:68-79

Colossians 1:11-20

Luke 23:33-43

## News of the Family

A page of photos taken at the annual Oktoberfest included a picture of Rob Montgomery smiling as he poured a beer.

Ms. Rachel — Rachel Lenstra — appeared once again in an article about programs offered by the Galena Public Library.

Judy Hodgkin appeared in a *Gazette* photo taken at her basket sales booth at the River Ridge Craft Fair.

Jerry Howard, Commander of the Galena post of the American Legion, was shown in a *Gazette* photo helping to present a check to the Battle Buddy Boxes for Veterans.

## Christmas Sprinkles

Christmas Sprinkles was a benefit Christmas-in-October performance of a series of holiday vignettes, which were either written or adapted by Pam McKinsey.

The Better Life Players — an ad hoc group consisting of Henry and Lilly Beadle, Merle Henrichs, Jim McCrea, Pam McKinsey and Lori Moser — performed three shows at the old hospital's solarium. Two performances were in the evening and the other was Saturday afternoon. The goal of those shows was to raise money for the work of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. The local St. Vincent chapter works hand-in-hand with the United Churches and helps people in need. Here's how the internet describes their work:

"The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is an international, Catholic lay organization that serves people in need by providing direct, person-to-person assistance with basic needs like food, housing, and clothing."

Although attendance was poor at two of the shows, the group was still able to raise a total of \$1,080.

## The Spirit of Thanksgiving

Father, we thank thee:

- For peace within our favored land,
- For plenty from thy bounteous hand,
- For means to give to those in need,
- For grace to help in thought and deed,
- For faith to walk, our hands in thine,
- For truth to know thy law divine,
- For strength to work with voice and pen,
- For love to serve our fellow men.
- For light the goal ahead to see,
- For life to use alone for thee

Father, we thank thee:

Author unknown

## Thank you Letters

Dear Partners in God's Ministry,

Our prayers are with you during this summer season. In these months, many communities are struggling with the adverse impacts of gun violence, climate change, inflation and uncertainty. I pray for God's grace and wisdom as we seek to serve with energy, intelligence, imagination and love to address these issues in our communities.

On behalf of Ministry Engagement and Support, please convey our appreciation to your mission committee, pastor, session and congregation for your gracious and faithful support.

Because World Communion Sunday will be celebrated on October 5th, now is also a suitable time to ensure you have your Peace & Global Witness Offering materials. Your church and your Presbytery each retain 25% of this Offering while the remaining 50% allows the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate for peace and justice, nationally and internationally. For more information, please go to [specialofferings.pcusa.org/peace-global](https://specialofferings.pcusa.org/peace-global). To order resources or to check on your congregation's standing order, please call Presbyterian Distribution Services at (800) 524-2612 or email them at [pds@pcusa.org](mailto:pds@pcusa.org).

Thank you once again for your support, dedication and partnership in furthering God's mission around the world. You are a valued partner. As always, please let me know how I can support you in your mission and ministry efforts.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Lemuel Garcia-Arroyo  
Stewardship Officer

Office of Stewardship of Funds  
Development

(502) 919-1835

[lemuel.garcia@pcusa.org](mailto:lemuel.garcia@pcusa.org)

## Thankful

*This is an article Nancy Campbell wrote in 2007 for the newsletter of her church in Sedona, Arizona. As a result, a small part of it is dated, but I thought you all might like to read it any way.*

What is your Thanksgiving like?

For me it used to be a huge family dimer — turkey with all the trimmings. My mother worked for days to get ready for that one special meal and financially, it was a real hardship on the food budget. But because of her hard work and sacrifice, it was always a day to remember.

It started off with us kids watching the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade on TV, mostly to stay out of Mom's way in the kitchen. Since we weren't a football family, we would then be occupied with an old movie on TV — usually *The Miracle* on 34th Street or the first seasonal showing of *It's a Wonderful Life*. Board games also played a part in keeping us busy in the Thanksgivings before video games and computers.

When Mom called us girls in to set the table, we knew the feast was about to begin. We were not a praying family back then and did not even take turns telling each other what we were most thankful for. We just dug into the food!

I got to thinking about what I am thankful for this year. *[Again, note that this was written in 2007.]* It has been a rather hard year for me, health-wise, but I am still thankful for my health because it could be so much worse. I am thankful for loved

ones. I am thankful for my church family and my wonderful friends. I am thankful for old friendships now renewed. I am thankful we have a new addition to the family with another on the way. I am thankful for nephew Kevin's and friend Stephen's safe returns from Iraq. I am thanked that Kathie is recovering so well.

And I am thankful that I know Jesus. None of the other things I am thankful for could be possible without Jesus in my life.

## Records Review at First Presbyterian Church



Each year, the presbytery asks the Clerks of Session from each of its member congregations to bring their Session Minute books and their Church Registers to one of four locations, so they may be checked to see if they are up to date and include all the information that the *Book of Order* (our denominational constitution) requires to be included.

For many, many years in a row our church has served as one of those four sites. Before we offered to do that, clerks in this area had to drive a minimum of 1.5 hours to have their books looked over. Please keep these clerks in your prayers on November 1 as they perform this necessary, but less-than-exciting task.



## Voice of the Martyrs Sudan: A War on Christians

On April 15, 2023, two Sudanese generals who had previously been accused of war crimes began fighting for control of Sudan. Islamists within the two armies, the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), often target Christians while fighting one another. “You have advantage being taken out of the chaos in order to perpetrate direct persecution on the church and on believers,” a front-line worker said.

As fighting intensified in the nation’s capital, Khartoum, during the first few days of the war, church leaders quickly arranged for the evacuation of church members by bus. “I [did not] desire to leave,” said Musa (right), a pastor and senior Christian leader from Khartoum. The situation, however, quickly became desperate. So when a friend urged Musa to get church members out of the area, he directed them to buses and helped evacuate hundreds of Christians to the relative safety of the Nuba Mountains. Musa’s home was later bombed, killing two people inside.

### Refuge amid Ruin

The Nuba Mountains, a contested area in the South Kordofan



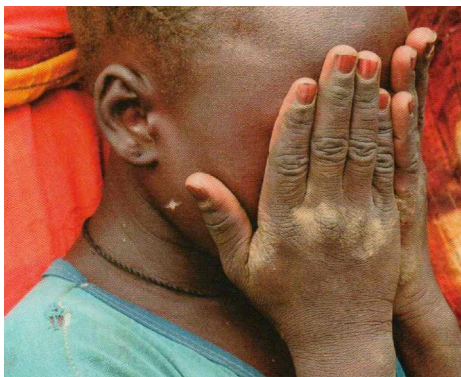
region of south-central Sudan, has a majority Christian population. In the 1990s, the Christians there began facing attacks from the same generals now fighting each other for control of the country. And in 1992, a fatwa, or Islamic legal ruling, was issued against the Nuba people. The Sudanese government dropped thousands of bombs on communities in the Nuba Mountains in the 1990s and into the 2000s, until a ceasefire was declared in 2005.

Many who lived in the Nuba Mountains during the government attacks moved to Khartoum

seeking work and education. But when the fighting began in 2023, they were forced to return to the Nuba Mountains.

An estimated 1 million mostly Christian Sudanese are thought to have fled to the Nuba Mountains to escape the warring factions in the capital. Today some of those who were driven from their homes are helping others in similar circumstances.

Still, resources in the region are limited, and life is a struggle. “We don’t have food,” said a woman with children. “We don’t have anything, we are eating these leaves.”





## Minute For Mission — October 12, 2025: Report on Dubuque Rescue Mission Meal Project

About a month ago, I announced that the Rescue Mission had discontinued Sunday meals with other churches taking over that Sunday meal service. That affected our church's project of serving a meal twice a year on Sundays. I asked for input from our members as to how we would adapt to this change and took their suggestions to the Mission Kitchen manager Clarissa.

I saw Clarissa at the Mission on Friday, and she was very grateful that we wanted to continue the relationship. I suggested that instead of bringing the food for the meal we are serving, we will donate \$200 from our COCW fund to help them cover the food costs for the meal. We agreed that our congregation will provide 6 volunteers, 6 cakes for dessert, 4 gallons of 2% milk, and hats, gloves, scarves to help their clients stay warm this winter.

We have two dates for our mission meals. The first meal will be Saturday November 15th to serve lunch. Our crew will arrive at 11:00 am to serve the 11:30 am to 12:30 pm meal.

The second date is Monday April 13, 2026, for supper. We need to be there at 4:30 pm to serve the meal that is 5:00 to 6:00 pm. We will bring the same \$200 check, volunteers, cakes, milk and underwear (new briefs, T-shirts, and socks) for their clients.

I will have a signup sheet for Nov 15th lunch meal to put out next Sunday October 19th for people to



sign-up to volunteer or to bring items.

Thank you for your willingness to continue contributing to this mission.

### We Are Peacemakers

In Romans 14:19, Paul calls us to know our neighbors, both around the corner and around the world, not as “them” but as “us,” friends and siblings in Christ. Pursuing peace is central to the gospel and the mission of the Church.

This morning, we are going to talk about amazing stories, moving stories of people who are living this call by pursuing paths to peace at home and around the world.

Chester Presbyterian's “Backpack Buddies” program in Chester, Virginia have partnered with an elementary school to provide backpacks of food for children to take home over the weekend — as well as a drive-through café that meets the needs of 90 to 105 residents weekly.

The Rev. Dr. Angela Johnson is the pastor of Louisville's Grace Hope Presbyterian Church in a historically African American neighborhood. She vividly recalls a time when as many

as four people in the congregation were affected by gun violence over the course of just one week. She led her congregation to connect with Guns to Gardens. This nonprofit program takes unwanted or decommissioned firearms and transforms them into garden tools, art or jewelry. The program nurtures peace and growth instead of violence.

Adriana Soto Acevedo is a student from Puerto Rico who is studying at Princeton Theological Seminary and destined to be a leader of the Church — about her life-changing experience at the United Nations' largest annual gathering on women's empowerment and gender equality, which cemented her commitment to being a “hope-bringer.” She says that by connecting with one another, by learning of the struggles we each go through, and by being there for each other, we bring hope. And bringing hope is part of our pursuit for peace.

Central to our commitment as peacemakers is this fundamental truth — peace is active, not passive; peace is doing, not waiting.

We are the Church, together, and we aren't waiting. Through our

gifts to the Peace & Global Witness Offering, we are able, as a single congregation, to actively participate in this larger work that we would not be able to do on our own. Our gifts will combine with churches across the PC(USA) to pursue paths to peace here and around the globe. Twenty-five percent of the Offering will stay with our own congregation to support our peacemaking and reconciliation ministries, and an additional 25% will stay with our mid council for similar work.

Blessed are the peacemakers. This year, this congregation gave \$570 to the Peace & Global Witness Offering. That is remarkable; thank you very much. Twenty-five percent of the \$570 stays locally and twenty-five percent goes to our mid-level councils (i.e. presbytery or synod) to unite congregations to support peacemaking in their regions. The amount of \$143 will be sent to Tyler's Justice Center for Children in Stockton to help them complete their mission. This reminds us that when we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.

Let us pray: God, you are the bringer of peace. Thank you for all the ways we are called to make peace in your name here and around the globe. Use our gifts as an offering of ourselves as we work for peace everywhere. Amen.

Nan Colin for the Mission & Stewardship Committee

## **An invitation from the Voice of the Martyrs**

Greetings, friend of our persecuted Christian family,

The Voice of the Martyrs would like to extend a personal invitation for you to attend our Regional

Conference at Crossview Church in Wisconsin Rapids, WI.

At this unique event, you will have the opportunity to hear firsthand from John Samara, who was arrested in Syria, Todd Nettleton, the host of VOM Radio, and other frontline workers who will share stories focused on the Middle East and North Africa. Come prepared to hear powerful updates on how God is moving around the world — even in the midst of opposition and suffering. We pray this experience will deepen your commitment to Christ and his Great Commission, no matter the cost.

Two different time slots are available for you to choose from: Thursday, November 6, from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., and Saturday, November 8, from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. We invite you to select the time slot that works best for you. This will be a rich time of fellowship and prayer as we hear firsthand stories and powerful updates of how God is at work in the Middle East and North Africa region.

For more information about the conference and where to register, visit [vom.org/RegCon](http://vom.org/RegCon) or call 800-747-0085. Space is limited, so we encourage you to register soon to reserve your spot. We would be honored to have you join us. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.

In Christ, Wes Holland,  
Director, Fellowship Events

## **Title**

Many years ago, in France, archaeologists discovered a series of deep caves which provided a treasure-trove of information about the life of the earliest stone-age

people. In the depths of one cave, the scientists found artifacts which indicated the chamber was used as a space to cook food. This discovery was mysterious and caused quite a stir because cave dwellers normally prepared and ate their food near the mouth of the cave.

The mystery was solved, however, with the translation of the paintings from the cave chamber walls. What was first believed to have been a “dining room” was actually a place of worship. The food cooked there was offered as a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and the chamber was actually an early church, or temple.

The earliest records and artifacts of human history witness to a great reverence for creation and for its creator. When the clan was successful in the hunt, a portion of the spoils was offered in burnt sacrifice as a means of thanking and appeasing the Supreme Being, who was the great provider of all things.

I suppose we can say that the practice of stewardship has always been an important part of what it means to be human and what it means to be in “covenant” with God. As Christians, we have additional cause to give thanks because creation has reached its perfection in Jesus Christ. God's love for his creation was perfected for humankind when the Word became flesh.

During this fall season we will all be called upon to make commitments as stewards of our time, talents and treasure. As we prayerfully consider our response, may we do so out of our own thankfulness and reverence for God and God's “clan,” the Church.

Yours in Christ,  
Gary Lambert



# THANKSGIVING POTLUCK DINNER

Join us in the Fellowship Hall after worship  
on Sunday, November 23, 2025  
for a Thanksgiving meal.  
The Church Life Committee will provide  
the turkeys and beverages.  
Those choosing to attend are asked  
to bring dishes that will go  
with that main course.





*11:00 am*  
*Sunday, November 30, 2025*

**Fifth Sunday**  
**Christmas Hymn Sing**  
**at the**  
**Lord of Love Lutheran Church**  
**219 Summit Street, Galena**  
**We will join our friends from**  
**the Lord of Love and**  
**the Galena United Methodist Church**  
**Fellowship time starting at 10:30 am**