



# The Presbyletter

First Presbyterian Church 125 W. Main Street Ionia, Michigan 48846 February 2025

## *Words From Pastor Chris*

### Growth Mindset

As I write this, it is the month of January, the beginning of a new year. January is the month in which we make those new year's resolutions. Mine have remained more or less constant in recent years: lose twenty pounds, deepen relationships with the people I value most, educate myself in subjects of which I have deficient knowledge, to name a few. Have I achieved success in these areas? Not entirely. Like most people, I make progress in fits and starts. Or, as my dad used to say, I take three steps forward and two steps back. Progress toward our goals is seldom linear, as we come to learn.

This prompts us to ask the question: Should we even make resolutions if we never seem to make good on them, at least not entirely? I think we should. Making resolutions shows that we are open to growth. They reflect what author Carol Dweck calls a "growth mindset." Dweck maintains that how we frame those obstacles that frustrate progress toward our desired goals makes all the difference. In her work with elementary school students, she found that children with a "growth mindset" saw difficult assignments as a means for becoming smarter and developing further their capabilities. In contrast, she found that children with a "fixed mindset" regarded the same assignments as a test for showing weakness and low ability. These children gave up and gravitated towards easier assignments to avoid looking stupid.

We should always have a "growth mindset" when it comes to following Christ. God's call to be holy and blameless before him in love (Eph. 1:4) sets before us a goal that we never entirely reach, at least not in this lifetime. We all stumble in many ways. But God's love picks us up and frees us again and again. We should never see setbacks in the new life God has graciously given us in Christ as cause for despair, even if those setbacks are severe. Confident, then, in the inexhaustible grace that God supplies each day, let us run the race in such a way as to obtain the prize (1 Cor. 9:24). Let us press on together toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called us heavenward in Christ Jesus (Phil. 3:14).

New Year's blessings to you,

Pastor Chris

## *At A Glance*

**Worship**  
**10:00 A.M.**  
**in the sanctuary**

Handicap Accessible  
via elevator

**Fellowship Time**  
immediately  
following  
worship  
in the Memorial  
Room

**Adult Sunday  
School**  
following  
fellowship time  
starting Feb. 16

**Holy Communion**  
First Sunday  
of the month

**Session Meeting**  
February 19, 2025  
10:00 a.m.

**Women's Study  
Group**  
Wednesdays  
7:00 P.M.

## February Mission Offering

Oh the first Sunday of each month, an envelope is included in the church bulletin for Mission Offering. The February 2<sup>nd</sup> Mission Offering will be designated for disaster relief help to those affected by the horrific fires in California. If you would like to help, please make your check payable to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance with a notation that it is for California fire relief. We will mail all checks and any cash that is received. If you would prefer to mail your check directly, the address is:

Presbyterian Church USA  
P.O. Box 643700  
Pittsburg, PA 15264-3700

## FEBRUARY Birthdays

2	Shannon Kohloff
4	Don Wilcox
7	Bill Robinson
8	Rick Steele
10	Kara Rogers
12	Sarah Sykes
25	Ella Hyland

## Budget and Finance Report to the Congregation, January 2025

This report summarizes calendar year 2024. Income and expenses are cumulative totals for the year. Assets, liabilities and fund balances reflect a point in time, 12/31/2024.

There is a projection of 2025 income and expenses. Finally, there is a sentence or two on financial review.

**Income and Expenses:** In calendar year 2024, income from all sources equaled \$98,725.60 which included \$4919 insurance to cover estimated replacement of the carillon. Total recorded expenses were \$139,043.43 which included \$13,500 to repair the north stained-glass frame. This equals a cash flow deficit of \$40,314.83. The deficit was covered by liquidating assets in the Edward Jones account and transferring \$33,000 to the checking account.

**Assets:** As of December 31, 2024, these were the assets of the church-

- Edward Jones account \$257,549
- General Fund Checking 6,785
- Kosbar Trust 107,190

Total \$371,524

**Liabilities:** Unpaid payroll taxes. \$612 (estimated 4th quarter payroll taxes)

**Fund Balances:** As of 12/31/2024, these were the fund balances-

- General Fund Balance \$204,342
- Memorial and Dedicated 56,700
- Kosbar Trust 109,870

Total \$370,912

**2025 Projection:** Based on actual figures from 2024 and known changes, income from all sources is estimated to be \$74,743. Expenses are estimated to be \$110,746. Simple math results in a deficit of \$36,003 which will be covered by liquidating assets if necessary.

**Financial Review:** Between now and the end of April, someone will check deposits, checks written and bills on file. Any discrepancies will be reported to session.

Alexis Parvin is our college student from First Presbyterian at Ferris State. Let's let her know that her church family is thinking about her by remembering her with a card or note of encouragement, or even a care package of goodies. She would be most appreciative of either one! Her address is:

**Alexis Parvin, 1502 Knollview Dr. #209, Big Rapids, MI 49307**



Pray for Our College Students

## Announcements

### Per Capita Dues – It's Not Too Late!

With the beginning of a new year, it is time to again pay our per capita to the Presbytery of Lake Michigan. For 2025, the per capita for each active member is \$42.00 (General Assembly \$10.84, Synod of the Covenant \$3.40, Presbytery of Lake Michigan \$27.76). For 2025 our total is \$2,142. This is based on 51 active members as of 12/31/23 and is due January 20, 2025.

As in the past, the Budget and Finance Committee is always very appreciative of members paying their own per capita. If you are able to do so, please indicate on your check that your \$42 is for that purpose. Thank you very much.



### Get All the Answers!

Starting February 16, everything in your faith will be perfectly explained, and you will have no more questions or worries about anything! Right? Imagine if it were *that* easy? We know it's not, but we often carry that unrealistic hope through our day as we wrestle with honest questions of faith and practice. It seems an easy question: How does scripture well over 2,000 years old connect to my day-to-day life? Or: How do I connect "Bible" with "This Afternoon?" That's what adult Sunday School Class is going to tackle! We are calling it "The Throughline."

Our *goal* will be to see and find the connections between God's Holy Word and God's Fallen World. And to see how we use one to help the other.

Our *method* (for the first little while) will be to explore past and current, creative and non-fiction thinkers to "weigh and gauge" their thoughts against what we know (or think we know) about the scriptures.

So, starting February 16, bring your heart and your brain, your questions and insights, and your hopes and fears. And your faith! We'll meet after fellowship time. We'll be in touch about the first 'thinker' that we'll read and discuss. Bring your friends! And suggestions!

## February Worship Volunteers

### Usher/Greeter

February 2, 2025	Steve Zeoli & Pam Rogers
February 9, 2025	Margaret Gregory & Norma Kilpatrick
February 16, 2025	Lee Hunsberger & Barb Klenk
February 23, 2025	Carol & Lew Campbell

### Communion Preparer/Servers

February 2, 2025	Cindy Rozich & Judi Emlinger
------------------	------------------------------

### Liturgist

February 2, 2025	Keith Sterner
February 9, 2025	Marilyn McKay
February 16, 2025	Kathy VanSyckle
February 23, 2025	Robert Sykes

## Session Highlights

### Session Highlights, December 17, 2024 Meeting

- In-home communion was served to three members on December 1.
- The new carillon arrived on December 14 and should be installed by the end of the year.
- The First Presbyterian Church of Grand Haven has again generously offered financial support for children from our church to attend camp.
- Zion Methodist hosted a combined Christmas Eve service in our sanctuary.
- Budget and Finance reported we continue to use savings to meet our expenses; but we are fortunate to have assets to cover these expenses and investments continue to do well.
- We helped three families over the holidays with gift certificates.
- Three elders will be going off session in January. Two are eligible to serve another term and have agreed to do so. One new person will need to be nominated by the congregation.
- We continue to have problems with our elevator maintenance contractor. Despite repeated attempts to contact them, they have not fulfilled the contract which was paid in full in November.
- Worship will feature communion by intinction in January and February. Session will evaluate the practice at their February meeting.
- The piano needs a new humidifier. The chair will get an estimate from Piano World and from Marshall Music.



### True Love

Many of us celebrate Valentine's Day in both fun and serious ways. Children exchange treats and humorous cards with classmates and friends; some bring home handmade cards for the adults in their lives. Romantic partners may go out to eat and present each other flowers, chocolate, a fancy card — maybe even an engagement ring!

As playful as Valentine's Day can be, it's also a great time to remember the serious side of love, as indicated by these quotes:

“When you love someone, you love the whole person as he or she is, and not as you would like them to be.” —Leo Tolstoy

“You don't love someone because they're perfect; you love them in spite of the fact that they're not.” —Jodi Picoult

“Love ... is quiet understanding, mutual confidence, sharing and forgiving. ... It settles for less than perfection and makes allowances for human weaknesses.” —Ann Landers

We can do the difficult work of true love — actions, not just feelings — only because God loved us first. He did (and does) so despite our imperfection, and in Jesus, God shows us how to share true love with others. This Valentine's Day, if you don't remember any other profound quotes, hold this one in your heart:

“We love because God first loved us.” —1 John 4:19 (NCV)

## **First Presbyterian Ruling Elders**

**Class of 2024** Jen Furman, Norma Kilpatrick, Linda Steele  
**Class of 2025** Marilyn McKay, Cindy Rozich, Dr. Warren Thompson  
**Class of 2026** Carol Campbell, Barb Klenk, Pam Rogers  
**Clerk of Session** Margaret Gregory

## **First Presbyterian Staff**

**Rev. Dr. Chris Dorn** Pastor Tel. 616-610-5982  
**Steve Slaughter** Custodian  
**Sara Hyland** Administrative Assistant

Newsletter, Calendar and more at [1stpreschurchionia.com](http://1stpreschurchionia.com)  
Email: [ioniafpc@gmail.com](mailto:ioniafpc@gmail.com)  
Church Office Hours: Tuesdays, Wednesdays 9:00-12:00 AM  
Ph# 616-527-2320