

Stewardship

The importance of the church's need for Stewardship lives with us year-round. As tax season approaches, for retirement age members there exists a pledge payment option of making a pledge payment by means of a Qualified Charitable Distribution from a traditional IRA provides a potential tax advantage than a cash donation.

Charitable minded individuals and couples have a tax smart strategy available to them with traditional IRAs: the Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD), also known as a charitable IRA rollover. The QCD allows a donor to instruct a traditional IRA administrator to send up to \$100,000 per year.

For those of age 73 years and older, IRS rules require an annual minimum distribution (RMD) from their traditional IRA. The RMD is taxable, however the taxable amount can be offset by making charitable contributions (QCD) directly from the IRA. The financial institution administering the IRA makes the payment(s) directly to the charitable organization(s) at the direction of the IRA owner. Depending upon income, this strategy combined with taking the standard deduction on one's annual tax filing can provide a significant tax advantage.

By having IRA assets go directly to charity, donors don't report the QCD as taxable income and don't owe any taxes on the QCD depending on your tax situation. Pledge payments to our church can be made using this method of QCD. Many of our older church members are already taking advantage of this means when making their charitable donation.

Mark your calendars! Our annual meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 1!

Help Wanted!!

The Community Engagement Team is in need of volunteers to help maintain the St Pauly bin in the parking lot. Please contact Sara Guppenberger for more information! Thank you!

Ms. Bridget's Sprouts

Come each week to join Ms. Bridget and her friend Sprout this winter! Sprouts is designed to enhance your child's early growth & development and increase socialization. Get ready to learn and have fun each Tuesday & Wednesday at 10:30am! See the calendar for details. Ages 6m-5y. Please contact Bridget Pacholec to register at 716-982-2000.



January Birthdays! Happy Birthday Everyone!

Barbara Ackley
Sandra Beers
Pavel Bittner
Connor Boss
Adelaide Byer

Lincoln Byer
Colleen Carlson
Shawn Gingerich
Wesley Hernandez
Richard Higgins

Lorny Hurd
Lisa Krieger
Addison More
Adam Murphy
Matthew Seifert

Mark Sleeper
Annika Spencer
Noah Suckow
Don Taylor
Richard Van Slooten

Join us for worship Sundays at 10am, in person or on Facebook!

The sacrament of Holy Communion is celebrated the first Sunday of every month.

The Chimes

Calendar

Al Anon:
Jan 8, 15, 22, 29, 10am

Back Row Boys:
Jan 7, 9am @ The Iron Kettle

Bible Study:
Jan 7, 14, 21, 28, 10am

Book Club:
Jan 26, 6:30 pm

Christian Education:
Jan 19, 6:30pm

Deacons:
Jan 27, 7pm

Ms. Bridget's Sprouts:
Jan 7, 13, 14, 27, 28, 10:30am

Session:
Jan 12, 7pm

Worship & Music:
January 25, 11am



Thanks so much to Matt Black for giving us such a wonderful concert!

December Fun!



January 2026

FPCEA had a packed December for of community, performances and fun! What a lovely advent season we had!

First Presbyterian Church of East Aurora

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A Note from the Pastor!

January 1 marks my one-year anniversary of serving as your pastor! As I reflect about the past year, I'm shocked by how much we've accomplished! I've gotten to know so many of you much better, and my main goal continues to be to get to know you all even better. As we build that foundation of trust, we can dream up new ministries endeavors together.

Our chapter together is off to a great start, and, thanks be to God, so much at FPCEA is working very well - many thanks to our many committed volunteers and staff. Indeed, it takes a lot of work for a church to operate smoothly. January is the time when our Nominating Committee dives into its work of finding new Elders for Session as well as new deacons. Each of these roles are for 3-year terms. Each Elder helps to guide a committee. Deacons assist with worship and fellowship duties, as well as offering care to our church family. The old saying always rings true - "many hands make light work." The more folks we have who can offer a helping hand at church, we function all the better. So, I encourage you to pray about possibly offering your gifts here at FPCEA. You might consider joining a committee or even serving as an Elder or Deacons. A member of the Nominating Committee may be calling soon!

At the same time, in an era of busy schedules, session is continuing our discussion of how we might approach the various committees of the church in new ways. Perhaps we need to consolidate some of our committees? Maybe we need to shrink Session? We want church to remain a place of joy and inspiration as opposed to a place of stress and numerous meetings. As we continue our discernment, it's always crucial to focus on what is truly life-giving and exciting at our church. Some of our ministries may lose their steam and need to lay fallow for a while. But, maybe a new ministry will be birthed due to needs in the community and the gifts we have to offer. Let's stay on the path together, trusting in one another and in God, that the Holy Spirit will keep creating opportunities all around us, no matter what the new year brings!

Community Engagement Update

December was a busy month for our Community Engagement team. Thanks to your generosity and proceeds from the church endowment fund, Community Engagement was able to send monetary donations to Aurora Adult Day Services, Family Promise, Peace of the City, Urban Christian Ministries, FISH, and the Tonawanda Seneca Nation. In addition, fleece blankets and personal items were brought to Family Promise to support their mission of preventing and ending homelessness. Thanks again to everyone's generosity, we were able to bring a car full of toys and gifts to United Christian Ministries. They were so thankful to have our donation! You have also continued to support those in the East Aurora area with food through donations to FISH! What a wonderful response to our community and to those who truly need assistance. THANK YOU!



Christian Education Update

A huge thank to all that helped with our December Christian Education activities which included pageant rehearsals, costume preparation, scenery touch-ups, Youth Group Christmas Caroling, and THE PAGEANT plus pizza party! We are blessed to have a loving devoted crew of all ages. The chaos of the season brought us together to celebrate and enjoy the wonder of Jesus' birth.

Our 2026 aspirations include:

- Celebrating and adjusting to the growing Sunday School classes. Kudos to our unbelievably talented, kind, and devoted set of volunteer teachers and assistants.
- Celebrating the efforts of the confirmands as they determine their next step.
- Supporting our Youth Group in potential opportunities.
- Encouraging the growth of additional Bible Studies.

As we flip the calendars, signups for teachers and assistants from January to June begin. Please consider supporting the children and youth by assisting or teaching a class. As I have said multiple times, it is an amazing opportunity for you to get to know them and vice versa. Assistants have no preparation. They simply are a second set of eyes and hands to help the teacher as needed. Teachers are provided with a lesson and have the freedom to tweak the material to best support their strengths. If you are interested in either, please do not hesitate to contact me at ce@fpcea.org, by phone/text 716-652-1556 or catch up with me after church. We have an incredible group of energetic children and youth for you to get to know.

January Events:

- Sunday School every Sunday
- Confirmation Class meets on January 11th
- Youth Group Meeting January 11th
- Wednesday Bible Study resumes on January 7th
- CE Meeting January 19, 6:30pm

Let's get 2026 started!

Book Club is Back!

After taking a hiatus for November and December, we will reconvene our book club in January! The January selection is "I Never Thought of it That Way: Have Fearlessly Curious Conversations in Dangerously Divided Times" by Monica Guzman. We will meet at 6:30 in the lounge. Join us!



Well, we did it! The 2026 Stewardship campaign total pledge amount received has reached \$206,272 and therefore we have achieved our year long sought after goal. This total includes 69 pledge units. Both the pledge dollars and pledge units are the largest amounts the church has received since before the COVID years. Congratulations and a big thank you goes out to all church members and friends that have made their faithful pledges which will greatly assist us with meeting all our church expenses for next year in 2026.