

A Note from the Pastor!

The Lenten Journey Begins...

The Christian season of Lent begins with our Ash Wednesday service on March 5 at 7pm. We'll begin the evening with a simple soup and bread meal at 6:15pm in Assembly Hall – try to bring your own table service (as we want to be green and have limited time for clean up) and perhaps a soup to share. Our Ash Wednesday service will include the imposition of ashes which symbolizes human mortality, mourning, and repentance to God. We remember that, "We are dust, and to dust we shall return" and so our journey to the cross and the empty tomb begins.

Lent is a special season of the liturgical church calendar that starts with Ash Wednesday and ends before Easter Sunday. The Lenten season commemorates Jesus' 40 days fasting and temptation in the wilderness. It is a time for Christians to reflect, repent, and pray as a way of preparing our hearts for the miracle of Easter.

There are several meaningful ways to observe Lent. Some folks choose to give up a habit or behavior during Lent as an exercise in prayerful discipline and self-reflection. This might range from something as simple as not eating chocolate during Lent to a full-blown program of fasting. Often giving up something helps to make us more mindful of the types of things we hold on to, put our energy into, and what may or may not be important in our lives. Other folks prefer to commit to a devotional activity during Lent—a daily Scripture reading, regular prayer, volunteer work in the community, or even committing to talk a walk with a friend every day.

The ways in which you may choose to observe Lent are up to you—the whole point is to focus your heart and mind on Jesus and your own discipleship during the journey to Easter. I would encourage you to try a Lenten practice. Whether you observe Lent in a small or a major way, you might be amazed at what happens when you devote a part of each day to reflecting on Jesus Christ, God's Word, and the many ways the Holy Spirit is at work in our lives.

Blessings for the journey,
Jesse

Aktion Club Dance!

We are mixing it up this spring! Instead of our traditional service with Aktion Club, we are having a dance! Join us in Assembly Hall on Wednesday, March 12 from 6:30-8:30pm while we dance the night away with our friends in the Aktion Club! We will have a deejay and hope you can join us for what is sure to be a most joyous evening! If you wish to help, please contact Darcy Sowya.



First Presbyterian Preschool News

-The Preschool is looking to expand their substitute list. We meet Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday mornings from 9-noon. If you like small children and are interested in being on our list, please call the church and leave your information with Annie. Thank you!

-Registration for the 2025-26 School Year is Open! Do you know anyone who is looking for a preschool home? Even though this seems early, registration for 2025-26 has begun. Please call the church office to begin the registration process.



Save the Date!

Presbyterian Women wants you to know about two upcoming events:

-On Monday, April 24th, a portion of sales from orders at Del Aureo's will support PW! Support their mission by ordering your favorite pizza and wings!

-The Bazaar is back! Mark your calendar for Saturday, May 17th and start saving your treasures. More details to follow!



Looking to the Past

A big thanks to Mark Dechert for sharing this picture he found on Facebook. This is what our church looked like before it burned down in 1933! After the fire, our current structure was built in its place!



March Birthdays! Happy Birthday Everyone!

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|-----------------|-------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Max Bindig | Charlotte Fischer | Jenny Higgins | Patty Patterson | Jen Suckow |
| Aurora Boneberg | James Griffis | Meg MacBain | Charlie Specht | Gerald Thurn |
| Heather Dechert | Mike Guppenberger | Nan Murphy | Isa Strzelec | |

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.



Calendar

Al Anon:
March 6, 13, 20, 27, 10am in the Lounge

Back Row Boys:
March 5, 9am @ The Iron Kettle

Bible Study:
March 5, 12, 19, 26, 10am

Book Club (NEW!):
March 31, 6:30pm

Christian Education:
March 17, 6:30pm

Community Engagement:
March 23, 8:45am

Deacons:
March 25, 7pm

Fiscal:
March 6, 7:pm

Men's Group:
March 15, 9am, Fox Run

Ms. Bridget's Sprouts:
March 4, 5, 18, 19, 25, 26, 10:30am
March 18, 6:15pm

Session:
Feb 10, 7pm

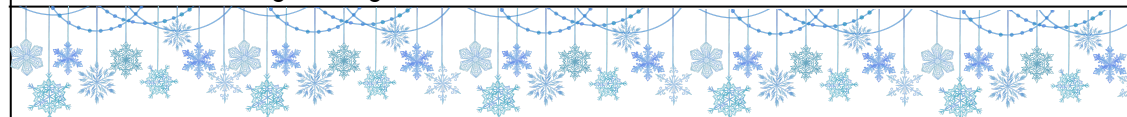
Women's Group:
March 19, 6:30pm, Favo

Worship Committee:
Feb 2, 11am

Christian Education Update

-BIG NEWS! CE is excited to celebrate lent by helping those in need. From March 5th to April 19th, we will be raising money to support Elikia (Helping Women and Children of Africa – Hope and Healing to Congo's Fatherless). Sarah Byer's friend, Nicole, is part of this organization that is changing lives of people in Congo. Sarah will be reaching out to Nicole to find the perfect use for the funds collected. As CE includes all ages of the church, we pray that you will contribute to this worthy cause. Let us be an example to all that helping our global neighbors is a perfect way to spread love which is the cornerstone of Christianity. Funds can be placed in the offering plates but please note in the memo line "CE Lent Charity "or on an envelope with the same label or hand directly to myself or a Sunday School Teacher. We thank you in advance for helping to make a difference.

-CE Schedule:
Sunday School Classes- weekly, Confirmation Classes - meet 3/2, 3/16, and 3/30, Bible Study- Wednesday, 5pm in the lounge (all welcome)
Submitted by Amy DeMario



Join Us for a Potluck Hosted by PW!

On Sunday, March 9th, PW is hosting a potluck after the service! Bring a dish to pass and stay for some delicious food and fellowship!



Book Club! New!!

Join us for our new book club! Our book for March book will be Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury. We will meet March 31, 6:30pm in the church lounge. Bring a snack to share. Adults and teens are invited!



Community Engagement News

-Mark your calendar and put on your Hawaiian shirt to escape to the tropics on Wednesday, March 12 6:30-8:30 in the assembly hall. Swing and sway to some tropical music and lots of other dance tunes with our friends from Aktion Club. We are hosting a very special evening with lots of fun planned. (Pastor Jesse will be our DJ!!!!) Please sign up to bring cookies, healthy snacks and anything tropical for refreshments. Come and make it a special evening with these wonderful adults with developmental differences.

-Thank you for helping sendoff 6 more very colorful fleece blankets to Family Promise of WNY. These are for the family members who have sheltered at Family Promise while getting resettled after being homeless. The comfort these blankets bring is much appreciated. Also, thanks for the help with sub sandwich making for South Buffalo Community Table.

-PROJECT 5000 2025: It is time for our annual food drive for FISH of East Aurora! Project 5000 is named from the Bible story in which Jesus feeds the crowd of people with five loaves of bread and two fish. That miracle can be relived through your generosity. The FISH food pantry is in need of restocking their pantry.

The food collection will run during Lent from March 16 until April 13. Please place your bags on the stage in the assembly room. If you are unable to shop, all financial donations during this time, will go towards purchasing food for FISH. Please make checks out to First Presbyterian Church and write FISH in memo or use the Mission envelopes in the pews.

*Reusable bags are highly recommended.

2 lists of suggested foods

2 cans tuna fish	2 boxes pasta
1 jar peanut butter	1 lg. can beans (any kind)
4 cans soup	1 lg. box cereal
4 cans vegetables	1 lg. plastic bottle juice (apple)
2 boxes macaroni & cheese	4 cans fruit
1 lg. jar spaghetti sauce	2 cans ravioli
1 lg. box cereal	1 Brownie mix
1 package of juice boxes	1 lb. package spaghetti
2 cans beef stew/chili	2 can beef stew/hash

We hope to reach our goal of 100 bags!!

Ash Wednesday

All are invited to our Ash Wednesday service on March 5; the service begins at 7pm but will be preceded by an informal soup & bread potluck at 6:15pm. You are encouraged to bring your own table service - a bowl, spoon, cup, etc. - and some bread or soup to share. However, we'll also have extra paper products, soup, and bread, so come as you are if the day gets away from you! As soon as we finish our meal in the Assembly Hall, we'll enter into worship which will include the imposition of ashes - and we'll officially begin the holy season of Lent.