

# FAITH HAPPENINGS

JANUARY 2023



## *Thoughts From The Pastor*

**BY PASTOR BRANDON KECK**

Happy New Year!

Here at NP First UMC we are eagerly looking forward to all that 2023 has in store for our congregation and community. From a youth mission trip to VBS to our weekly missions and worship, there are many ways for you to step into ministry and grow in your faith. As I do consider this New Year, I would like to reflect upon all of the ways in which God has blessed us through all of the members of our congregation. We look around and can see our church as a place that is full of life virtually every day of the week. Monday through Thursday we have over 50 young people who fill our classrooms and our hallways with laughter and excitement as Creative Fish Preschool prepares them for kindergarten. Further, we have 50 to 60 people who stop in to eat every Tuesday with our Supper Table ministry and those who get clothes at the clothes closet. All of this goes on without mentioning the two worship services that we have each week. These truly are blessings.

All of these happen because of the blessings that God has showered upon us especially in the form of this building. For generations we have called 201 West High Ave our home. People have been introduced to faith in Christ here, married here, baptized here and even had their funerals here. This is a place where people feel safe to come and worship, study scripture, pray and build relationships. It is a place that is under constant use and maintenance. It takes quite a bit of dedication to keep our facilities in working order. We constantly have to be on the lookout for things that might need fixing or replacing. One of the areas that the Trustees have been concerned about is our carpeting.

Carpet is meant to be aesthetically pleasing while also keeping our floors from becoming slippery and unsafe. Unfortunately, there are several places where our carpet is starting to bubble up and create a hazard. We have been regluing these areas because they pose a tripping hazard for all of us, young and old. However, the Trustees have decided that regluing the carpet is just not cutting it anymore. We need to embark on a project to replace the carpet and have decided the best way to do this is with two foot carpet squares. After getting estimates we have determined the carpeting project needs to be divided up into two phases. The first phase is the area outside of our Sanctuary. This area will require 300 two foot carpet squares at a cost of \$20 each installed. The total cost for phase one is \$6000. Phase two will be in the Livingroom and will be completed at a later date.

The Trustees would invite you to consider helping out with covering the cost of this project by purchasing individual carpet squares. This will help us to provide a safe and healthy facility for worship and countless other ministries.

Pastor Brandon

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brandon Keck".

# Congregational Care

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, Feb. 7th at 6:30pm in the Living Room.

If you would like visitation, communion brought to your home, meals, prayer, or any kind of support, please call (330-339-6411) or email the office (office@npfirstumc.org), and they will put you in touch with this team.

## Cookies with Santa

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! We had a huge turnout for Cookies with Santa. It was a great time of fellowship. We are so thankful to the church members who helped make it such a special event for our students and families! We appreciate your efforts tremendously!

We are excited to begin enrollment for 2023 in January!

Thank You! - Creative Fish Preschool

## Delphian Chorale Variety Show

The Delphian Chorale will be returning to its annual Rigatoni Dinner and Variety Show in the Life Center on January 21st at 6:00 p.m. The dinner will consist of rigatoni, salad, rolls, drink, and dessert. While enjoying your meal served by the members of the Delphian Chorale, you will also be entertained by a variety of acts performed by the students! Tickets will go on sale on January 8th, and can be purchased from any Delphian Chorale member or from Kristi or Abigail Prucha. The cost per person is \$10, and there will be a limited number of tickets available at the door that evening. All proceeds will go towards the cost of the Delphian Chorale trip to New York City in June.

## Preparing for Lent

It is time to start preparing for our Lenten devotional. You can start signing up for passages at the receptionist desk or by calling in to the church office. We would love for everyone to participate in our Lenten devotional - no special talents required.

### *IN THIS ISSUE*

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*KNOW SOMEONE WHO  
HAS A GREAT STORY  
TO TELL???*

Let us know!!

- email/call the office or Lauren Wilson
- lwilson@npfirstumc.org

# Outreach

- Thank you to the congregation for contributing over \$225 through the Noisy Offering in November. This was added to the \$1000 donation Outreach made through UMCOR to the crisis in Ukraine.
- Another thank you to everyone who filled a Share-A-Christmas ornament request this season. The Church was able to provide over 120 toys for the children of Tuscarawas County.
- The Outreach Committee would like to recognize the New Philadelphia Walmart store for their donation of 4 ½ pallets of new shoes and clothing to the Clothes Closet in December. Several church members were able to transport the numerous boxes from Walmart to the Clothes Closet. We will be sorting and distributing the items through the spring.
- The Supper Table continues to provide a weekly meal to the community. In November, the teams served over 350 meals. As winter begins, we expect to see an increase in the number of meals served each week. Please consider volunteering on a Supper Table team or feel free to join us for a meal every Tuesday evening from 5:30-6:30 pm.
- The Outreach Committee would like to thank everyone for their continued support and we look forward to changing lives in the new year and increasing our outreach opportunities.

## Christian Education

December has been a big month for the Christian Education and Youth Ministries here at the Church. We decided to move forward with a new Sunday School Curriculum that will start on January 8th. We hope this will bring a breath of fresh air to our Sunday School Ministry. We encourage families to bring their children to Sunday School every week at 10AM. Volunteers who are looking to serve in Sunday School either through teaching, craft, or being a helping hand are also needed.

The Youth Group finished its series on "Fiery Faith" and held a lock-in event on December 30-31st. It was an amazing time of fellowship and fun that will be a basis point for future events in the future. Youth Group is held on Sunday nights from 6:30-8PM and we encourage students from 6th-12th grade to attend. We are also looking for more volunteers for that ministry as well.

## BIRTHDAYS

<i>Beverly Milarcik</i>	1/3
<i>Georgia Marshall</i>	1/3
<i>Debra Burton</i>	1/4
<i>Terry Carpenter</i>	1/7
<i>Jeff Goddard</i>	1/7
<i>Pastor Brandon</i>	1/10
<i>Julie Watson</i>	1/10
<i>Judy Schrock</i>	1/11
<i>Kelly Price</i>	1/11
<i>Cathy Bleininger</i>	1/11
<i>Debbie Miller</i>	1/11
<i>Marylee Llewellyn</i>	1/14
<i>Greg Goodie</i>	1/15
<i>Max Carroll</i>	1/16
<i>Joe Hildebrand</i>	1/17
<i>Bill Harding</i>	1/20
<i>Andrew Kamban</i>	1/20
<i>Vicki Daniels</i>	1/21
<i>Karen Chaney</i>	1/22
<i>John Gartrell</i>	1/22
<i>Perry Hershberger</i>	1/28
<i>Stephen Sabo</i>	1/29
<i>Emilee Cardani</i>	1/30



## ANNIVERSARIES

*Jesse & Judy Newburn  
January 1st*

*Kelly & Sharon Price  
January 16th*

*Chad & Denise Cochenour  
January 15th*

*Stephen & Het Sabo  
January 18th*

## Christian Education Continued

In January the youth will start a new series on Learning How to Read the Bible. This will help our young students learn the ins and outs of the Bible, where to start reading, and the various literary forms throughout the Bible.

Lastly, the VBS theme this year will be Stellar: Shine Jesus' Light. It is a space themed event centered around how kids can shine the light of Jesus in the world. More information about VBS and leadership/volunteer retreat will be forwarded out to parishioners in January and February.

If you are interested or feel led to help with Youth Group or Sunday School, please contact Shawn Sullivan at:

[ssullivan@npfirstumc.org](mailto:ssullivan@npfirstumc.org).

## Christmas Parade

On Friday, December 2nd, the City of New Philadelphia had its annual Christmas parade. We served cookies and hot chocolate to many people! Thank you to all the volunteers that came out to serve or to just hang out and watch the parade.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Blood Drive

- 1/6 12PM - 6PM

### Church Council Meeting

- 1/18 7PM



# College Care Packages

We are planning on sending out care packages to our college students in February. We are in need of items to put into the packages. Here are some things that we would love to have donated:

- individually wrapped items like goldfish, cookies, popcorn, hot chocolate
- candy
- gum
- granola bars
- ramen noodles / cup noodles

Monetary donations for postage would be greatly appreciated as well. There will be a basket in the living room where you can drop off donations.

The students really appreciated the packages they received this past fall & they mentioned that they really enjoyed getting personalized letters in those packages. We would love to have more letters sent in the packages so if you have some time to write one, they would really enjoy that! Here is a list of the students receiving the packages:

- Audrey Garbrandt
- Mackenzie Fahner
- Leah Harmon
- Jayvin Herbert
- Emma Hinkle
- JaeLynn Marks
- Maggie Prucha

There will be a basket in the living room where you can drop off donations and a place where you can write a note to the students. Thank you for your help!

## Card Shower

There is a request for a card shower for Esther Cox in celebration of her 80th birthday! Esther's birthday is February 4th. Please help celebrate her 80th Birthday with us by sending cards to:

1446 Old Town Valley Rd SE  
New Philadelphia, OH 44663

## COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

### Staff Parish Relations (SPR)

- Jim Rice

### Trustees

- Mike Johnson

### Outreach

- Sarah Ghezzi

### Finance

- Jeff Goddard

### Church Council

- Brian Hanner

### Worship Team

- Shawna Hinkle

### Congregational Care

- Johnna Keck

## CONTACT US AT:

FIRST UNITED METHODIST  
CHURCH OF NEW PHILADELPHIA

201 W HIGH AVE  
NEW PHILADELPHIA, OH 44663

(330) 339-6411  
OFFICE@NPFIRSTUMC.ORG  
WWW.NPFIRSTUMC.ORG

FIND AND FOLLOW US ON  
FACEBOOK  
@NPFIRSTUMC

## ***Beautiful Reflections- Our Stained Glass Window***

**You may have noticed recently that our stained glass window received a much needed facelift on the outside of the building. While it helps make the window stand out more, it was done out of necessity to protect and maintain the window. A big thank you to Jim Foltz from Radiant Arts in Mineral City for the great work they did to make this happen.**

**We are blessed to have such a beautiful stained glass window as a focal point in our sanctuary, but do you know what the interpretation is?**

**The Crucifixion and the Resurrection- the Latin Cross was chosen as the main symbol of our window. This to most Christians is a symbol of "Finished Redemption" and is one of the reasons why we sing so many hymns about the Cross. Our window is designed with lighter colors of gold near the center of the Cross as symbol of the "Light" of Jesus Christ and therefore symbolic of his "Resurrection". The rays of light extend to all portions of the window - to all the people of this congregation and to all the peoples of the earth. The colors of red are to symbolize Joy and has depicted in this window that the resurrection was for all mankind.**

**Symbols beneath the window: in the symbols beneath the window represent two of the miracles of Jesus, a life that pleases God, and anchor of Christianity. The pitcher and cup are symbolic of the six stone jars and the cups used at the marriage of Cana in Galilee. In John, Chapter 2:3 we learn of the story of Jesus turning water into wine. This then is symbolic of one of the miracles performed by Jesus. The Loaf of Bread- being broken is symbolic of the "Feeding of the Four Thousand." A story of Jesus's compassion and refusal to turn away a crowd who had nothing to eat and were hungry. He sent his disciples to gather seven loaves of bread and few small fish, he gave thanks for it and broke them and gave them to the crowd. They all ate and were satisfied. An anchor of Christianity - the small Latin Cross, its arms are connected by straight lines representing the four Evangelists: Mark, Matthew, Luke and John. It is formed in the conjunction with the oldest transcriptions in the catacombs as a sign of the fixed hope of Christians. Hebrews, Chapter 6:18, 19: ".....hold fast the hope set before us, Which we have as an anchor of the soul, sure and firm...." The Basket of Fruit - symbol of the "Original Sin" or the "Fall of Man" as described in Genesis. This then is a symbol of life itself and can serve as a symbol to be thankful to God for our blessings. Luke, Chapter 6:43-45: " A healthy tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a poor tree bear good fruit. Every tree is known by the fruit it bears; you do not pick figs from thorn bushes, or gather grapes from bramble bushes. A good man brings good out of the treasure of good things in his heart; a bad man brings bad out of treasure of bad things. For a man's mouth speaks what his heart is full of." Therefore the basket of fruit represents living a life that pleases God. Stop by the sanctuary and see these beautiful reflections of faith for yourself.**

