



The Portage Presbyterian Church

December, 2022

"The Church is a people - and we are the Church!"



Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and peace!

"Reverse" Advent Calendar - Portage Food Pantry



You are invited to participate in an Advent experience unlike any other - a "Reverse" Advent Calendar!

During each day of Advent, the "calendar" will have an item which will be donated to the Portage Food Pantry.

You may collect your items and drop them off at the church during the week - or you may choose to wait and bring your items all at one time.

We will be collecting "food items" until December 24 - Christmas Eve.

We will have a "special dedication" of our Advent gifts on Christmas Eve.

If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Dave.

The "Reverse Advent Calendar" is available at the church and will be included with the December newsletter. If you would like an "extra calendar" to share with others, we can email or mail one to you!

Our 2022 Advent Theme - "Have You Ever Wondered?"



This Advent Season, we will "Wonder" about this time of the year - and "Wonder" about the story of how God brings the Messiah into the world.

And so, in our times of worship together - we will "Wonder" about such things as

Why Decorations?

Why Bethlehem?

Why Shepherds?

Why A Manger?

Why Me - We - Us?

O Come, let us adore Him - and Come, let us "wonder" together ...

"Decorating the Church" - Saturday, November 26

We will "kick off" the Advent Season with the "decorating" of the church on Saturday, November 26 - beginning @ 9:00 a.m.

"Children of God" of all ages are welcome!

Wreaths - and roping - and trees - "oh my!" are to be done. You can choose what you would like to do! There is something for everyone!

If you have questions, contact the Church Office.



Holiday "Soup and Bake Sale" - @ PPC - Sat, December 3rd



PPC's Presbyterian Women Group will be hosting a "Soup and Bake Sale" on Saturday, December 4 - from 9:00-11:00 a.m.

A choice of Soup (*Beef Barley or Chicken Noodle*) will be available in "quart jars to go."

There will also be a **delicious assortment of homemade breads - cookies - bars - pies - candy - and ???** available as well.

What a great way to "prep" for the upcoming holiday season - and help support the work and projects of PPC's Women's Association at the same time.

See you there!



Upcoming Sunday Worship Services

Sunday - November 27 - "Greening of the Church" Worship

"We will share the "Lord's Supper" during the service.

Worship @ 10:05 a.m.

Sunday - December 4 - "Traditional" Worship

Second Sunday of Advent

"We will share the "Lord's Supper" during the service.

Worship @ 10:05 a.m.

Sunday, December 11 - "Traditional" Worship

Third Sunday of Advent

Worship @ 10:05 a.m.

Sunday, December 11 - "Worship In A Barn" Service

@ Heinze Family Farm (W10027 Hwy 127)

@ 5:30 p.m.

Sunday - December 18 - "Traditional" Worship

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

Worship @ 10:05 a.m.

Friday - December 24 - "Christmas Eve" Worship

5:30 p.m. - "Candlelight" Service

Sunday, December 25 - "Traditional" Worship

Christmas Day

10:05 a.m. - Traditional Worship of Scripture and Songs

"Community Christmas Cooking Baking" Opportunity - Dec 10

We Are offering A "New gift to the community" This Advent -

"A Community Christmas Cookie Baking" opportunity



On Saturday, December 10 - PPC will "extend an invitation" to our church community, our neighbors and their families to come and "bake Christmas cookies."

- For those who have never baked cookies before, we will provide directions.
- For those who do not have a place to bake cookies, we will provide the facilities.
- For those who need "ingredients" for their cookies, we will provide what is needed.
- For those who need a special time spent together with their family, we will provide an unforgettable experience - maybe even a new "family tradition."

If you would like to come and help our "neighbors" to bake cookies, please contact the Church Office.

We will also be looking for those who would be willing to provide "ingredients."

If you would like to help (or have questions) please contact the Church Office.

Be Sure to watch the bulletins - emails - Facebook for more details!

"Christmas In A Barn" - December 11



We are delighted that Mark and Beth Heinze have invited *US* to share in this most unique and inspirational worship experience "in a barn."

Come and experience a "back to the future" **Christmas** as we gather with the animals to sing - hear the Christmas story from the Scriptures - and reflect on the real reason for this season.

We will gather at the Heinze Family Farm (W10027 Hwy 127) @ 5:30 p.m..

be sure to "spread the word" - invite family, neighbors & friends!

"Live Nativity" Christmas Program in 2022

"Live - in Portage - it's a Drive Thru Nativity!"

That's right - once again PPC will "gift" the community with our "Drive Thru Live Nativity" scene @ PPC - on **Saturday, December 17 - from 4:30-6:30 p.m.** - in the area behind Westminster Center.

Visitors will be able to "drive thru" (stay warm) and experience an inspirational scene which we offer as our "gift to the community."

This is an "all ages" type of activity - in other words, **EVERYONE** can have a part to play - and there are no speaking parts!!!

We are looking for angels - shepherds - a couple of Mary's and Josephs - animals - set up help (and tear down help too) - organizing costumes - traffic control - and "support" folks who will have hot chocolate and cookies for the "players" during the "shifts."

Please note: "characters" will be changed out in "shifts" - so no one will have to be outside "all the time."

If you would like to "be a character" or help out in any way with this "special Christmas gift" (or have questions) - please contact the Church Office!



Christmas Eve "Candlelight" Worship Service

We will share a Christmas Eve "Candlelight" worship service on **December 24 @ 5:30 p.m.**

A worship experience of Scripture - Song - Prayers - and lighting Candles will be shared in the sanctuary.

"O come let us adore Him!"



Christmas Day Worship - Sunday, Dec 25

PPC will be sharing a Christmas Day Worship Service of "Scripture and Song" on Sunday, December 25 - beginning @ our normal worship time of 10:05 a.m.

FREE Christmas Day Dinner



This will be the 24th year the Portage Presbyterian Church has provided a free mid-day dinner for people in our community - on Christmas Day!

With the health and safety of our church and the community in mind we will again offer our Christmas Dinner through **pick ups and delivery only**. Deliveries will be made only in the city of Portage.

Our menu will be: turkey, ham, mashed potatoes, vegetable, cranberry and rolls along with bars and/or cookies for dessert.

Reservations for pick up or delivery can be made by calling the church office at 608-742-6006 or Nancy Schaper at 608-742-7242 and leave a message and we will contact you back. **Reservations must be made by December 22nd.**

We are in need of help that day so if you are available to help please call Nancy. We will also need cookies and bars so call Nancy if you can donate dessert or have any questions.

"Check Out" Advent Worship - "Online"

Though we may not be able to attend the different worship services "live and in person" - you can participate "online - and in person."

All of our Advent Worship Services will be "live" on PPC's Facebook Page.

So, you will be able to be a part of "the Christmas in the Barn" service and "Christmas Eve's Candlelight Service" for example.

"Special Music" for Advent and Christmas

Anyone "out there" who may be interested in sharing "Special Music" during Advent and Christmas?

This could be "vocal" - "instrumental" - "ensemble" or "other ideas" you may have!

Contact Pastor Dave if you are interested - or have any questions!

"Come, let's make a joyful noise to the Lord!"



"Christmas Story Time" - during Advent

Join Pastor Dave each Monday evening during Advent @ 6:00 p.m. as he chooses some of his favorite stories to read.

You can watch the "story time" - either "live" or "on your schedule"

Each "video" will be available on the PPC "Facebook Page" under "videos."

PPC's Women's Association Updates

Thanks to all who donated items for Mary House. We delivered the items and cleaned there on October 15th. Cassandra was very appreciative for all we did.

Again this year we will hold a soup and bake good sale. We will have **beef barley and chicken noodle soup in quart jars for \$7.**

We also will have a wide variety of pies, cookies, breads, snacks and other **goodies**. Please come and purchase your soup and holiday goodies on **Saturday, December 3rd, from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.** in Parry Hall. We will be looking for bake goods donations so please sign up on the sign up sheet on the bulletin board or we will be calling you.

Thank you for your support!



Worship @ Tivoli - Dec 19 - "Christmas" Worship Service

We will once again share our "Christmas" Worship Service with the residents of Tivoli on

Monday, December 19 @ 10:00 a.m.

This is our "annual worship service" of Scripture and Songs celebrating the birth of Jesus. Anyone coming to be a part of the worship community will be asked to "check in" at the entrance and to "wear a mask" during the service (per Aspirus-Divine Savior Healthcare guidelines) - as will the Tivoli residents.

"Christmas Joy Offering"

A Presbyterian tradition for almost seventy years, the Christmas Joy Offering is one of four special offerings designated by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church to provide congregations direct ways of supporting specific causes that help those in need.

The receipts from the offering are distributed equally to the Board of Pension for assistance programs and to Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women of the General Assembly Mission Council to support Presbyterian racial ethnic education.



The Christmas Joy Offering will be received any time during December. If you have boxed church envelopes there is a Christmas Joy envelope included.

Christmas Joy Envelopes are also available in the Church Office and on Sunday mornings on the table with the bulletins. For those who receive the Newsletter by mail, you will find an envelope included.



PPC will be "stocking shelves" at the Portage Food Pantry on Wednesday, December 21 - @ 5:30 p.m.



Everyone is invited to come and help to make a difference in the lives of people in our community. Usually we will work approximately 1 hour or so. The more people we have the shorter the time.

If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Dave. Thanks!

Advent Devotionals are available at the church. You may pick them up on Sunday mornings in Parry Hall. Or you may stop by the Church Office during the week.

If you would like to have a devotional mailed to you, just contact the Church Office.





New Directions 4-H club is a very active group of young people from the area that meet together to share ideas, work on projects and learn great leadership skills.

The New Directions 4-H club meets @ PPC on the 3rd Sunday of each month, beginning @ 4:00 p.m.

Jen Martens is the advisor for the New Directions Club.

"Scouting" Updates!



Pack 70 - Troop 7070 - Troop 70 continue to be active in their Scouting experiences.

Among the activities in which the Scout Units have been engaged have been: **Selling Popcorn - Halloween Parties - a "Lock-In @ PPC - Advancements - "Rake A Difference" (volunteering to rake lawns) - helping with Eagle Scout projects of Troop members - Helping with PPC's "Harvest Dinner" - Having a number of Scouts advance in rank - Writing proposals for a number of upcoming Eagle Scout projects - having fun!**

As you can see, Scouting is alive and well here in Portage - and here at Portage Presbyterian Church.

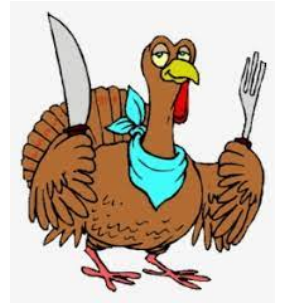
Offering Envelopes for 2023?

As we prepare to move into a new year in 2023, we are asking that those who would like to have **"offering envelopes" for next year** please contact our Treasurer, Rosemary, and let her know. You may leave a message for her at the Church Office or email the Church Office.

Thank you!

"Harvest Dinner" Wrap Up

This year again we had our "Drive Thru" dinner that was very successful. **Thank you to all who helped in any way.** Thanks to the workers who delivered food, sold tickets and directed traffic out in the cold. Thanks so much to the Boy Scouts who volunteered their time to help with the dinner. We served 250 meals and made a profit of about **\$3,000,00** that will be donated to the general operating expenses of our church. If you were unable to make it, you missed a wonderful meal.



Salvation Army "Bell Ringing"



Once again we answered the call to ring bells for the Salvation Army on November 19th. Thank you *to Pastor Dave and Kathy, Liz Bellmore, The Foster Family, Sue Goodman, Jean Oren, Tara Bandekow, Karin Hall, Lori Rogers, Rosemary Minnema, Laura Brenner, Donna Mohr and Nancy Schaper* for volunteering to ring.

If you were unable to ring on that day and want to donate your time, call 1-608-617-3237 to sign up.

Looking For A Special Gift?

If you are looking for a special gift for someone, why not consider one of "**Syd Jones' Photos.**" We have a few photos left that Syd had given to the church family to enjoy and share. If you would like to have one of Syd's photos, just check on Sunday morning or contact the Church Office

Important "Information and Activities" Around Portage

"Sharing Supper" Information!

On Monday, December 18 - from 5:00-6:30 p.m. - Portage's "Sharing Supper" will be serving the community meal - @ **Bartels Middle School.** - *Note the change in date for December!*

"Sharing Supper" is organized around the idea that it is good for people to come together - in community - to "share a meal" - along with conversations. Different organizations and groups in the Portage area provide the meals each month - ordinarily on the last Monday of the month.



"Kwik Trip" Car Wash Cards are still available!

For \$36.00 / card, you will receive 5 -
yes, that's right - 5 "Ultimate" car washes (normally a cost of
\$50.00)

If you would like to purchase a "Kwik Trip Car Wash Card" -
contact Pastor Dave.



Coming Into A Season of "Endings and Beginnings" - A Reflection

The season of Advent in the Church calendar is such a strange time. It is a time when we "look back and look forward" - seeing "where we have been" as we anticipate "where we will go next."

Much the same could be said when we talk about the life and ministry of the Church.

As we come to the end of the "calendar year" we take a moment to "look back" - to see how and where God has been at work in and through and with the Portage Presbyterian Church. PPC continues to be a strong messenger and presence of God's grace and love and peace through our mission projects, our participation in the community and our fellowship.

And as we look ahead, we really trust that God will continue to lead and inspire this church as we seek ways and means to share this "Good News of Great Joy With All People."

We are grateful for all of the "offerings" that have been shared this past year. Remember- "offering" is not merely our financial gifts, but the giving of our "whole self" (talents, abilities, time, presence among other "gifts").

God has blessed the Portage Presbyterian Church in many ways over our 172+years - and especially in these last 3 years.

Because of the faithful "giving of our gifts" PPC has been and continues to be "a place and a people" of hope - joy - peace - love - and fun!

But there is more yet to be done! We believe that God will continue to bless this church community - that we might be a blessing to the community and people around us - as we "look forward" to the work and ministry to which God will call us and send us.

Thanks to all who continue to make a difference by giving and sharing your "gifts."

Peace Be With You!

Pastor Dave

It is "easy" to make a "financial" offering
for the work and ministry here @ Portage Presbyterian Church

You may choose to



Mail it to the Church Office

or

Drop it in the "mail slot"



or



Use the "online giving" option on "PPC's Website"

or

On "Amazon Smiles" **amazon**smile
You shop. Amazon gives.

*Your financial support for the work and ministry of God in and through the Portage
Presbyterian Church is greatly appreciated!*

"Together" - we continue to share God's "Good News" in many
ways

and YOU are helping to make this possible!



To Contact The Portage Presbyterian Church

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Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/Portage-Presbyterian-Church-155581354519952

