



# FIRST LOOK

November 2023

Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church of Wheaton

## Gratitude

*"I thank my God always for you, because of God's grace that was given to you in Christ Jesus."*

— 1 Corinthians 1:4

Most days, I'm able to spend 30 minutes at the start of the day in prayer. Each day, this may take a different form including: praying while walking, journaling, and speaking audibly to the Lord. As a part of each extended time of daily prayer, I spend several minutes simply offering gratitude to God.

One of the petitions of thanksgiving that always comes to my mind is offering thanks for our church family. I thank Jesus for those in our church who have been members for decades, those who have and continue to support our ministries in countless ways, and those new friends who might become involved in our church any given week.

I especially thank God for the kindness you extend to me, Sarah, and our kids. Thank you for your prayers, generosity, and contribution to our mission of *inviting all generations into a growing life with Jesus Christ*.

As you probably know, ministry is difficult. Despite the challenge, it continues to be a joy to serve alongside our talented staff, many faithful elders and deacons, and the countless saints who serve in selfless ways.

During this Thanksgiving season, I encourage you to grow in faith by thanking God each day for his goodness, provision, and our church family.

God bless you,

Pastor Kellen

## Generosity 2024 Thank You!

In Pastor Kellen's recent generosity sermon series, we learned that generosity plus joy equals contentment. We are blessed to have a congregation that financially supports our ministries, and also joyfully gives of their time and talents.

If you have already made your pledge for 2024, thank you. For those who plan to do so, there is still time to respond as we work to plan the 2024 budget. You may complete your pledge by returning the Commitment Card you received by mail or in person. You can also fill out an online commitment form at [firstpreswheaton.org/generosity2024](https://firstpreswheaton.org/generosity2024).

Thank you for your ongoing prayerful and financial support of First Presbyterian Church of Wheaton and all its programs and ministries. We are grateful for you!

— Dave Trumpy, Elder



# Thanksgiving Feast

**Wednesday, November 15**  
**5:30-6:30 p.m.**



RSVP by Tuesday, November 14 at  
[firstpreswheaton.org/ThanksgivingFeast](http://firstpreswheaton.org/ThanksgivingFeast)

Join your church family for a celebratory Thanksgiving Feast. The week before the holiday, all generations are invited to enjoy this time of giving thanks while sharing a delicious meal. The menu will include a turkey dinner with dressing and all the fixings. There will be activities for children and a Toddler Corner for kids two and under.

Cost: \$10/adult, \$5/ages 3-12 (\$30 household maximum)  
Pay at the door (cash or via QR code when you arrive)

## Sermon Series



### The Power of Prayer

**Sundays, November 5 and 12**

In this two-part series, Pastor Kellen explores the impact of prayer in Jesus' ministry. Throughout the gospels, Jesus demonstrated the power of prayer through his teaching and healing. As his disciples, the question for us can be, do we believe in the power of prayer?

Be part of this series and discover how prayer can transform your life and energize the church.

**Week 1: The Potency of Prayer**

**Week 2: The Posture of Prayer**

## Advent

### Lessons & Carols

**Sunday, December 10**

### Christmas Eve Services

**Sunday, December 24**

**10:30 a.m. – Family Service**

**6:00 and 8:00 p.m. Candlelight**

*(Childcare at 6:00 service)*

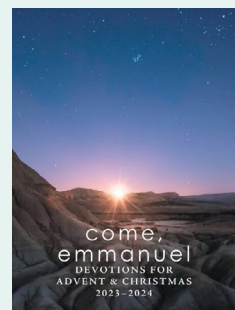
*In-person and online at [firstpreswheaton.org/Livestream](http://firstpreswheaton.org/Livestream)*

*Join us on Christmas Eve for Pastor Kellen's meaningful message and inspiring music.*

### ADVENT DEVOTIONAL

### Come, Emmanuel: Devotions for Advent & Christmas 2023 -2024

by R. Guy Erwin, Paul Hoffman,  
Stacey Nalean-Carlson, Lisa Smith,  
and Jeanette Bialas Strandjord



**Available starting November 19.**

Explore the Advent season and celebrate the joy of the 12 days of Christmas and the day of Epiphany. Come, Emmanuel includes daily devotions for the first Sunday of Advent (December 3, 2023) through Epiphany (January 6, 2024). In addition to devotions, the book offers household blessings and prayers to enrich your preparations and celebrations.



*Celebrating God's Love For All Creatures*



## BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

The “Blessing of the Animals” service on Sunday, **October 1** was enjoyed by many, as people met the furry companions of their church friends and neighbors. The event included a short worship service, followed by blessing lines, where pets received personalized blessings from Pastor Kellen and Pastor Kat. The beautiful weather added to the joy of the afternoon.



## Family Fall Fest!

*We brought the fun inside for this year's  
Family Fall Fest on October 15.*







*The Table has been a wonderful time of weekly fellowship and community. Enjoying a delicious meal, singing a congregational song, and hearing a brief teaching have been part of each gathering. Over 80 people of all generations were in attendance in each week.*



# Fall Concert

and  
Hymn Sing

Thank you to Dr. Tony Payne and the choirs from First Pres Wheaton, First Pres Glen Ellyn, and Wheaton Bible Church for gracing the First Pres Wheaton Sanctuary with beautiful music during the Fall Concert held last Sunday!

The concert can be viewed at [firstpreswheaton.org/livestream](http://firstpreswheaton.org/livestream).





# Women's Ministry



## PW/ Horizons Women's Bible Study

First Tuesday each month – 10:00 a.m. in the Living Room

Women's Bible Study is led by Pastor Kat and is based on the book *Sacred Encounters*, by Olive Mahabir. Join us as we study the power and presence of Jesus in Luke-Acts, and wrestle with the question "How can we go beyond a facade of caring to achieve true inclusion in our faith communities?" Books are available in the church office for \$10.

## Northern Illinois Food Bank

Thursday, November 16 from 9:00-11:30 a.m.

RSVP by Wednesday, November 1

Women's Ministry has its Northern Illinois Food Bank morning of service coming up, where they will be helping sort and pack food. Following the service time, there will be a fun lunch together at Portillo's for whoever is able to join. There are a limited number of spots available. If you would like to serve, please contact Erin Schnack at [erinschnack@yahoo.com](mailto:erinschnack@yahoo.com) by Wednesday, November 1.

## Cooking Class at Marcel's

The date for this event has been changed to: Wednesday, March 6 from 6:00-9:00 p.m.

## Holiday Gathering

Sunday, December 10 – at the home of Susan Drinan

— For more information about Women's Ministry, please call the church office. —



The Women's Ministry at First Pres hosted the Resilient Women's Retreat last month for the Synod of Lincoln Trails with over 50 women from the Chicago area attending. The retreat provided amazing food, beautiful decorations and was a valuable opportunity for women to come together and support one another as they explored stories of resilience. Thanks so much to everyone who helped to make this event a huge success!

The women participating had many powerful Holy Spirit moments of connection with God and each other that made the event especially meaningful.





# Abundant Compassion

## Matthew 25

We have accepted the Matthew 25 invitation to help our denomination become a more relevant presence in the world. We recognize Christ's urgent call to be a church of action, where God's love, justice and mercy shine forth and are contagious. We rejoice how our re-energized faith can unite all Presbyterians for a common and holy purpose: our common identity to do mission.



**Areas of Focus** • Building congregational vitality • Dismantling structural racism • Eradicating systemic poverty

**On Tuesday, November 14, we will be the host team at The Bridge, a 20-year mission project now supported by First Pres.**

- We will travel to 1443 Roosevelt at Ashland, in Chicago, carpooling from First Pres around 5:30 p.m. to arrive at 6:30 (or you can drive on your own)
- After a short training/update session, we will welcome our "guests" (some of whom will be new to the Bridge that night)
- We will participate in their worship service, then serve guests a wholesome meal that may be their best (or only) one of the day
- After clean-up, we should be on our way home by 9:30 p.m.

**THE BRIDGE**  
*get connected*

This will be an unforgettable experience. Learn more about The Bridge at [missionusa.com/program-overview](http://missionusa.com/program-overview). Contact the church office if you are planning to come. We hope to see you on November 14!

*Outreach  
Senior  
Christmas  
Luncheon*



## Serve Holiday Joy to a Senior

**Friday, December 15**

First Presbyterian partners with Outreach Carol Stream and Gary Methodist Church to host this annual Christmas luncheon at our church for the Older

Adults supported by Outreach. For many of these seniors, the event is the highlight of their holiday season, and for some, their only celebration. Approximately 125 guests will enjoy a traditional ham dinner, a holiday musical presentation by students from Franklin Middle School, and will receive a gift of office supplies.

First Pres provides volunteers who help with set-up/clean up, making food, serving seniors at the table, and making financial donations. A \$12 donation provides a place at the table and gift for each guest. Please make checks payable to Outreach Carol Stream and mail to Linda Hawkins, 345 S President St., Carol Stream IL 60188 or see the display on the welcome desk in the Rotunda. To sign up to volunteer for serving or cooking food, contact Linda Hawkins at 630/260-7600 or [lhawkins@outreachcommin.com](mailto:lhawkins@outreachcommin.com).

## Food Pantry Ministry

A big thank you to our church members for the unending support! We made many trips with carloads of food and personal hygiene items to the local food pantries in the past months. Donations may be deposited in the Rotunda any Sunday (and weekdays too) in the designated basket and grocery cart. Non-perishable food, disposable baby diapers, and personal hygiene and cleaning items are all needed.



**Food Pantry  
Ministry**





# Christmas Sharing

Financial contributions are encouraged before Thanksgiving, so we can purchase gift cards for families. Financial donations can be made at [firstpreswheaton.org/onlinegiving](http://firstpreswheaton.org/onlinegiving), using the Christmas Sharing drop down.

Donation of items may be brought to church between Monday, December 4 and Friday, December 8.

Christmas Sharing is returning to our church facility in the same format as last year. Please note there will be no collection of used goods. First Pres has set high goals to provide for 175 families and pray the congregation will be able to fully support the effort in providing for District 200 families in need.

First Pres will host families on Saturday, December 9 with the goal to provide \$15,000 in \$75 gift cards, winter coats (which were previously purchased on clearance) and new items from the list below. When you are Christmas shopping, please keep this list in mind with all of the sales quickly approaching for the holidays. Questions can be directed to Sharon Carroll at [smc803@live.com](mailto:smc803@live.com).

**The Portillo's and Panera Fundraisers offer additional and delicious ways you can support Christmas Sharing! (See promo codes below)**

Portillo's - Thursday, November 2 from 5:00-8:00 p.m.

Panera (Danada) - Thursday, November 9 from 4:00-8:00 p.m.

You're invited to a  
**Portillo's**  
FUNDRAISER

Join us at Portillo's for a fundraiser to support:  
**Christmas Sharing of Wheaton Warrenville**

When:  
**November 2, 2023**  
5:00 PM - 8:00 PM

at the Portillo's located at:  
**235 North Ave.**  
Glendale Heights, IL

20% of sales will benefit your organization. Order online or in app for pickup using code **PORTILLOS2** before checkout in the "Apply Offer" field, or show this flyer or a digital version to cashier when ordering at the restaurant. Valid on drive thru, pickup, curbside, and in restaurant orders.

**Portillo's**  
FOR GOOD

**RAISE SOME DOUGH**  
Help support us!

25% of sales will benefit  
Christmas Sharing of Wheaton  
Warrenville

**November 9, 2023**  
4:00 pm to 8:00 pm CDT  
167 Danada Square East, Wheaton,  
IL

In Cafe Drive-Thru  
Pick-Up Delivery

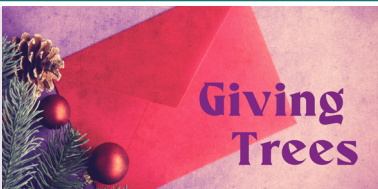
Enter promo code **FUND4U** at online checkout.

**Panera**  
FUNDRAISING

## New Items Needed:

- Toys for ages 2-18 • Twin sheet sets
- Queen sheet sets • Diapers size 2-6 • Wipes

**Sundry boxes and contents lists will be available for pickup starting November 5.**



## Christmas Giving Trees

As part of the Mission Outreach Ministry of the church, our congregation will be sharing Christmas joy with the annual Christmas Giving Trees.

The trees will be decorated and set up on the ramp soon. There are trees for Homeless Veterans, Marklund, the Care Center and children of Outreach Community Center. You may select a tag from a tree, bring a gift and place it under the appropriate tree. Bring your unwrapped gift this year by December 10. Gifts will be wrapped by the tree sponsor. Contact the church office with questions. Thank you for your generosity this Christmas season.





FIRST PRES PRESCHOOL & PRE-K

*Halloween is a fun and exciting time at First Pres Preschool! Fall festivals, parades, and enjoying seeing friends dressed up in costumes!*



## We had a great October in Kids Ministry!

In Sunday School, we are continuing to follow the story of Moses. We just finished learning about the ten plagues of Egypt. We caught and studied (fake) bugs, created unique works of art, told the story through creative drama and learned what finally changed Pharaoh's mind to let God's people go. Now we are at the banks of the Red Sea, trapped between the water and Pharaoh's army. We wonder what will happen next.

The kids are working hard memorizing their verses/prayers. Preschoolers are memorizing The Golden Rule, Kindergarten-2nd graders are memorizing The Lord's Prayer, and 3rd-5th graders are memorizing The Beatitudes. Ask your child to recite them for you and work on them at home!

Rain and soggy ground couldn't stop our annual Kids Ministry Fall Fest! We brought the beautiful fall colors inside and didn't miss a second of fun. Families enjoyed delicious food from Doctor Dogs, a bounce house, photobooth and the incredible Mr. Scott's Giant Bubble Show! Thank you to all the families that joined us and to the volunteers who helped make our Fall Fest a blast! We already can't wait for next year!

— Stacey Chvatal,  
Director of Kids Ministry



## Student Ministry Update



**WF wrapped up its' first series One-on-One Encounters with Jesus this month.** Besides the weekly programming, WF High School Ministry has been ramping up for the Fall Retreat to Stronghold. Having 19 students participate in this retreat, including 5 leaders, made it so the energy of the weekend was unmatched. The theme of the retreat was cultivate. With that, we learned about how God cultivates the desire in us to pursue and deepen a relationship with Him, how He leads us to fruitful friendships, and how he intimately holds us through the growth process of our faith. We spent the weekend together playing various competitive games between our small groups, doing team-building tasks, soaking in a beautiful fall weekend, deepening our relationships as a group, and motivating each of us to prioritize our relationships with God more and more.



**Genesis Middle School Ministry dove into a new series called *Beyond Belief*, where we have been exploring how God worked through Moses in the Bible.** We've talked about how, when you doubt yourself, God can still use you. And we'll see how, when you doubt God, it's okay to ask questions because God still offers guidance and always takes care of you. The Genesis group wrapped up the month by going on a fun outing to Sonny Acres Farm.

— Hannah Curry  
Director of Student Ministry





WHEATON COLLEGE CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

# Let the Stable Still Astonish



## Wheaton College Christmas Festival Concert

Saturday, December 2  
4:00 p.m.

First Pres Wheaton has reserved a limited number of seats together for the Wheaton College Christmas Festival Concert 2023: *Let the Stable Still Astonish* at the 4:00 p.m. matinee on December 2. This beautiful 75-minute concert is held in Edman Memorial Chapel on the Wheaton College campus. The seats are on the Main Floor and the ticket price is \$23.60 each (\$20 for the ticket plus a \$3.60 Wheaton College handling fee). If you would like to purchase a ticket (or tickets) to sit with other First Pres Wheaton members for the Saturday afternoon concert, please contact Debbie Veal at [dveal@firstpreswheaton.org](mailto:dveal@firstpreswheaton.org).

*We hope to see you there!*



# Handel's Messiah



## Saturday, December 16 3:00 p.m. at First Pres Wheaton

Enjoy this fabulous performance of Handel's Messiah, with a family-friendly sing-along Hallelujah Chorus. The Camerata Chicago Orchestra and Choir will perform the famous and celebrated Hallelujah Chorus twice, the second time for you to join in for a truly rousing finale to this fabulous sacred music performance.

The Camerata Chicago Choir features many of Chicago's top chorists, including these four excellent soloists:

- Olivia Doig, Soprano
- Kathleen Felty, Mezzosoprano
- Jonathan Johnson, Tenor
- Ian Rucker, Baritone

This performance includes a 24-member professional chorus and the Camerata Chicago chamber orchestra, conducted by Drostan Hall. [CamerataChicago.org/t/fpwh](http://CamerataChicago.org/t/fpwh)

### TICKETS:

Order your tickets at:  
[firstpreswheaton.org/Messiah2023](http://firstpreswheaton.org/Messiah2023)

Enter coupon code: FPWH  
for a 25% ticket discount



## Confirmation Sunday is November 12 at both services

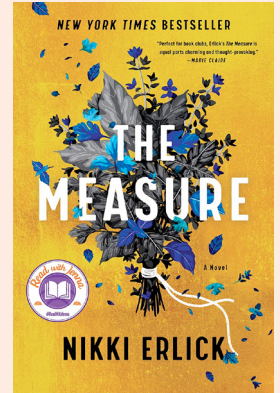
Join us for a reception between services  
to celebrate this year's Confirmation Class

### November Book Club

Thursday, November 30 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom  
*The Measure* by Nikki Erlick

What happens when you open your front door and waiting for you is a small wooden box. This box holds your fate inside: the answer to the exact number of years you will live. From suburban doorsteps to desert tents, every person on every continent receives the same box. In an instant, the world is thrust into a collective frenzy. Where did these boxes come from? What do they mean? Is there truth to what they promise? As society comes together and pulls apart, everyone faces the same shocking choice: Do they wish to know how long they'll live? And, if so, what will they do with that knowledge? Enchanting and deeply uplifting, *The Measure* is a sweeping, ambitious, and invigorating story about family, friendship, hope, and destiny that encourages us to live life to the fullest. Join your FPC book club for a great discussion with good friends.

Contact Mary Kinsey at [marykinsey79@gmail.com](mailto:marykinsey79@gmail.com) for the Zoom link.



See the online calendar for up-to-date  
listings of church events and meetings.

[firstpreswheaton.org/calendar](http://firstpreswheaton.org/calendar)

### Church Office Hours

Monday through Thursday – 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Friday – 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

You can give to the ministry of First Pres  
quickly and easily by scanning this QR code  
with your smartphone camera app.



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