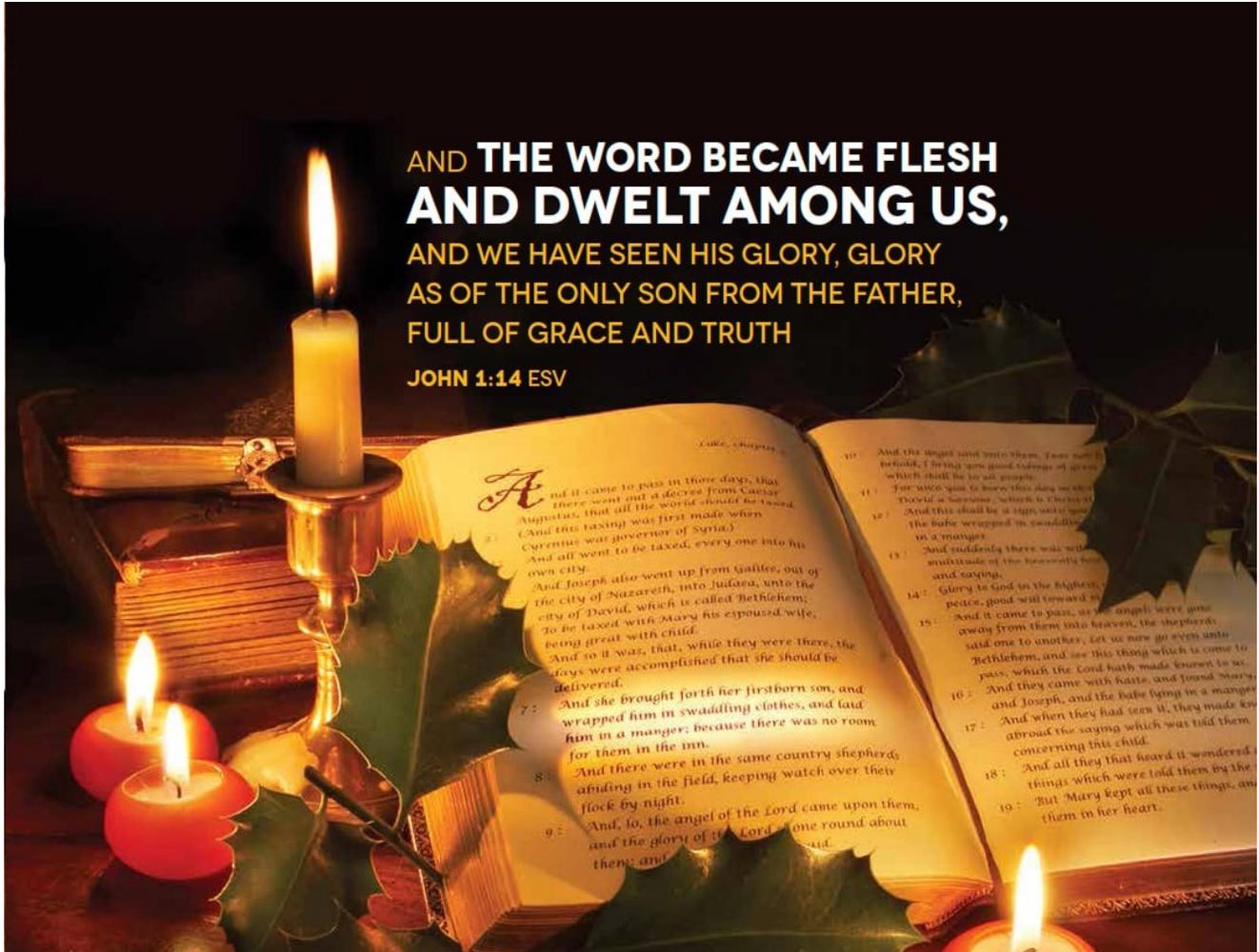


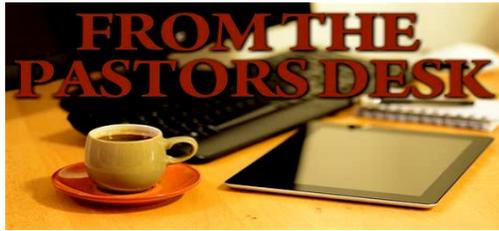
The Evangel

AND THE WORD BECAME FLESH
AND DWELT AMONG US,
AND WE HAVE SEEN HIS GLORY, GLORY
AS OF THE ONLY SON FROM THE FATHER,
FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH

JOHN 1:14 ESV



THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
DECEMBER 2025



“Let Him Love You”

I recently came across this quote which spoke to me:

If God was willing to wrap himself in rags and drink from a mother's breast, then all questions about his love for you are off the table.

There is no place he will not go. If he is willing to be born in a barnyard, then expect him to be at work anywhere – bars, bedrooms, boardrooms, and brothels. No place is too common. No person is too hardened. No distance is too far. There is no person he cannot reach. There is no limit to his love.

When Christ was born, so was our hope.

This is why I love Christmas. The event invites us to believe the wildest of promises: God became one of us so we could become one with him. He did away with every barrier, fence, sin, bent, debt, and grave. Anything that might keep us from him was demolished. He only awaits our word to walk through the door.

Invite him in. Let him love you.¹

That really is the phenomenal Good News of this Advent and Christmas season we are entering: *God became one of us so that we could become one with Him!* And the things that He did to become one of us: becoming a fetus in Mary's womb, submitting to the mess and indignity of being born – in a barn, no less! – of growing up, and then ultimately, of dying . . . all so we could know Him and love Him again . . . well, it's incredible to think about! Think of God having to have His diaper changed! Think of God learning to crawl! Think of God getting the hiccups, God being put down for a nap, God learning the alphabet, God becoming an apprentice so he can learn a trade! God did all of this so that He could truly be *Emmanuel – God With Us!* And God did all of this so that we could truly be with Him as we were meant to be!

Perhaps this is why I get so grouchy when I see the Christmas season turned into something else. God became a human being, and yet we want to turn this into a winter retail holiday! God became a human being, and yet we want to celebrate Santa and the Grinch and Rudolph and Frosty the Snowman! God became a human being, and yet we turn this season into an onslaught of cloying clichés like “Christmas is really all about the children,” or “be good for goodness' sake!” or “have a cup of Christmas cheer.” Listen, I like Christmas cookies and family togetherness and presents as much as the next guy, but when it all comes down to it, this season isn't about any of those things. It's about Jesus. It's about how God so loved the world that He gave us His one and only Son, wrapped in our human flesh, coming to make His dwelling here among us. If we miss that, then we've missed everything.

Will you miss that this year? Will you miss the tremendous, incredible honor our God paid us because you were too busy, too distracted, too stressed to really see it? Or will you take this time to “prepare the way of the Lord,” to prepare yourself to again invite Him in so you can bask in His love and His grace? The choice is yours. Choose wisely!

To Him alone be the glory!

In Christ’s Love,

Joshua

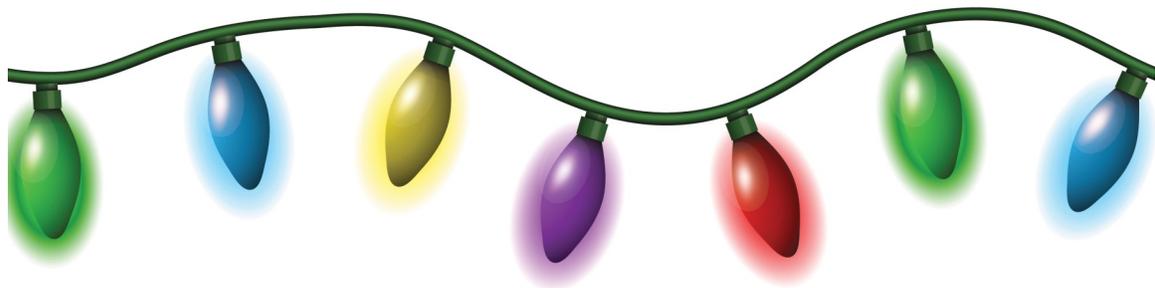
¹This is from a Max Lucado devotion that I used several years ago. I copied the page and saved it to use later – but unfortunately, I did not include a reference on it. All I know is that it’s a quote from Lucado’s book *Because of Bethlehem*. My apologies to any who wanted to do the work to chase the work down to read!

Advent continues throughout the month of December. Plan to join us in worship as we again “prepare the way of the Lord” with worship and repentance! Also, if you have not picked up our free Advent devotions to help you with your preparation for Christmas, be sure to do so! If you have any questions, please call the church office.



Library News

Mark your calendars! On December 7th, there will be a Library Christmas Open House in our church’s main library. The open house will take place after the 10:45 service. Stop by and see all the new books that have been added, book club picks, plus some old favorites. Also pick up a sweet treat! Reminder: Our Library Book Club will be held on Tuesday, January 20th from 10am to noon. Hope you are able to pick out a book from our Library and join in the fun. Any questions, please contact Phyllis Pridemore.





Coffee & Tea With the Pastor

Coffee and Tea with the Pastor Continues on a New Day! Coffee and Tea with the Pastor has moved now to the *third* Wednesday of each month - so join us on Wednesday, **December 17** from 2-4pm at the Coffee Peddler downtown (112 Harrison Avenue). We meet from 2pm - 4pm (you are welcome for all of that time, or can come and go for a portion of it!) when we will enjoy fellowship, good discussion, and delicious caffeinated beverages! All are welcome!



Calling All Prayer Warriors!

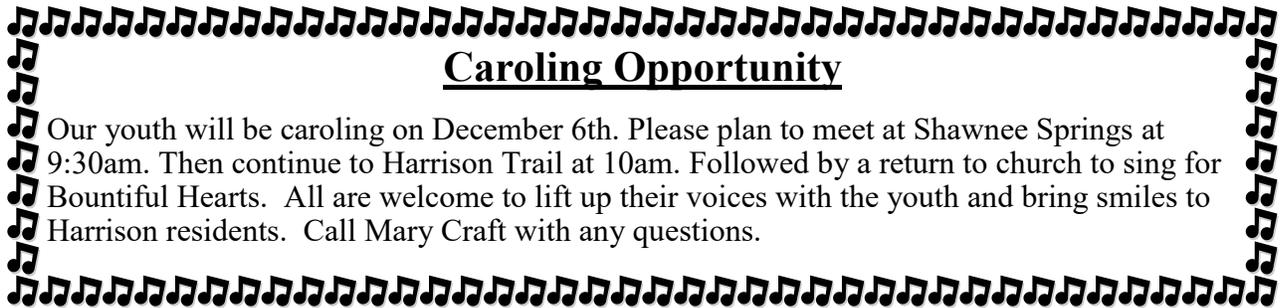
Join us each Wednesday at noon in the church library as we lift up our world, our church, and all our other joys and concerns in prayer. All are welcome! See you here!

Christmas Program



It's time to get ready for our annual **Christmas Program!** Make plans now to join us on Sunday, December 7 at 6pm in the Sanctuary as we see both kids and adults use their talents to help us get ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus. And if you have a talent to share (a song, a skit, a reading, or something else entirely!), see Beth Snape to get in

the program. Light refreshments will follow in Faith Hall. If you have any questions, see Mary Craft or Rebecca Scherzinger.



Caroling Opportunity

Our youth will be caroling on December 6th. Please plan to meet at Shawnee Springs at 9:30am. Then continue to Harrison Trail at 10am. Followed by a return to church to sing for Bountiful Hearts. All are welcome to lift up their voices with the youth and bring smiles to Harrison residents. Call Mary Craft with any questions.

Let us Pray!

For our final monthly prayer focus for the year, we will be joining together to pray for all the folks our congregation members will be inviting to join us for our Advent and Christmas worship services. This is a wonderfully convenient time to invite your family members, your co-workers, your neighbors, and your friends and acquaintances to come join with you in worshiping Christ, the Newborn King! Let's pray that those invitations will be accepted, and that when folks join us in worship, that God moves in their hearts to draw them to Him! Let us pray!

“Once in our world, a stable had something in it that was bigger than our whole world.” - C.S. Lewis



The Pastor's Bible Study Continues!

Studying God's Word is one of the most important –and most valuable!-things we do together as a congregation. Whether you're a Bible scholar or a Bible newbie, plan now to join us every Monday at 7pm in the Conference Room. This month, we will wrap up the Letter to the Hebrews, and will begin Paul's letters to the Thessalonians. Our lessons are relaxed and (hopefully!) informative - and quite often, we have tasty treats to share! All are welcome.

Join us for our special **Christmas Eve Candlelight Services** this year! We will again offer two different services on December 24 - at 7pm and 11pm. During our 7pm service, Joshua will preach and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be celebrated; our 11pm service will feature Lessons and Carols, and a special anthem by the choir. Candlelighting will be featured at both services. Who will you invite to join you in worship this year? We hope to see you at one or both services this year!

Christmas Eve



Women's Association Annual Christmas Lunch & Auction

Mark your calendar for Thursday, December 4th at noon when the Women's Association Annual Christmas Luncheon and Auction will be held in Faith Hall. Bring an hors d'oeuvres to share and a wrapped gift to auction. All women are invited to attend this fun event!



Graduation Sunday is December 14. Join us in worship at 10:45 as we celebrate our two college graduates - Charlie Steuver and Jenna Walton!

**TWO CENTS A MEAL COLLECTION IS
December 14**

Please look for the gold pots at both entrances to the sanctuary to place your monthly donations. If you are not able to make it to a service, please feel free to mail your donation to the church. It goes to a good cause of helping feed the hungry. As always, thanks for your generous donations.

~ The Mission Committee



Four ways to watch our service:

**Church
Secretary**



During the service live-stream our 10:45 service each Sunday on our church website (harrisonpresbyterian.com) using the link.

After the service is over:

- Send an email to video@harrisonpresbyterian.com to receive a link to the full service.
- Watch the sermon on our YouTube channel- "First Presbyterian Church of Harrison, OH."
- Call the Office to have a DVD prepared for you.

Healing Prayer is available upon request. All who wish to receive anointing, the laying on of hands, and prayers for healing are welcome to call the church office.



Meal Ministry

Our free community meal, **Bountiful Hearts**, continues on the first Saturday of every month. Our next meal will be on Saturday, **December 6** from 11am – 1pm here at our church.

We will need **donations of dessert items**, either homemade or from the bakery/grocery store. Please let Tamela Hinson or Christine Luca know if you would like to volunteer; **we also need drivers**. We greatly appreciate your donations, both of time and financial contributions; they are what make this meal possible.

“How many observe Christ’s birthday! How few, His precepts! O! ‘tis easier to keep holidays than commandments.” -Benjamin Franklin

Looking Ahead to...

January

- **Epiphany Sunday** is January 4. Join us in worship as we remember the coming of the Magi to worship Jesus. All are welcome!
- **Necrology Sunday** is January 11. Be sure to come worship with us as we remember those from our number who went to their eternal reward in 2025. See you there!
- We will have a **congregational meeting**, probably sometime in January, for the purpose of approving the pastor's terms of call, electing the 2026 Nominating Committee, receiving the 2026 budget, and receiving the 2025 Annual Report. Watch this space and the bulletin for more information! All active members are encouraged to attend.
- Also watch this space and the bulletin for more information on our pastor's **installation service**, which will probably be sometime in January. This will be the final step in our journey to become a part of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC). There will be a celebration to follow this service - make plans to join us!
- The **giving statements for 2025** will be available by January 31, 2026. They will be available to pick up in Faith Hall on February 1st.



SM The **Soup-er Bowl** is coming! All through January and the beginning of February, we will be collecting cans of soup to re-stock the shelves of our local food pantries! Last year, we collected over 1,100 cans of soup! - do you think we can do that this year? All cans of soup are due by Sunday, February 8th, the date of the Super Bowl! Thanks for your generosity!



Our Newly Elected Officers

We would like to thank our newly elected officers for stepping forward and answering God's call to serve our congregation! Our Class of 2028 Elders are Doug Jones, Becky Hayes-Heckman and Jeff Anders. The Class of 2028 Deacons are Debbie McCane, Lisa Steuver and Pam Fury.

Pastor is on Vacation



The **pastor will be on vacation** from December 25 - January 1. If you have a pastoral care need during this time, please contact the church office and Judy will put you in touch with a local pastor. Be sure to join us on Sunday, December 28 as our own Olivia Steuver fills the pulpit for us. Reminder - there is **NO 8:30 SERVICE ON 12/28** and **NO PASTOR'S BIBLE STUDY** on 12/29.

Young Youth Group

Come and join us on January 11th, February 8th and March 8th as we explore our faith. If you have any questions, contact Mary Craft.



“The inn was full...There are many of you who think of yourselves: ‘If only I had been there! How quick I would have been to help the Baby!’ Why don’t you do it now? You have Christ in your neighbor. You ought to serve your neighbor, for what you do to your neighbor in need you do to the Lord Christ Himself.” - Martin Luther, from his 1543 Christmas sermon



We are called to love God and to love people. Our generous, caring church family did just that for Sybil Kindred last week! We delivered flowers, a donated Longaberger serving basket filled with an abundance of thoughtful gifts, including a lovely Fenton glass bowl we filled with homemade soaps, homemade lip balm and a tin of homemade salve for soft skin, in addition to, a wonderfully fragrant lemon candle, magazines, a puzzle book, many toiletries, fluffy warm socks and tea bags & honey. The Kroger gift card was a big hit! \$200 still buys a lot of food!

Giving back to someone who has given so much to others is a true JOY!! I know Sybil feels our prayers and our love. Her hip surgery went well. The doctors kept her overnight on the 11th. Thankfully, Sybil was due to go to her daughter's (Kristy) home to recuperate and do in-home physical therapy. From the bottom of my heart, I thank you for your loving, kind generosity and I praise God for our church family who puts love into action. “They will know we are Christians by our love...”

- With Love and GRATITUDE, Linda Hellmann



Online Giving is available for First Presbyterian Church. Since our original giving platform was through PC(USA), we have developed a new online giving account. The new account is on our website: harrisonpresbyterian.com at the GIVE NOW button. The new QR Code is below.



If you have been giving through the original online giving platform you need to IMMEDIATELY switch to the new online giving platform. Erwin J. Hein (513-608-1090) will walk you through the steps to cancel your giving under the original platform and to input your giving on the new online giving account.



Weekly Offering

Your new 2026 **Offering Labels** will be available for pick-up on December 24 and 28. If you are unable to pick up your new labels, please contact the church office to make other arrangements.



Remember Your Offerings

Please have any end of year giving into the church by **December 31, 2025** in order to have your donations count toward your 2024 giving.

The office will be closed on December 25 and , January 1 in honor of the Christmas and New Year's Holidays.



Missions and the Siberian Tatars

The EPC challenged each presbytery to choose a group around the world to take under their wing and spread the Word of God too. The Midwest Presbytery, which we will belong to, chose the Siberian Tatars and they are translating the Bible into their language and bringing Jesus to them. The Presbytery has asked each congregation to donate \$600 per year to this worthwhile cause. The Missions Committee is excited to support this evangelistic effort and we donated \$500 this year. We can't wait to see what happens in the new year. If you would like more information on this worthy effort, please talk to a member of the Missions Committee!

Another Successful Fill the Chancel

Our congregation had the honor of providing food boxes for 20 families from Harrison Elementary School. Everyone was very appreciative of this helping hand.

Wow! There was so much food!! **Thank you for your continued generosity!! It was greatly appreciated!**



WE'RE CLOSED Due to Weather

Look for Worship and Sunday School cancellations and delays at the following TV channels & websites. You can also check the Church's Facebook page for updates.

- * WCPO— Channel 9
www.wcpo.com/closingsadmin
- * WKRC—Channel 12
www.schoolwatch.com
- * WXIX—Channel 19
www.fox19.com



We have received a check from Kroger in the amount of \$109.75 for the period of August 1, 2025 thru October 31, 2025. We have 45 households shopping for us. **IT ONLY TAKES A FEW MINUTES.** You already swipe your Kroger Plus card when you shop so why not help our church earn money at the same time?! Please contact Reta Crone at 367-4917 for more info.



Addresses for Our Missionaries

If you would like to send a donation to any of our missionaries, these are their addresses:

- 1) Ryan & Maggie Warmuth: R&M W 1259, Team Expansion, 4112 Old Routt Road, Louisville, KY, 40214
- 2) Sean & Carmen Garrigan: Missionary Air Group, P.O. Box 5160, Burlington, NC 27216, Designate in memo: Garrigans.
- 3) Zack & Sarah Jones: MissionStream, P.O. Box 1, Meadow Vista, CA 95722, Designate in memo: Zachary & Sarah Jones.

TIME TO ORDER YOUR CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

Please complete the form below if you would like to purchase a poinsettia to be placed in the Sanctuary for the Christmas Eve services.

All orders and money are due to the church office by December 17.

Each flower will cost \$12.00 each. (Please make checks payable to First Presbyterian Church)

All flowers can be taken home after the 11pm Christmas Eve service.



of flowers @ \$12.00 ea. _____

Total amount enclosed \$ _____

NAME _____

IN HONOR OF _____

IN MEMORY OF _____





- 2 Ruth Loos
- 6 Debra Frenz
- 11 Deanna Jones
- 13 Janna Corcoran
- 18 Mary Ellen Watts
- 19 Alan Wolfram, Jeff Zahradnik
- 21 Ray Heckman
- 22 Kelsey Loos
- 25 Jeff Sindiong
- 27 Carol Vassil

Office Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Monday - Thursday

Bulletin Deadlines: Wednesdays,
10:00 a.m.

January Evangel Deadline:
December 15 by 12 Noon

Send all bulletin and Evangel items to Judy at
office@harrisonpresbyterian.com, call the office
(367-4301) or drop by the office.

Please remember that Fridays are the pastor's
Sabbath day. He is available for emergencies
only on that day. Thank you.



DECEMBER FELLOWSHIP TABLE

- 7 Bountiful Hearts
- 14 Pam Fury
- 21 Mindy Sindiong
- 28 Barb Wolf

“Who can add to Christmas? The perfect motive is that God so loved the world. The perfect gift is that He gave His only Son. The only requirement is to believe in Him. The reward of faith is that you shall have everlasting life.” -Corrie Ten Boom



The Adult Sunday School class is starting a new study for Advent titled “The Case for Christmas” by Lee Strobel. In this four-part study, we will separate the holiday from the holy day, the facts from the fantasy, and the truth from the tradition. We will clarify what the Bible says about Jesus’ birth and how we can know it is accurate. The study begins on November 30th at 9:30am (we start after the early service ends) in the Conference Room. Come join us as we explore “The Case for Christmas”. If there are any questions, contact Sean McCauley.



Senior Saints

Dick Morris Vivian Talley Shirley Quinn Sherry Schlager
Fran Myers Joy Riegel Kathryn Pierson Marian Brandenburg

Ongoing Health

Needs

Prayers For Our Church

Our Missionaries: Warmuths, Garrigans & Joneses;

Louanna Smith

Monthly Prayer Focus: for the all those invited to our Christmas celebrations; JoJean Kleinfeld

Pam Biddle: battling cancer;

Arlene Anderson

Bill Gregg: got good scan results;

Pam Mains

Arlene Anderson: battling cancer;

Anne Troy: is at Harrison Trail;

Prayers For Others

Deb Menninger: for Joey and & Hank's health;

Marilyn Bourquein: for grandson, Kent's health;

Mary Ann Pickens: for her mental health and for brother, Paul's health;

Marcia Merse: for husband, George, under special care at home;

For our loved ones with cancer: Kelly Sebastian, Carol Elkins, Linda Schmidt, Jenny Lehmann, Carol Scott and Beth Ann Willis;

Ellen Puckett: doing physical therapy;

Mary Tabor: for friend, JoAnn, had a stroke and for the Blesser Family, grieving for Valerie;

Reta Crone: for Sybil, recovering at home from hip surgery;

Linda Lehrter: for grandson, Simon, awaiting possible procedure;

Mary Craft: for Rob Parsons, has lung cancer and for Jane Tucker, had surgery for a brain tumor and had a stroke during surgery;

Jeff Sindiong: for mother, Carol Wilkins, having heart issues and a bowel blockage;

Bev Hughes: for friend's daughter, LeeAnn, recovering from surgery;

Carmen Garrigan: grieving the loss of her father;

Linda Hellmann: for Syndey Roberts and family, grieving the loss of her father;



PRAYER CHAIN CALLS: The Prayer Chain is a group of people who are committed to praying daily for those requesting prayer. This ministry is administered through our Board of Deacons. If you have a prayer request, please contact **Mindy Sindiong (513) 235-3778 during the day or Phyllis Wolfram 367-4578 during the evening.** For two weeks, the people on the chain will pray daily for the person or situation requested.

First Presbyterian Church
115 S. Vine St.
Harrison, OH 45030
Pastor: Dr. Joshua Long
Church Phone number: 367-4301
Church email: office@harrisonpresbyterian.com
Pastor email: jlong@harrisonpresbyterian.com
Website: www.harrisonpresbyterian.com

OUR CHURCH MISSION STATEMENT

First Presbyterian Church of Harrison, Ohio is growing in faith by building stronger relationships with God and community through prayer and worship. The reading and understanding of God's Word strengthens our commitment to share the Good News of Jesus Christ through love and service to our neighbor so that all may experience God's grace.

