

First Presbyterian Church of Strasburg

News for November 30, 2025

Dear FPC family and friends,

Happy Thanksgiving! I remember well our first Thanksgiving together as a married couple in Italy. We invited a handful of families to our house for an American Thanksgiving meal. I had to go to the neighborhood butcher to order a turkey. I asked for a 13 pound turkey and he gave me a 13 kilo turkey, it was about 25 pounds and when I held it up, it was terrifying. We butchered it and used 4 ovens to bake it, and it turned out great. That was way back in 1995, 30 years ago.

What are some of your best Thanksgiving memories over the years? The Psalms are filled with thanksgiving for what God has done and for what God promises to do for us throughout our lives. We are thankful for God's faithfulness which endures forever. Look back at that phrase which is repeated in a number of psalms. The steadfast love of the Lord will endure forever. Whatever your thanksgiving memories may be, I pray that the presence of the Lord and the steadfast promises of never leaving us nor forsaking us will always win the day.

Stacy and I travel today to head down to Florida for my mom's service on Saturday. Keep us in your prayers if you would. We will never forget this year's Thanksgiving. This day was always a time that the Bronkema family would get together and some form of competition would break out. Two years ago I shared with you that my mom and her sister beat my brother and me in shuffleboard. They had a combined age of 181 years, and they still beat us.

If you are someone who maybe doesn't have great memories of Thanksgiving, or maybe has no place to go this year, I wanted to let you know that Our Table is hosting Thanksgiving again this year. People are welcome to wander in anytime after 8:45 and the meal is served at noon. Come and join folks in the Fellowship Hall to watch the parade and to eat a good meal. We are so grateful for the ministry of Our Table and the work that they do for the community.

A lot has happened since my last enews to you. Here is a listing in no particular order. Session approved the renovation of the fellowship hall bathrooms which should take place around January and February. Walter Kondratowski was approved as a candidate at the last Presbytery meeting setting him up for potential ordination in February, if the way be clear. Emma Wilson was elected by Presbytery to be a YAAD, which is a Young Adult Advisory Delegate, to the PC(USA) General Assembly in Wisconsin in the summer of 2026.

Session approved the budget for 2026. You can find paper copies of it in the foyers as you leave or enter the sanctuary. It may shock you that the budget is increasing this year. Your giving has been tremendous, but that is not why it is going up. The majority of the increase is in mission, which is exciting, and specifically mission involving youth, which is equally exciting. Another increase is that last year we did not take into account the cleaning crew we hired at the end of the year and it is significantly more expensive than having a staff person do the cleaning.

Also, at Session mission and finance reported on the survey which they took of the congregation. Look for the next enews to break it down, maybe next week. It is helpful to hear what you think. The vast majority of you do care strongly about what we do as mission here at the church, so that is encouraging.

We had a record number of people show up on Monday to decorate the church. Yes, the church looks great, but what a great time we had putting things up and eating pizza. Have a Happy Thanksgiving, and don't ever forget to give thanks to God for all of God's benefits.

Your servant in Christ,
Pastor Bob

HAPPENING IN THE LIFE OF FPC...

Advent Nights:

November 30 at 5pm: Advent Night Sunday, November 30th ~ 5pm Come join us as we celebrate the first Sunday of the Advent season! This night is for EVERYONE as we wait and prepare for the celebration of Jesus' birth at Christmas. Adults create a craft to take home! Kids create a craft to take home and one to decorate the tree at church! Sing Christmas Carols with Goggie and Friends! Decorate a Christmas cookie! Dinner will include lasagna and chicken tenders. Please bring a dish to share: appetizer, side, dessert or beverage. A sign-up sheet will be in the welcome area under the TV. If you have any questions, please see Beth Feiler or Andrea Petrokonis.

December 7 at 7pm: Christmas with the Organ, Join us for an organ concert and Christmas carols on December 7th at 7pm, hosted by our very own Jonathan Jones.

Congregational Meeting on December 7 after second service: The Session has called for a congregational meeting at 12:15pm (after second service) on Sunday, December 7th. The purpose of this meeting is to review and act on the proposed 2026 Pastoral Terms of Call, elect New Officers for the terms starting in 2026, and to review and receive the 2026 Ministry Budget. Copies of the budget are available in both foyers.

PARENTS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS: There will be a meeting on Sunday, December 28th at 12:15pm (after second service) to discuss the children's Sunday school class. Parents, children and CE members are invited. Pizza will be served!

Santa's Helpers for 2025: Once again First Presbyterian is teaming up with the LS school district to help families whose children might need a little extra help to get a gift around the tree. The tree and tags will be up this Sunday so get ready! The gifts are due back unwrapped on December 14. Join in helping a student.

NO BIBLE STUDY THIS WEEK: HAPPY THANKSGIVING!