



January 2026

# LIFELINE

## December Highlights



Our wonderful church family enjoyed another joyous Advent season in our beautiful sanctuary. We also enjoyed a time of fellowship together in the Fellowship Hall as we showed off our Christmas sweaters. Our Sunday Fun Day included food, activities, door prizes, and FUN!





**Pastor Joe Retires**  
**We will miss him but wish him well.**

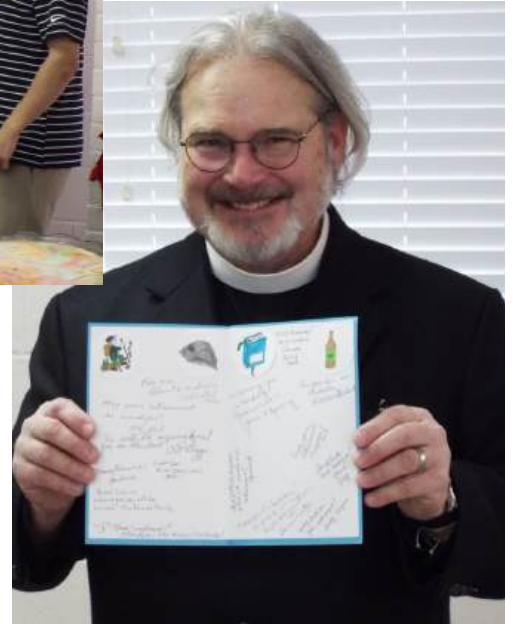


Dear Friends,  
Many thanks to everyone who made my Retirement Sunday a special day. I was grateful for your cards and well wishes, and the monetary gift was astonishingly generous! I will always remember your welcoming kindness over the years and that was all exemplified in Sunday's Open House. A special thanks to Diane, Julie, Linda, Kathleen, and Bob for their efforts at the Open House. Please forgive me if I have left anybody out, and know that my prayers for you will always be for every blessing of grace and peace and in your continued life and ministry. Always yours in friendship, fellowship, and Christian service,  
+ Pastor Joe





Open House pictures  
continued...





More  
Open  
House  
pictures...







The ladies of the church and friends of the church gathered in fellowship Hall on December 8th for their annual Christmas Luncheon. After enjoying a wonderful lunch, they continued the time of fellowship with games and prizes. It was a great start to the Christmas season.



Art and Julie packed up all the fleece blankets we had previously made for the School Transitional Living Program so they could be delivered to the school. Bristen Wells was very happy to receive the five large bags of blankets. It was especially timely with the cold December we were experiencing. Thank you to all who helped make the blankets for the Fairborn students and give them something to keep them warm.



Troy was installed as a Ruling Elder as she begins another term of Session. Thank you Troy for serving again.



The children helped Pastor Joe place the figurines in the creche each week of Advent as he told them the Christmas story.

Ann Bryant shared her talents with a bell solo for us while guest organist, Flo Krikke, shared her talents as accompanist.







### CLERK'S CORNER DECEMBER 2025

Your Session did not meet in December.

Our next meeting is scheduled for January 18, 2026, following worship. The January meeting traditionally elects officers of the corporation, elects the Clerk of Session for 2026, and assigns committee assignments for Session Elders.

Kathleen Seewer

2025 Clerk of Session

*Merry  
Christmas*  
HAPPY NEW YEAR

### ***A NOTE FROM ECCLESIAL—OUR RESIDENT CHURCH MOUSE***

Happy New Year! The celebration of the birth of Baby Jesus is behind us - but the hope his birth brought is ahead of us. In the life of our church, December was a busy month. Thanks to our congregation, two families had a bright and happy Christmas morning receiving gifts you provided. Close to 200 residents of nursing facilities had a package of Christmas cards delivered to read and brighten their rooms. And to add a little fun to the mix, the ladies of the church had a delicious Christmas lunch and enjoyed a program. Christmas Sweater Day after Sunday service was also enjoyed by all with another delicious lunch, games and crafts. Your Fellowship Committee worked hard this month to ensure you had fellowship during this Advent and Christmas season as a church family. Last, but not least, a bittersweet event was held to wish Pastor Joe and his family a happy and healthy Retirement. We will miss him, but are excited for him as he starts this new journey and wish him the best life has to give. As we head into this New Year, I know our congregation will continue doing good works and spreading the love of Christ. There will be changes in the life of our church, but I have no doubt it will be a challenge faced with love and compassion. My family and I wish you health, happiness and the love of your family and friends in 2026! ~*Ecclesial Mouse*




### **Christmas Card Crusade Thank You**

A BIG thanks to all who signed and donated Christmas Cards this year. On Dec 15 the Presbyterian Elves -- Elaine Brown, Julie Brown, Cathy Gagnon, Marilyn Löw, Maryann Schneider, Jan Smith and Diane Sondergelt -- (accompanied by Christmas music and, of course, snacks) sorted, stacked and tied 200 packs of cards! Each had three or four cards and our church information. That is a lot of cards! The cards were delivered that day to Day Spring and Wyckshire. I was assured the residents looked forward to receiving them as they did last year. Again, many thanks to all.

Linda Hartsock

# January 2026

**Sun****Mon****Tue****Wed****Thu****Fri****Sat**

				1	2	3
4 10:15 am Worship with Communion	5 1:00 pm Hope Circle— Lounge	6	7	8	9	10
11 10:15 am Worship	12 10:30 am Matthew 25 Field Trip	13	14	15	16	17
18 10:15 am Worship  11:30 am Session Mtg	19 	20	21	22	23	24
25 10:15 am Worship and Congregational Meeting  11:30 am Deacon's Mtg	26	27	28 11:30 am Sr Ctr Lunch	29	30	31



## Happy Birthday!

**Jan 7** Troy Oliver

Paula Saunders

**15** Gordon Roberts

**16** Alice Martin

**22** Pam Lundell

**27** Bill Arnold

## 2025 Matthew 25 Ministries Field Trips

We will return to Matthew 25 Ministries in 2026 to volunteer. We will go on the third Mondays in the odd numbered months (January, March, May, July, September, and November). Our first trip will be Monday, January 12th (due to the holiday on the 19th). We meet in the parking lot at 10:15am and return at approximately 3:00pm. Please see Diane if you can come or have questions.



## Welcome Rev. Stan Gockel

We welcome Rev. Stan Gockel as our pastor (available until Easter) while we search for a pastor to be with us long-term. Rev. Gockel was born in Dayton and raised in Beavercreek. He was ordained at Spinning Road Baptist Church on World Communion Sunday, October 5, 1980. Stan considers himself a "Baptiterian," drawing on the best of both the Free Church and Reformed traditions. Stan is married to Libby Stanton, a retired teacher. Welcome!

## "Souper" Bowl Sunday - February 8 2026

### Can You Help?

Is anyone willing to organize and take charge of our usual Sunday Fun Day for "Souper Bowl" Sunday? I won't be able to organize it this year. Please let me know if you are willing to do this.  
Thanks,  
Diane



***Lifeline*—the monthly newsletter of the  
First Presbyterian Church of Fairborn, Ohio  
1130 Highview Dr., Fairborn, OH 45324  
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Office Hours: Wednesday and Thursday, 10 am—2 pm

***"The Friendliest Church in Town"***

Sunday Worship: 10:15 am with an on-line option from the church website

Pastor: Rev. Stan Gockel

## SESSION

**Moderator:** Miami Valley Presbytery Representative

**Clerk:** Kathleen Seewer

**Ruling Elders:** Linda Hartsock, Art Myers, Troy Oliver,  
Kathleen Seewer, Roland Sommer, and Diane Sondergelt

**Articles for next month's Lifeline need to be in the office by January 27th.**

**There will be a limited number of copies of the *Lifeline*  
in the lower narthex if you want to pick one up.**

**Please let the office know of any meetings that you have scheduled in the church building  
so that we can maintain an accurate calendar and answer questions as folks call.**