

SPIRIT SIGHTINGS

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF PALATINE

NOVEMBER 2023

FROM THE PASTOR...

"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." 2 Corinthians 9:7

The Power of Commitment: Why Church Members Should Make a Financial Pledge

As our church leaders gear up for the new year, they frequently delve into discussions about finances, budgets, and income, all aimed at maintaining fiscal responsibility to support our ministry. While each of you discern your financial commitment, it's important to remember that a commitment of giving embodies the spirit of stewardship.

There have been churches closing their doors with \$1M still in reserve. True stewardship ministry centers on the giver's intrinsic need to give. It is a call to fulfill a divine desire for each of us to experience the profound joy in the act of generosity. While some may question the necessity of a pledge, it is essential to understand the profound impact it can have on both individuals and the church community as a whole.

Our church proudly identifies as "Small but Mighty!". Even though our congregation may be modest in size, the impact we've made in the lives of those around us is significant, all thanks to your unwavering commitment to sharing your time, gifts, talents, and finances.

Your commitment is not merely a financial transaction; it's a profoundly spiritual and meaningful one. It supports our mission, fosters a sense of ownership, promotes spiritual growth, ensures financial stability, sets an example, brings spiritual blessings, and contributes to the greater good.

Let us continue this journey hand in hand, to support our church and make a difference in the lives of many. The impact of your pledge reaches far beyond our sanctuary's walls and into the hearts of those in need. Together, we can achieve great things in the service of our faith and community.

With warmest regards and heartfelt blessings, Pastor RJ Kang



charity **time** PURPOSE connect HELPsupport
 NOW DONATE community
make a difference

STEWARDSHIP

In last month's article we looked at who we are and what we do. We do so much with the giving that we receive each year and our generosity has helped PCOP ministries to continue to thrive. Our local mission projects benefit the youth in our community. The mission projects for the larger community are carefully chosen so that our mission giving helps those who need it most.

Giving is an act of worshipping God with gratitude. Our giving sustains God's work as we build faith in people's hearts. We are one in unity with the people of PCOP and the larger Christian community. Our giving is vital for planning our ministries, all of which require your time, talent, and financial giving.

We are thankful for your continued financial giving. Your gifts helped us to thrive during the pandemic which changed the way we worship. Live streaming of our service has helped us to stay in contact with those who are unable to attend church on Sundays. With a generous gift we installed a hearing loop in our sanctuary that enriches worship for the hearing impaired. We have improved our web site and continue to produce our monthly newsletter, Spirit Sightings. Good things are happening at PCOP!

Please spend some time discerning what portion of your time, talent, and financial resources you will be able to gift to PCOP. Your commitment during the 2024 giving campaign is appreciated and helps us to maintain our ministry and mission going into the future.

GARDEN MINISTRY

For the last six months the gardeners in our church have been working the plots to bring fresh and nutritious veggies to the Township of Palatine's Food Pantry. The Pantry has seen a tremendous increase in those needing their help this year, so our donation of food helps them meet the needs of their clients.

With the plants dying down we closed the garden for the season with the help from the Csik Hago School. This is their sixth year helping us remove the plants and weeds and till the soil for the winter and we are extremely thankful to their volunteers! Any remaining produce went over to the Pantry for our final delivery this year.

Many thanks to the dedicated volunteers on this ministry team that have spent countless hours working the plots this past season. And, thank you to the members of PCOP who help support this ministry by supporting the church so that we have the plots and water to grow the produce.

We would love your help! Please consider joining this ministry next year. Many hands make light work!

Jim Ekeberg, Marge Pearson, Curt Peterson, Pam Anderson, Robin Dillon, Mirabel Wiryen, Crystalyn Boyer, Cheryl Maluta, Lyn Nawrot, and the church of servants



GET INVOLVED unconditional intention
 SHARE volunteer abundance GIVE action



FOOD PANTRY REPORT

In the month from September 24 to October 26 we delivered 14 orders to 6 families that have been regular or semi-regular Pantry clients for the past several months. Thirty-one people, including 18 children, comprise those families. They have been referred from the Social Workers at Virginia Lake and Winston elementary schools and Winston junior high school.

The total estimated cost of the 14 orders is \$844.50 which averages out to \$60.32 per order.



HARVEST 1 : WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE

Harvest 1 Season: August 27 - October 8

Team Members-Lyn Nawrot, Jean Tittle, Cheryl Maluta and Mary & Tom Kenter

“With God All Things Are Possible” was the theme for the 2023 Harvest 1 Season. The scripture readings reminded us that what seems impossible for us as humans, is possible with God by our side.

Our mission focus was the Peace & Global Witness offering and a total of \$1,195 was collected. Of that, \$298.75 will go back to the PCOP Pantry Food Pantry. In addition, we were able to collect a basket full of much needed personal health and cleaning products for the clients of the Township of Palatine Food Pantry.

Many of our members enjoyed RJ’s series on “Does God Have a Sense of Humor” on Tuesday mornings for in-person and zoom on Thursday nights. Wendy was able to share devotionals on God Winks, messages from God that you are not alone and everything will be ok.

Our joint worship, communion, and fellowship with the church of servants on World Communion Sunday was well attended and there was enough food for everyone. The selection of dishes were impressive and most everyone stayed a while to converse. On other Sundays, many have stayed for fellowship as well! It’s nice to catch up with everyone and hear about their summer trips.

Continue to look for signs of God winks in your daily life and remember, **with God all things are possible!**





HARVEST 2: THE BOUNTY OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS - OCTOBER 15 - DECEMBER 2

Team Members- Anita Kern, Judy Lundeen, Jennifer & Allan Garraway

The Harvest 2 season kicked off with a great fellowship hour on October 15 featuring soup and a presentation by Shelley Welch from WINGS (Women In Need Growing Stronger) about Domestic Violence.

The H2 season includes our stewardship pledge campaign, an opportunity to respond to God's faithfulness through commitments of our financial support, as well as our time and gifts by signing up to serve on one or two 2024 Season Teams. You may sign up in person in the narthex, or call or email the church office.

Attached to this email you will find a calendar showing the dates of the planning meetings and seasons.

We are grateful for all who have signed up to support our local mission of providing 6 Thanksgiving Baskets for the Palatine Township's annual drive. This program assists under-resourced families in our community by providing them with all of the ingredients needed to prepare a traditional Thanksgiving dinner. There are still items needed to complete the baskets! You may sign up on the poster in the entryway or email the church office to see what items are still needed. Donations are due Sunday, November 5.

If you haven't yet made a donation to the Peace and Global Witness Offering, there's still time! Let's demonstrate the bounty of God's faithfulness by supporting all of God's people. Help us turn our faith, prayers, words, and resources into a living testimony of God's faithfulness and love.

Plan to join us for worship and fellowship on November 26 when we will celebrate our pledge and season team commitments, install officers, and welcome new members. Cake will be served!!

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

This week, my family and I attended an event created to celebrate diversity and build a culture of belonging within our community. While at the event, I immediately recognized a familiar book on the recommended reading list, "The Big Umbrella" by Amy June Bates and Juniper Bates. In this children's book, there is a big, friendly umbrella that likes to gather people in. The simple problem is that "some people worry that there won't be enough room under the big umbrella." In the end, there is always room. This idea of inclusion should not be new to us as Christians.

Consider the hymn, For Everyone Born Hymn #769, text by Shirley Erena Murray:

- 1. For everyone born, a place at the table, For everyone born, clean water and bread, A shelter, a space, a safe place for growing, for everyone born, a star overhead.
- 2-4. examples: gender, age, and just and unjust.
- 5. For everyone born, a place at the table, to live without fear, and simply to be, to work, to speak out, to witness and worship, for everyone born, the right to be free.
- Refrain: and God will delight when we are creators of justice and joy, compassion and peace.

How does our community offer welcome and a place to belong? When we reflect God's love to our neighbor, how can we best love, serve, and welcome those outside of our PCOP, Presbyterian, or Christian "umbrellas"?

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF FAITH FORMATION

In Children’s Christian Education, we have been using the God’s Story curriculum for over a month now, and the kids and we love it! After reading a Bible story in the Sparks storybook, pondering the “I Wonder” questions, and praying, the kids create a craft or perform a designated activity. In one lesson, they were able to arm wrestle, illustrating how Jacob wrestled God for his blessing!

Devotions continue to be selected for Adult Christian Education in accordance with each season team’s theme. Harvest Two has chosen the theme “The Bounty of God’s Faithfulness.” Devotions this season will consist of the meaning of the verses behind the beloved hymn, “Great Is Thy Faithfulness”, as well as from the devotional book of the same title published by Our Daily Bread. I look forward to delving into this material and being constantly reminded of the faithfulness of our great God!

**Blessings~
Wendy Canedy
PCOP/DF**

PC USA 101

The Office of the General Assembly has released its annual statistics report showing a continued steady decline in membership in the PC(USA). Current active membership stands at just over 1.1 million, a 51,000-member drop from 2020. Total number of churches last year stood at 8,813, approximately 112 less than the year before.

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Total Churches | 9,451 | 9,304 | 9,161 | 9,041 | 8,925 | 8,813 |
| Active Members | 1,482,767 | 1,415,053 | 1,352,678 | 1,302,043 | 1,245,354 | 1,193,770 |

| Percentage of membership reported: | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | Percentage |
|------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------------|
| Age 17 & Under | | | | 38,165 | 4.10% |
| Age 18 – 25 | 129,927 | 118,795 | 111,172 | 69,433 | 7.46% |
| Age 26 – 40 | 163,598 | 148,984 | 140,022 | 126,944 | 13.65% |
| Age 41 – 55 | 186,821 | 174,652 | 166,137 | 154,346 | 16.59% |
| Age 56 – 70 | 278,795 | 263,432 | 253,775 | 239,589 | 25.75% |
| Age 71 & Over | 339,773 | 317,333 | 313,331 | 301,846 | 32.45% |

| | | | | |
|------------------------|-------------|------------|---|-------------|
| | <u>2022</u> | Percentage | | <u>2022</u> |
| Women | 80% | | Age 4 and Under | 42,136 |
| Men | 557,968 | 61.48% | Elementary School (K-5 th grade) | 38,628 |
| Non-Binary/Genderqueer | 348,231 | 38.67% | Middle School (6 th – 8 th grade) | 14,703 |
| | 1,317 | .15% | High School (9 th – 12 th grade) | 39,319 |



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

COOKIE WALK December 9, 9:30am

The holiday favorite COOKIE WALK is coming! Join us for fresh homemade cookies – you can fill one pound boxes from a wide variety of holiday treats for \$15.00 each. Proceeds from our cookie walk are distributed amongst local and international mission organizations.

Also shop at the ever-popular table of Christmas treasures. If you have gently used Christmas items that you would like to donate, please bring them beginning Sunday, December 3.

Special guest **Santa Claus** will be joining us and will be available for pictures.

In order for our Cookie Walk to be a success we need LOTS & LOTS of cookies. Please consider making a batch or two (or more) of your favorite Christmas cookies. Cookies can be dropped off at the church on Friday, December 8, from 11:00am - 5:00pm or Saturday morning before 9:00. You may sign up on the poster located near the narthex. The more cookies the better!

Questions? Contact Kathy Ekeberg (847-271-2240 / kekeberg@yahoo.com)

RUMMAGE SALE FOLLOW-UP

We are happy to report the success of the PW Rummage Sale on September 30, which raised \$1254 for the church. We had a beautiful day that was enjoyed by both shoppers and workers. Shoppers were impressed with the large variety of items for sale, which filled every available space.

Many unsold items were delivered to local organizations: Journeys (selected clothing, blankets, towels, paperback books), Palatine Public Library (books, Halloween costumes), Salvation Army (men's suits & sport coats), Community Threads (fine dinnerware, vases, etc.), Kay's Animal Shelter (dog crates, other pet supplies). Amvets arrived with a truck a few days post-sale to pick up the remaining items.

Thank you for your support, for your donations, and for the time and hard work of many. In addition to our congregation, we received assistance from the Csik Hago Hungarian School, the church of servants, and Inglesis Evangelica Monte de Sion congregation. We could not have had such a successful sale without such good support. Thank you very much!

***God Bless,
Presbyterian Women***



**PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN**





HELLO NOVEMBER!

| | | | | | |
|-------|--|-----------------|-------|---------------------------------------|---|
| 11/1 | All Saints' Day Alpha Ministry | 7pm | 11/19 | Worship | 10am |
| 11/5 | Worship Memorial Plaque Dedication | 10am 11am | 11/21 | Presbytery Assembly Stewardship | 4pm 7pm |
| 11/8 | PW Board | 10am | 11/23 | THANKSGIVING DAY |  |
| 11/9 | Food Pantry | 2:30pm | 11/25 | Rebecca Circle | 10am |
| 11/12 | Worship Epiphany Planning | 10am 11:30am | 11/26 | Worship Session | 10am 11:30am |
| 11/14 | Personnel | 7pm | 11/30 | Food Pantry | 2:30pm |
| 11/15 | Grace Circle | 10am | | | |

OUR OFFICE HOURS ARE MONDAY - THURSDAY, 10:00AM - 2:00PM
 PASTOR KANG'S IN-OFFICE HOURS - TUESDAYS, WEDNESDAYS AND THURSDAYS
 BETWEEN 10:00AM & 12:00PM
 OUTSIDE REGULAR HOURS, PLEASE ARRANGE A MEETING WITH THE PASTOR.

**As you consider your annual giving during H2 Season,
 please sign up to serve on the 2024 Season Teams.**

**You can sign up in person in the narthex or
 call/email the church office.**

