

THE MESSENGER



The Pastor's Corner A Message from Pastor Cheryl Raine Mending the World

Our theme this Advent is “Mending the World”. The division so rampant in our world brought to mind a poem by Dr. Howard Thurman titled, *Now the Work of Christmas Begins*. The work of Christmas is not just what happens between Thanksgiving and Christmas when hearts are softened, and generosity seems to flow more naturally. It is not just the deacon ministries that support those who are in need. The work of Christmas is what happens in the everyday trenches of life three hundred and sixty-five days a year, as is so eloquently expressed by Thurman in his poem.

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among brothers,
To make music in the heart.



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SESSION MEMBERS

- **Jim Appleton**
- **Gayle Timilione**
- **Paul Lambert**
- **James Rager**
- **Kasim Barus**
- **Harry Muaya**
- **Jeffry Suban**
- **Marcia Fagan—Clerk
of Session**

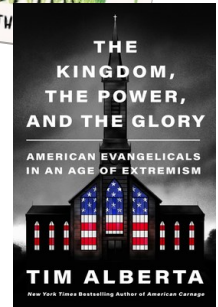
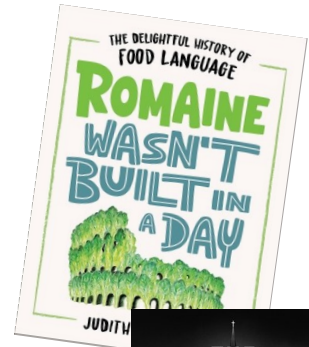


FIRST PRESBYTERIAN MONTHLY BOOK CLUB

The next FPC Book Club meeting will be Thursday evening, December 5, at 7:00 P.M. at Aleta Rudrich's home.

The book selected for discussion is *Romaine Wasn't Built in a Day: The Delightful History of Food Language*, by Judith Tschann. The author, a Professor at the University of Redlands, will be joining the gathering!

January's read is *The Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory*, by Tim Alberta. Who wants to lead the discussion?



Books under consideration for next year:

- **Challenger** by Adam Higginbotham
- **Nuclear War** by Annie Jacobson
- **Demon Copperhead** by Barbara Kingsolver
- **Peace By Chocolate** by Jon Trattie

December 1	Zachary Emmanuel
December 2	Norman Hamada
December 4	Zyana Mariam Medlicott
December 6	Daniel Pew
December 6	Sylvia Tendean
December 12	Simone Alfred
December 13	Lisdur Pakpahan
December 13	Ria Margaretha Gurring (Purba)
December 14	David Purba
December 14	Lina F. Tan
December 15	Anmol Sanchez

December 16	Joseph Timilione
December 17	Gaby Butarbutar
December 18	Angela Lambert
December 18	Thomas Arnold
December 20	Paula Mawei (Kembuan)
December 23	Ronald I. Duvall
December 23	Richard Cunningham
December 25	Carol M. Luebbe
December 27	Ben Hamada
December 29	Lynn Phelps
December 29	Rochelle Rager

First Presbyterian Church of Redlands

DECEMBER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

All services will be held in the sanctuary on Sunday and available on Facebook Live on demand

<https://www.facebook.com/First-Presbyterian-Church-of-Redlands-106569590974548>

English Worship Service 10:00 A.M.
Indonesian Worship Service 5:00 P.M.

Third Sunday of the Month—11:30 A.M. Urdu
(Facebook Live Only)

HOW TO GIVE TO FPC REDLANDS

Please take advantage of these convenient Giving Opportunities.

DONATE: Check or cash in the offering plate or dropped by the office

BANK: Set-up one-time or reoccurring donations with your bank bill pay

ONLINE: Visit our website at <https://www.fpc Credlands.org/give>

December 1, 2024 1st Sunday of Advent All Church Sunday Communion and Congregational Meeting

First Reading Isaiah 40:3-5
Second Reading Isaiah 61:1-3
The Message Hope Mends

December 8, 2024 2nd Sunday of Advent

First Reading Isaiah 2:1-4
Second Reading Luke 1:67-79
The Message Peace Mends

December 15, 2024 3rd Sunday of Advent

First Reading Isaiah 12:2-6 &
Habakkuk 3:17-19
Second Reading John 16:16-24
The Message Joy Mends

December 22, 2024 3rd Sunday of Advent

First Reading Micah 6:6-8
Second Reading John 15:12-17
The Message Love Mends

December 24, 2022 4:00 PM All Church Christmas Eve

The Story Luke 2:1-20,
Matthew 2:1-2, 10-11
First Reading Psalm 96:1-9
Second Reading Titus 2:11-14 & 3:4-7
The Message Grace Mends

December 29, 2024 1st Sunday of Christmas

First Reading Psalm 148:1-14
Second Reading Colossians 3:12-17
The Message Now the Work



STAFF WHEREABOUTS

The office will be closed Tuesday, Christmas Eve, December 24, and Wednesday, Christmas Day, December 25. Otherwise, Judy will be in the office Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, from noon until 4:00 P.M. except for the week of December 16, when she will be spending time with family visiting from out of state. Pastor Cheryl is always available by phone and by appointment.

(Continued from page 1)
The Pastor's Corner



Jesus read from the Isaiah scroll at the start of his public ministry, proclaiming, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. The Lord has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” This is the work of Christmas. These works invite us to participate in the mending of the world.

Together, I believe we are doing this work through the Outreach Share Ministry. We are tending to the lost, broken and hungry. We are mending the world in a small way by feeding those in need. We are also mending the world through our Deacon ministries as we support agencies working to mend the world like Family Services Association, Youth Hope, and Veterans Affairs. Our Deacon greeting card and prayer ministries also help mend the world. What other work might we be about? We must never lose sight that we are called to serve beyond our own walls by sharing the resources God has generously given us to help mend the world.

Yet, we must also remember that this mending is never done, for we live in the in-between time between God’s incarnation as a babe born in Bethlehem and Christ’s coming again. God’s kin-dom is among us here and now, yet it will not be fully realized until Christ comes again. And so, the work of Christmas never ends. Our faith calls us to participate in acts of mending the lost, broken, hungry, imprisoned peoples and even nations by the power of the Spirit at work within us and through us.

There is much work to be done and my prayer for us this December is that the Holy Spirit will continue to prod us and equip us to do Christ’s ministry of mending. Let’s do the work of Christmas every day!

Willing to do the work of Christmas now,
Pastor Cheryl



CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

**December 1, 2024,
Immediately After Service**

On Sunday, December 1, 2024, the Session has called a congregational meeting to elect Elders and Deacons and to approve the Pastoral Compensation package for Pastor Cheryl for 2025. The congregational meeting will take place immediately following the All-Church Worship Service planned for that day, with a short technical break to end the Facebook Live feed.

It will be necessary to have a quorum to conduct business and according to the Book of Order a quorum is no less than 10% of the congregation for a congregational meeting. As of November 1, 2024, we had 142 members, so at least 14 members will need to be in attendance for us to have a quorum, which should a breeze! The meeting will also be available on Zoom, if you are unable to attend in person, and the link will be in the Saturday update.

If you have any questions, please ask Pastor Cheryl or Marcia Fagan, Clerk of Session.



Photo by [Sage](#)

Contemplative Corner

Praying with the Gospel of Mark

In December we begin a new liturgical year in the church, moving from the Gospel of Mark to the Gospel of Luke. Yet, before we do, I would like us to consider the very beginning of the Gospel of Mark. This gospel does not have a birth narrative. This gospel is not included in the Advent and Christmas season, so I invite us to spend some time wondering why Mark started his gospel as he did:

“The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, ‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,’ John appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.”

What is the beginning of the good news for you? The words of the prophet Isaiah? “Look a young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Emmanuel” [Isaiah 7:14b] Or “For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace’ [Isaiah 9:6]. Or maybe “A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots” [Isaiah 11:1]. Or “A voice cries out” [Isaiah 40:3]. There are even more words from Isaiah that speak to Advent. Or maybe the beginning of the good news takes place for you in the gospels with the angel visit to Mary or the dream of Joseph? Or is it the journey that Mary and Joseph take to Bethlehem?

What is the beginning of the good news for you? Spend some time reflecting on our faith story and notice when the good news takes root for you. Spend some time pondering and then enacting how will you live out the good news this Advent and Christmas Season. Let us bear the Christ Child’s good news into the world this holy season.



YOUR MISSION DOLLARS WISELY ALLOCATED

We routinely receive letters of appreciation for the support your generous donations make possible. They are too numerous to include in the newsletter, but this one from Friends of Forman Christian College was particularly stirring:

“Thank you for your gift of \$1,430 to Forman Christian College. Your generous donation makes God’s love visible in the fifth most populous and second largest Muslim nation on earth. You have helped to enable a far more hopeful future for young women and for individuals trapped in a cycle of generational poverty. You also help advance the renovation and construction of campus facilities and support the senior American leadership of Pakistan's premier liberal arts university.

Your generosity truly is changing the lives of students and staff at Forman. Together, in a part of the world that is far too frequently marked by conflict, this unique community lives by the Forman motto, *By Love Serve One Another.*”



As you consider your Christmas plans, remember that you can preorder scrip that goes beyond our normal inventory for Christmas gifts for family members, friends, colleagues and even your non-profit of choice. Wilson Kayange is our coordinator, and he is ready to receive your orders! He will be available after the All Church morning service on **Sunday, December 1, 2024, and on Sunday, December 8th which will be the last Sunday for special orders!**

Wilson is available at other times to receive your orders or ecard orders as well. We look forward to a great season of giving that also gives to the Christian Education endeavors of the church through our everyday shopping gift giving!



Happy colorful Autumn to everyone! Here's a line-up of activities we have planned for our upcoming Advent Season that you won't want to miss:

Saturday, November 30, Please join us in decorating the Sanctuary at 3:00 P.M. We have a lovely tree to decorate, garlands to drape, and wreaths and Advent banners to hang. Come with loving hands and hearts to create an atmosphere of peace, hope, joy, and love in our cherished place of worship!

Each Advent Sunday our Young Disciples will pair up to read an inspirational passage and light the Advent candle at the beginning of our service.

Sunday, December 15, we will have a Christmas Cookie Decorating Party in JKH after service, so bring your creativity and favorite Christmas apron and be ready for a festive Fellowship time.

We hope everyone will enthusiastically be part of these upcoming events!

Love and Blessings to all, Your Spiritual Formation Committee and Deacons

PROPERTY AND FINANCE UPDATE



2025 Pledges

On Sunday, November 10, we began to receive pledges for 2025. Thank you to everyone who has already submitted a pledge. If you have not had the opportunity to submit a pledge, cards are available in the sanctuary narthex or the office. Our collective pledges will help the Session finalize our 2025 Ministry Budget. Our collective generosity makes our ministry possible.

Finances and Property Usage

Here are some broad highlights from our financial reporting Year to Date November 30, 2024:

	<u>Actual</u>	-	<u>Anticipated</u>	=	<u>Difference</u>
Donations and Pledges	\$ 155,995.11		\$ 171,666.66		(\$ 12,298.56)
Rental Income	\$ 116,697.51		\$ 109,178.04		\$ 7,519.47
Total Income	\$ 277,046.63		\$ 282,219.74		(\$ 5,173.11)
<u>Total Expense</u>	<u>\$ 270,843.76</u>		<u>\$ 276,551.20</u>		<u>(\$ 5,707.64)</u>
Net Unrestricted Income*	\$ 6,202.87				
Less Principal on Loan	<u>(\$ 6,535.88)</u>				
Adjusted *NUI	(\$ 333.01)				

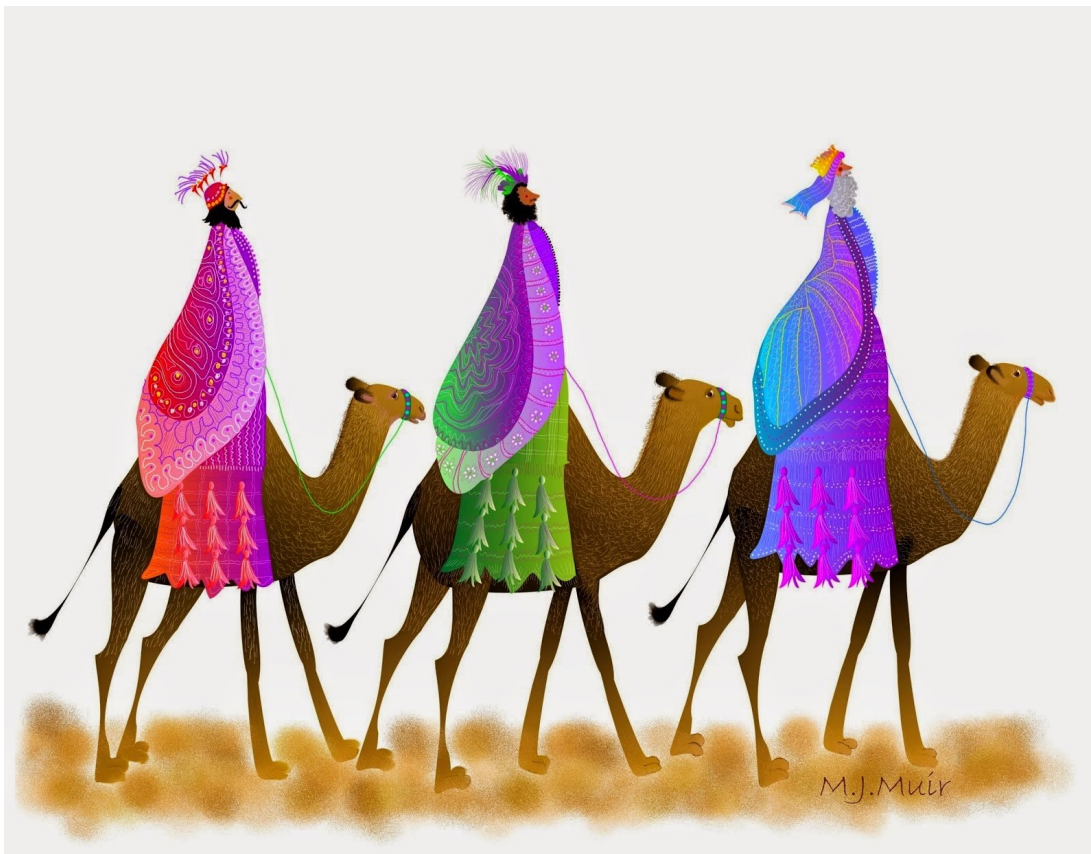
So, what do these numbers mean? Our donations and pledges are less than what was anticipated at this point in the year by \$12,298. Our Net Unrestricted Income (NUI) was more than our expenses by \$6,203. The Adjusted NUI happens below the NUI line because the principal payments on our loan of \$6,535.88 YTD are not considered an expense for accounting purposes, although the principal payment does come out of our checking account. Therefore, at the end of October our Adjusted NUI was less than our expenses by \$333.01, that is, *we have spent slightly more than we have received so far this year.*

As the year draws to a close, *to finish the year financially strong we will need our collective generosity to address the deficit, which may grow because of a large insurance payment that occurs in December.* Yearend financial gifts need to be in the office or postmarked before the end of the year. We trust that God's provision will be enough for us as we rely on God's abundance. Our collective generosity and our community partnerships along with the movement of the Spirit among us make our ministries possible. Thanks be to God for our ministries.

If you ever have any questions or concerns about finance or facility issues, please ask James Rager or Paul Lambert, our Property and Finance Co-Moderators or Pastor Cheryl.

Deacon's November Moment





THE SEASON OF ADVENT FAITH FORMATION

This Advent Pastor Cheryl is offering two classes following the morning service on December 8 and 15. This Advent we will be guided by scriptures and some writings of Howard Thurman, an American author, philosopher, theologian, Christian mystic, education and civil rights leader. His poem, "Now the Work of Christmas Begins", and his book, *Jesus and the Disinherited*, will guide our discussions. December 8 What is the Impact of Fear in our lives?

December 15^t How do the Disinherited, those up against a wall, survive?

Come to be engaged in conversation as we explore Howard Thurman's insights for our current cultural climate. How might we more effectively engage in the Work of Christmas – to find the lost, to heal the broken, to feed the hungry, to release the prisoner, to rebuild the nations, to bring peace among the people, to make music in the heart?

CHRISTMAS EVE ALL CHURCH WORSHIP

**DECEMBER 24 AT 4:00 P.M. IN-
PERSON AND THROUGH FACEBOOK
LIVE**

Throughout Advent we will be challenged to explore how the hope, peace, joy, love, and grace of God helps us mend our lives and help us draw others to the mending power of God for their lives.

As we gather on Christmas Eve we will welcome the Holy Child through carols, scripture, story, and meditation. Invite your out-of-town family as well as local neighbors to be with us this night as we worship.

All children and youth will be invited to participate in the telling of the birth story by being a shepherd, angel, or wise one. As families enter the sanctuary, children will be invited to choose a headdress that represents these characters in our biblical story. Encourage your young disciples to participate!

Our worship will conclude with the singing of Silent Night, affirming the truth of Emmanuel, that God is with us.

YOUNG & YOUTH DISCIPLES CORNER
SUNDAY SCHOOL,
WORSHIP LEADERSHIP,
AND MORE!



December

What's happening this month?

On Sunday, December 1, our young disciples will make their Advent Chains which hold a verse from scripture for every day until Christmas Day. Our young disciples will remain in worship with us on December 1st and then they will explore the Christmas Story on December 8th, 15th, and 22nd. On December 24, the young disciples are invited to participate in the telling of the Christmas Story by choosing to be an angel, shepherd, or wise one. Come and participate in telling our faith story! There will also be Sunday School on December 29th thanks to Mr. Wilson and Mrs. Sereena, our capable teachers.

A shout out to all the Young Disciples who have helped lead worship through the sharing of the Prayer for Illumination during November worship services: Nevil Cunningham, Zachary Emmanuel, Rich Cunningham, and Arianna Emmanuel.

Parents, please remember that all children and youth elementary age and older are invited to participate in worship by leading the Prayer of Illumination or more if they would like. Just let Mr. Wilson know. If your children and youth would like other opportunities let Pastor Cheryl know!

**May we instill in our children and youth a lifelong passion
for nurturing their relationship with God!**

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS
NOVEMBER 2024





OUTREACH – SHARE MINISTRY

On Saturday, November 23, a delightful crew from the First Presbyterian Church of Redlands gathered at the First United Methodist Church to prepare and serve a hearty meatloaf and mashed potato meal. Trimmings included green beans, salad, fruit, and desert (of course!). Once prepared, we enjoyed serving our guests from 3:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M.

Are you being called to participate in the Share Ministry in the coming year? Here are the dates for 2025 when we will be serving again. Make note on your new calendars now and plan to participate.

January 25	July 26
March 22	September 27
May 24	November 22



This will take a village! We will need cooks, prep workers, and servers.



You can always invite friends and neighbors to participate with you.



OUTREACH – CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

On Sunday, December 22nd we will receive the PC(USA) Christmas Joy special offering. During the Advent and Christmas season, together we lift up past, present, and future leaders of the church. God has blessed the Church with incredible leadership in every time and place, but those leaders often need to be supported by their communities as well. This Offering addresses the support needed by some of our leaders, including supporting leadership development for communities of color, and providing support for Presbyterian church workers in their time of need. Here are some stories:

“Rev. Peggy Krong served the church for over fifty years. When she faced retirement had financial barriers that jeopardized her ability to move into the Mont Vista Grove Homes in Pasadena, California. A dear friend encouraged her to contact the Board of Pensions. The PC(USA) agency granted her immediate assistance by partially paying the retirement home’s required entrance fee and later set her up with an ongoing Housing Supplement to help her manage the monthly fees. This support was made possible in part by the Christmas Joy Offering.”

“The Presbyterian ruling elder and deacon Sue Ann Fairman of is a member of New Wilmington Presbyterian Church, which supported her and her former husband during their years as international mission workers. They lived and worked among the Maasai people in southwestern Kenya. It was there that Fairman cultivated a love for literacy, raised and homeschooled two daughters, and spent 14 of her nearly 25 years in mission service volunteering at Mother Teresa’s Orphanage in Nairobi. When she was initially faced with the financial realities of moving into a senior living community, Fairman said she was feeling “more than a bit stressed.” A trusted friends asked her, ‘Why don’t you apply to the Board of Pensions for income and housing assistance,’ which she had never heard of before. Her friend explained it was there for retired pastors and mission workers if they were in financial need. When she made the call and they investigated her situation, they felt she qualified. Then Sue Ann wrote, ‘When I got that letter that said I was accepted, I just cried. It meant that much to me. I cannot tell you how much this income assistance has validated me and my years of ministry!’” Your gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering serve to validate their life and their ministry.”

Consider an additional gift this Advent Season to bless past, present, and future leaders of our churches and in the mission field.

First Presbyterian
Church of Redlands

Living the heart & mind
of Christ at the heart of
the city

The mission of the First
Presbyterian Church of
Redlands is to grow
spiritually with the
community by sharing
the love of Jesus Christ
with all who seek to
know God through
worship, relationships,
exploration, and prayer.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF REDLANDS

AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY
OF FAITH, LIVING THE HEART
AND MIND OF CHRIST AT THE
HEART OF THE CITY

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We are pleased to share our newsletter with you and we
welcome your comments!

You may also view this newsletter on our web site. Go to
www.fpcredlands.org and then click on The *Messenger*
tab at the top of the page.

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CHURCH OF REDLANDS

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