Harvest Hearts

We’ve begun to hear repeatedly about Jesus’ teaching that his disciples (that’s us!) should bear a lot of good fruit for God’s purposes, like a grape vine is expected to produce a lot of good grapes. The imagery was fully understandable in Jesus’ day as villagers and even city folks were quite familiar with vineyards.

We today get it, too, because we know at least something about fruit bearing plants and crops of different kinds. A plant (a grape vine in Jesus’ analogy) is put in the soil. It grows through seasons to reach fruit bearing maturity. At harvest is when the proof will be in full view. Will there be fruit? Will the fruit be good? Will there be enough?

When we consumers see bad fruit or not enough, we have the benefit of going to a different store to get what we really want. For people who live entirely off the land, there are no options. In that case, one’s very life depends on the fruit that comes.

It’s for this very reason that there was a first season of thanksgiving in the Plymouth Colony in 1621. After only half the group survived the first winter, their first planting and gathering season, aided by their Wampanoag neighbors, provided enough to move into their second winter. No wonder they were thankful and showed it.

I’m thankful in this harvest season. I give thanks for you and your investment in our church fellowship and family. Whether you’ve been with us a short while or a long time, your presence here as part of the family of First Presbyterian Church enriches my life and the lives of everyone touched by our ministry.

Thanksgiving is real for me as I see us willing to explore what it means to be a church in our day and time, in our particular context on Riverside Avenue, in the greater Muncie area and in the world. We live out of a legacy of generations who have served God faithfully. We live with joy regarding what is going on right now and what will yet unfold in the years ahead.

This leads me to do all I can to help us produce more and more good fruit. My time, my abilities and gifts and a minimum of ten percent of my income comes to my highest priority—God through our church. There are other ministries and causes in which I invest as well, but my church comes first. In this way, I also want to show that God, who is the Lord of the harvest, comes first in my life. Living with a harvest heart just seems right in every way. I trust you will join me in this response to God who provides.

On the financial front, you’ll read elsewhere in this Columns that we need to both receive all offerings and gifts possible to finish 2017 well and increase our overall giving for 2018. All gifts help us achieve the harvest God so desires for us.

In order to be a church that produces more and more good fruit, it all depends on our gratitude-filled response. Let’s invest every bit of who we are to God and to one another in this harvest season.

“When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father.”
—Jesus of Nazareth in John 15:8

With hope for our harvest,
Pat
The Pre-K students experienced their first field trip to the pumpkin patch during the month of October! Hayrides, pumpkin picking, corn mazes and more were enjoyed by all. Our two year olds had a wonderful opportunity to view a fire truck and talk with a fire fighter, interact with a police officer and his K-9 dog as well as see a tow truck here at the church.

Mrs. Daugherty’s 3-4 class enjoying the pumpkin patch and pumpkin bowling!

Mrs. Maddox’s 3-4 year old class at White Tail Tree Farm!

Our 2 year olds enjoying a day of learning.
**INQUIRERS CLASS**

We’re delighted to have people who have invested themselves in our ministry who have requested to become members find out more about First Presbyterian. A series of four classes is planned for three weeks in November and one in December to provide information on the Christian faith, Presbyterianism and First Pres. These classes are open to anyone who has not yet become a member including those who just want to explore that possibility.

Classes will be led by various leaders of our ministry and cover topics like personal faith, the history of our congregation, investing in this ministry and our mission to our community and world.

Please contact the church office for more information and to sign up. The class will meet in the conference room (on the upper floor between the office entrance and the stairs to the chapel) from 9:45-10:30 am on November 5, 12, 19 and December 3. Child care will be provided.

Those who wish to become members will be introduced to the congregation on December 3rd.
Fellowship Sunday and Adult Sunday School

What is Fellowship Sunday?

Our regular “coffee/fellowship” time between services will take place in Fellowship Hall (refreshments will be served in Fellowship Hall). From 9:45 to 10:30 there will be an activity which fosters relationship building.

Fellowship Sunday is a great time to invite people to visit our church.

November 5
Fellowship Sunday

November 12
Jim Williams report from his mission trip

November 19
Rob Weingartner (Director of the Outreach Foundation, a Presbyterian Mission funding effort), “How God is Using Presbyterians to Turn the World Upside Down.”

THEYOUTHCORNER

Upcoming Events

November 5  9:45—Sunday School—Youth Hall
5:00–7:00 pm—PRE-K Sunday Prep

November 11  5:00 pm—LOCK IN

November 12  9:45—Sunday School—Youth Hall
11:00—PRE-K Sunday Program

Questions? Contact Aaron and Jacqueline Burton

DON’T FORGET TO FALL BACK

Turn your clocks one hour back before going to bed on Saturday 4th

PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE MINISTRY
@ FIRST PRES MUNCIE

How can followers of Christ be advocates for the environment and human rights? Come join us as we explore our individual responsibilities in advocacy and awareness in current events as followers of Christ.

Aside our Sunday services, our regular activities include

Every third Tuesday of the month: Documentary and Discussion.

Contact Lucas Clay: lhclay@bsu.edu
Saturday November 4
at 9:00 am
If you have gardening tools,
bring them!
Rakes, shovels, pruners, etc.
Don’t forget your
gardening gloves!

Tickets available for purchase at the church office
**A Deepening Walk With God**

In one of Paul’s letters comes the compelling declaration that “... we must grow up in every way ... into Christ.” The question this begs for each one of us is, “Am I growing up into Christ?” The follow up is, “What can I do to grow more?”

Perhaps you’ve noticed a desire for more meaningful community, you feel sort of lost in your relationship with God or in life in general or there’s a desire in your heart for meaning. Maybe you want to understand more of who God is and what God has for you to do. Life might seem as if you are skimming along the surface of faith and there is a longing for something more.

Two groups will begin meeting in January of 2018 that will provide ways for God to answer some of these soul needs we each have. “The Journey” is a meaningful walk with a group of adults guided by three questions Pat Smith shares with us from time to time: “Who is God? Who am I? What does God desire to do through me?”

These groups will meet weekly starting in January and, with breaks along the way, continue meeting into the early part of the fall. Expectations are that each participant will spend up to two hours in preparation each week and up to two hours a week in group conversation at a scheduled time each week. Pat and Laura Smith will each lead one of these groups.

Materials cost $250 per person. There are high expectations regarding attendance, since this is about spiritual growth in community with others. It is hoped that each group of about eight to twelve people will have adults of all ages and genders. One group will meet in the evenings on Thursdays from 6:30-8:30. The other group will meet during the day on Tuesdays from 9:00-11:00.

Please contact Pat (rpatsmith@firstpresmuncie.org) or Laura (knappkin76@gmail.com) for more information.

“Imagine the significant rewards that could result from meeting with a group of adults with similar questions and desires, walking through a process that will awaken, deepen, and empower your spiritual life.

” God desires this kind of growth for us all. Consider being part of “The Journey” in 2018.

**Mid-Week Advent Study Conversation**

Are you looking for a way to add a little something to your spiritual preparation for Christmas, something that, though small, is really big? If so, plan to be part of a gathering each Wednesday evening of Advent for a look at the most overlooked couple in the whole Christmas story.

Mary and Joseph understandably get all the press. Mary’s cousin, Elizabeth, and her husband, Zechariah, are absolutely critical to all the unfolding realities surrounding the birth of Jesus. They, too, are part of God’s miraculous plans including the appearance of an angel, a pregnancy and a birth that are all wrapped up in God’s long-awaited, rescuing work.

It’s a great story with lots of cultural, historical, geographical, literary and personal significance. Come be part of the study facilitated by Pat Smith on Wednesday nights from 7:00-8:00. It all starts on November 29th and runs through December 20th. Study books are $8.00 (a couple can share or each have their own). Prep time each week will be less than thirty minutes. Youth are also invited to participate.

Please drop Gabby a note right now or by November 15th at office@firstpresmuncie.org to indicate you plan to attend and let her know how many books you want.
On November 19, we welcome Rev. Dr. Rob Weingartner, executive director of The Outreach Foundation, to our pulpit. The Outreach Foundation engages Presbyterians and global partners in proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ. Because our ministry is Kingdom work, not denominational work, we work with PC(USA), EPC, ECO, Fellowship Community congregations and others. We help congregations build long-term partnerships with the global church that are mutually transformational. Every person, project and partnership we support is directly involved in sharing the Gospel in word and deed.

Our work depends entirely upon the involvement and financial support of mission-minded individuals, congregations and organizations. We receive gifts in our office and disburse them to partners around the world. Established in 1979, The Outreach Foundation is independently governed by a Board of Trustees, all of whom are pastors or officers in their respective congregations.

Our Mission
Connecting Presbyterians to build the church’s capacity to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ

Our Convictions
Committed to the historic Christian faith as it is revealed in God’s Word and expressed by the ecumenical creeds and in the Reformed confessions, we affirm that

• Jesus Christ is the only Lord and Savior.
• God’s grace in Jesus Christ is for all people.
• The church exists for God’s glory and God’s mission.
• Discipleship and mission are the calling of every follower of Jesus.
• God connects us in mission through relationships of mutual respect and support.
• The Holy Spirit empowers the church to bear witness to the Good News by its life words and deeds.

Our Priorities
Helping the church live out its missional calling

Building the mission capacity of the global church, especially where the church is vulnerable or growing rapidly, as together we
• cultivate deep, long-term relationships
• support the work of missionaries
• help each other equip leaders, plant and build churches, and strengthen ministries of compassion

Transforming lives through mission involvement

Reaching Out
Reaching Out is published three times per year by The Outreach Foundation to inform friends and donors about our involvement in God's mission. Subscriptions are offered free of charge upon request.

To learn more, contact info@theoutreachfoundation.org or www.theoutreachfoundation.org
Our Mission Team is looking for **10** individuals/families who would like to spread holiday cheer at Thanksgiving and Christmas.

**Food baskets will be assembled at the church, and volunteers are needed to deliver them as follows:**

- **Thanksgiving Baskets**  November 19
- **Christmas Baskets**  December 17

A volunteer usually delivers both Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets to the same family; however, if you are not available to deliver on both dates, you can sign up to deliver on one date and someone else will deliver the other date. Please call Janie Miller (289-3652) or email janiem13@att.net for more information, or to sign up to be a basket deliverer—especially fun for families or for 2 or 3 friends together.

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**The Giving Tree**

The Giving Tree will be up in the Lounge hallway on Saturday, November 26, and you can help decorate it with ornaments which are displayed on the table beside the tree. Please select an ornament or several, remove the tag from the ornament and place the ornament on the tree. Then purchase the gift, wrap it, **PUT YOUR TAG ON THE GIFT IDENTIFYING THE RECIPIENT, MAKING SURE THE FAMILY NUMBER IS ON IT** and put it under the tree.

Many ornaments represent a very special need of a family of children or of persons identified by the Salvation Army, A Better Way or the YWCA. Other ornaments represent gifts for agencies with whom we partner - some specific gifts and some monetary gifts.

It’s such a joy to buy for a child knowing how excited he or she will be. Each child will have two ornaments: one with toy or game suggestions and one with clothing suggestions and sizes. We ask that you choose only one of the suggestions per ornament because all the families have more than one child represented by ornaments. It wouldn't be fair for one child in the family to receive 12 gifts while the others each receive two. If you want to buy many gifts, you could take ornaments for all the children in the family.

Agencies represented by some of the ornaments include Christian Ministries, Muncie Habitat for Humanity, Second Harvest Food Bank, Motivate Our Minds (MOMS), Home Savers, Stepping Stones, Harvest Soup Kitchen, and Muncie Mission.

**Place your gift(s) under our Giving Tree by Friday, December 15, for delivery on December 17.**
3rd Annual Breakfast with Santa
Saturday, December 9 from 8:30-11:00 am.

Reservations are required to Tracy Clinger
751-7960 or tracy@firstpresmuncie.org.

Please indicate the number of children and adults that will
attend so we may plan appropriately for breakfast and crafts.

Breakfast will be catered by VKA Kitchen and Catering,
a craft for the children and a visit with
Santa and Mrs. Claus will be enjoyed by all.

American Red Cross
BLOOD DRIVE
Wednesday, November 15 in Fellowship Hall 4-8 pm
Give Blood • Give Life

Hanging of the Greens
Sunday, November 26th, 2017
Come help us decorate our church

Be a Bell Ringer for Salvation Army

Look for dates and volunteer sign up sheets soon!!

First Presbyterian Church
1400 W. Riverside Ave.
Muncie IN 47303
Phone: 765-289-4431
Fax: 765-289-4486
www.firstpresmuncie.org
info@firstpresmuncie.org

SUNDAY SERVICE TIMES:
8:30 a.m.—Contemporary Services
11:00 a.m.—International Service (Chapel)
11:00 a.m.—Traditional Service

The Rev. Dr. Pat Smith, Interim Pastor
rpatsmith@firstpresmuncie.org

The Rev. Dr. Myungku Lee, Associate Pastor
9brights@firstpresmuncie.org

Carrie Jo Miller, Commissioned Ruling Elder
cjmiller3501@comcast.net

Cathy Alexander, Coordinator of Ministry and Mission - cathy@firstpresmuncie.org

Tracy Clinger, Director of Pre-Kindergarten
tracy@firstpresmuncie.org

Lisa Ulrich, Business Administrator
lisa@firstpresmuncie.org

Gabriela Burciaga, Administrative Assistant
office@firstpresmuncie.org

Lucas Clay, Building Superintendent
lhclay96@gmail.com
School is back in session and we need cooks and drivers on Tuesdays.
Kitchen volunteers at 12:30 to 3:00 pm
Delivery drivers at 2:30 pm
A sign up sheet is located on the bulletin board, behind the information desk.

November Donation Item

Cereals

As always, please place your donation(s) in the cart in Fellowship Hall.

Join our team of Volunteer Bus Drivers

Here’s an easy volunteer opportunity…providing Sunday morning transportation for our Westminster Village members. The church bus is very easy to drive and doesn’t require a special license. The bus leaves the parking lot at 10:20 to arrive at Westminster around 10:30 am.

The group is in the main lobby waiting for the bus (pull under the overhang).

After the service, you bring the van to the circle to pick up the group.

If you have any questions, ask one of our current drivers: Cathy Alexander, Jeff Clinger, Tim Koontz, Jonathan Schmidt, Claudia Sursa and Bob Wadsworth.

If you would be willing to drive, please contact the church office 765-289-4431.

A reminder email with the schedule will be sent out weekly.

Support our South View Food Pantry

Volunteers are welcome to distribute food at South View from 4:45 to 7:00 on the following dates:

November 30  December 14  January 25
February 22   March 22   April 26

Email Cathy Alexander if you would like to be part of this wonderful ministry!

We Need Liturgists

Liturgists for the 11:00 am services are needed.
If you are willing to serve as a Scripture reader for a Sunday service, please sign up on the bulletin board behind the information desk or contact Gabby at (office@firstpresmuncie.org or call 765-289-4431).

Readings for the week will be emailed to you or a copy can be picked up in the office.
Thank you!
**Fall Series: “Longing for the Best”**

No matter how things are going at the moment, there is always something that could be better. Whether our current circumstances are bleak, or great, or somewhere in between, we can all find ourselves in a position where we hope that tomorrow will in some way be better than today.

The Hebrew people once found themselves in about as bleak an existence as can be imagined. Once a favored family in a land of plenty, they found themselves on the short end of the stick generations later. Life that was once good went bad, very, very bad. They languished between the memory of what once was and that for which they hardly dare long. They longed for the best while barely able to imagine anything could ever really change for the better.

Our “Longing for Best” series will allow us to examine the history of the Jews in the period known as the Exodus. God takes them from slavery in Egypt to freedom and to a land God had in mind for them all along. The process God uses to accomplish this shift from hardship to rest will inform and encourage us as we face the realities of our present life that lead us to long for something more.

- **November 5**
  - “God First in Everything”
  - Commitment Sunday and Communion
  - Exodus 25:1-19

- **November 12**
  - “At Rest”
  - Pre-School Sunday
  - Exodus 21:12-17

- **November 19**
  - Bearing Fruit by Burying Distracting Debates
  - Rev. Dr. Rob Weingartner, Executive Director of the Outreach Foundation
  - Guest Preacher
  - Mark 1:16-20 16:19-20

For questions or further information, contact Barb Ottinger 765-289-4080 or lkbaott59@comcast.net
November 19  Packing and Delivering Thanksgiving Baskets

November 26  Hanging of the Greens

November 26  The Giving Tree

December 3  Breakfast With Santa

December 17  Advent Brunch

December 17  Packing and Delivering Christmas baskets

December 24  One service only at 11:00 am  
7:30 pm Lessons and Carols

More information inside!