



Providence Post

DECEMBER 2023



Session Highlights

By Barb Hazlett

(Note: The following highlights are taken from the minutes of the Monday, November 13, 2023, regular Session meeting.)

Clerk's Report: Eighty communicants received communion on Sunday, November 5.

Lois McLaughlin passed away on Saturday, September 9, 2023.

The membership rolls at Providence were discussed. The following people will be removed from our rolls: Jacob Herbster, Jacob Hollingsworth, Tyler Hollingsworth, Christine Inmon, Ashley Mollica and Christopher Mollica.

Session rewrote the mission statement for our church. It now reads: *"Our mission statement is to grow in love of God and neighbor, reach new people, and heal a broken world."*

Treasurer's Report: The treasurer's report was distributed and discussed.

Jane Carothers distributed the budget for 2024; several items were discussed and approved.

Huntingdon Presbytery Report: The next regular meeting of Huntingdon Presbytery will be on Tuesday, November 14, 2023, in Philipsburg.

Nominating Committee Report: Gail Irwin will fill the unexpired term of Carol McCracken; Judy Hartzell will fill the unexpired term of Mark Leberfinger; Jane Yerty will serve an additional term on the Outreach Committee; Rick Herbster will come on Session (Worship Committee); Sue Whitsel will come on Session (Finance & Stewardship); and Barry Gaut will be the Church Treasurer. Joan Conway, B.J. Crownover and Clair Roddey have agreed to be nominated for the 2024 Nominating Committee.

Session Team Reports (Chair)

Finance & Stewardship (Barry Gaut): The 2023 per capita amount has been established at \$39.24. For the period ending on October 30, 2023, there was \$3,590.42 paid into the per capita fund.

The Presbytery of Huntingdon at its September 30, 2023, meeting, approved a per capita rate for 2024 of \$39.24 per member, which is unchanged from last year's amount. Two of the allocations were changed very slightly and include \$27.04 for the Presbytery, \$2.40 for the Synod of the Trinity, and \$9.80 for General Assembly.

"Estimate of Giving" cards have been turned in on Stewardship Sunday, November 5, 2023. Thus far, 33 pledges have been received for a total of \$106,208—an average pledge of \$3,218.

The Monthly Financial Summary is shown below:

	Through 10/30/23	Through 10/30/22
Congregational Giving	\$ 153,638	\$ 166,396
Building Rental Income	1,267	4,343
Special Offerings	11,461	7,252
=====		
Total Income	\$ 166,366	\$ 177,991
Total Expenses	\$ 196,893	\$ 208,281
=====		
Surplus (Shortfall)	\$ 30,527	\$ 30,290

Congregational Care (Gail Irwin): Coupons for the military families were mailed out this month.

The delivery of cakes for the Presbyterian Village at Hollidaysburg was the last delivery for 2023.

Kathy Colebank went with some of our committee members to serve our sick and shut-ins communion.

We will deliver holiday cookie trays on Tuesday, December 19.

Congregational Fellowship (Glenn Nelson): Plans were finalized for the Advent Dinner, which will be held on Sunday, December 3, 2023. John Gallace will be planning and preparing the dinner and therefore needs a final count by Sunday, November 19.

Mission (Judy Hartzell) : The Christmas Joy Offering will be collected in December. *[See the special article in this newsletter.—Ed.]*

Outreach (Jane Yerty): Our committee reviewed the Card Making event for Veterans Day and made suggestions for future events. The VA Home was happy to receive cards and participants seemed to enjoy making the cards.

The Garden and Library are now closed and put away until spring. We are investigating several ways to improve the garden and make it more maintenance free. Nancy Woomer is checking with Burchfield Landscaping regarding mulching and planting the Beale Avenue beds. Also, we presented some ideas for smaller and lighter outdoor bulletin boards.

Jen Braun is considering the design and purchase of a refrigerator magnet that shows our church information. The goal is to give them out at our Christmas Eve service and at our Spring Yard Sale.

The Outreach Team is planning a Marianna's sandwich/pizza sale on Saturday, March 9, 2024. Monies will be used for Krislund scholarships.

We are looking for input from all the Session teams for upcoming Advent/Christmas activities. Our goal is to design a flyer to highlight these programs and email them out to our contact list.

Property (Geoff Geesey): We received the final

figures for the church organ repairs.

Spiritual Enhancement (Jeanie Mollica): The committee is discussing hiring a nursery attendant.

We will not be participating in the Advent of Christmas parade this year.

The Friendsgiving Dinner was successful.

Our youth will sing at the Presbyterian Village at Hollidaysburg on Sunday, December 17. They will also be serving at the Soup on Saturday event in December.

There will be a bus going to Sight and Sound Theater for the play "Daniel." This trip will be open to adults in the church.

Worship (Ellie Herbster): Acolytes, liturgists and ushers are set for November. Jeff Stanek and Jane Yerty will share the liturgist position for this month.

The church pipe organ repairs will begin in February 2024.

The team discussed what to do if the need to cancel church should arise. Rick will check with Kimberly to see if she can access the church email from her home. We will check Facebook and our website. The Worship Team, in consultation with our moderator, will make any decision to cancel church services due to bad weather.

Ken Lynch will fill the pulpit on the first and second Sundays of the month in 2024; he will also serve on Maundy Thursday (March 28).

December Worship Calendar:

December 2: (Saturday) Decorate for Advent at 9:00 am

December 3: Rev. Doug McGaffin, Communion, Advent wreath readings begin, "Wear Your Holiday Colors" day, Advent Dinner

December 10 and December 17: Carol Wyerman

December 24 (Morning Service): Ken Lynch

December 24 (Christmas Eve service): Ken Lynch, Prelude at 6:00 pm, Service at 6:30 pm

December 31: Ken Lynch

Looking Ahead:

January 7 (Baptism of the Lord): Ken Lynch, We will “undecorate” the church following the worship service

February 11 (Camp and Retreat Sunday): Ken Lynch, Camp Krislund director to speak

February 14 (Ash Wednesday)

March 24 (Palm Sunday)

March 28 (Maundy Thursday): Communion

March 31 (Easter Sunday)

December 25: Nativity of the Lord/Christmas Day



December Donation Needs

Providence Presbyterian Church is collecting the following items for Family Services on the second Sunday in December. Items may be left on the table in Fellowship Hall on Sunday, December 10.

Category: Holiday Items

Holiday gifts for infants, children,
teens and adults
Gift cards for local stores
Crayons/Markers/Play dough
Disinfectant wipes
Pajamas (all sizes)
Craft supplies
Slippers
Warm socks for kids and adults
Ice & snow melt (salt)

Watch for a new donation category in the January 2024 newsletter!



Congregational Meeting: A congregational meeting was held following the morning worship service on Sunday, November 19. Rev. Janie McElwee-Smith, pastor at the First Presbyterian Church in Hollidaysburg, moderated the meeting.

Barry Gaut, co-chair of the Nominating Committee, announced a slate of three elders for the Session class of 2026: Rick Herbster, Sue Whitsel and Jane Yerty. A motion was approved to elect the three candidates.

Barry then presented three members of the congregation-at-large for the five-member Nominating Committee of 2024: Joan Conway, B.J. Crownover and Clair Roddey. The remaining two members will come from the Session. A motion was approved to elect these three members to the Nominating Committee.

Pastor McElwee-Smith introduced the treasurer, Jane Carothers, who reviewed various sections of the 2024 budget. There were a few questions concerning the Pastor Nominating Committee expenses, and those were answered by the moderator.

There was no old or new business; Pastor McElwee-Smith adjourned the meeting with prayer.

Per Capita: As the year winds down, please remember that the Per Capita amount for 2023 is \$39.24 *per member*. At the end of 2022, our response to the per capita offering was 77% of our congregation paying their amount due. So far this year, our response rate is 66%. If you have not yet paid your per capita, please use the special [blue envelope](#) in your box of offering envelopes to do so. Thank you!

2024 Tithing Envelopes: New offering envelopes will be ready to be picked up on Sunday, December 3. The boxes will be located on a table in the Fellowship Hall. They are arranged in alphabetical

order and have your name on top of the box. If you can't find a box with your name on it, please call Kimberly (814-944-7258), and she will have your envelopes ready for pick-up on the next Sunday.

Session Team Reports: We are asking all Session members to please submit your report from each ministry team to Kimberly no later than Monday, January 15, 2024. These reports will be included in our annual report, which will be distributed at the Annual Congregational Meeting in February.

Christmas Eve: This year's Christmas Eve service on December 24, will begin with a Musical Prelude at 6:00 pm, and continue with the Candlelight worship service at 6:30 pm. There will be Sunday School at 9:00 am and a morning worship service at 10:15 am on Christmas Eve morning.

Lights and Locks: We are in need of volunteers to "Open & Lock-Up" the church each month next year. There is a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall if you are able to help open and lock-up for one month in 2024!

Flower Calendar: If you would like to remember loved ones or honor a special event, please sign the *2024 Flower Calendar*, which is located in the 24th Street hallway adjacent to the Fellowship Hall. The cost is fifty dollars (\$50) for two vases.



DECEMBER

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Devyn Little	2
George Greiner III	4
Dick Bender	7
Jane Hite	7
Jeff Stanek	10
Amanda Stanek	11
Dave Adams	11
Dee Schnarrs	12
Willie Stephens	13
Rich Slutzker	14
Suzanne Slep	14
Kathy Rutter	16
Sandy Settle	22
Irelynn Treese	22
Sharon Judd	28
Tyler Hollingsworth	28
Zoe Yerty	28
Emilee Hollingsworth	29
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Dennis & Kathy Braun	18



Christmas Joy Offering

When Jesus was born among us, he came as a helpless baby destined to bring joy, peace and salvation to his people. This child, God's Word made flesh—fully human and fully God—became one of us. One with us. One among us. In all of our vulnerabilities, struggles and triumphs, Jesus became one of us—leading us, knowing us, connecting us to himself and to each other, and offering us his gift of eternal life.

Through the Christmas Joy Offering, we reflect God's perfect gift to us, with generous support of church leaders among us—past, present and future—who have pointed us to God.

The Christmas Joy Offering honors the faithfulness of current and retired church workers and their families in need. Thanks in part to support from this Offering, church workers can receive critical financial assistance to support them through life's challenging circumstances. These generous actions bear witness to our faithful responses to God's charge to love one another as Christ commanded.

Special offering envelopes will be available at the church. If you are mailing your contribution, mark "Christmas Joy Offering" on the memo line of your check. If we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.