Explore Generosity

Our journey studying and learning and growing up in the fruit of the Spirit continues into the new year. For two weeks on January 10 and 17, the topic of Explore will be “self-control”.

With the dawn of a new year, perhaps you have new resolutions to join a gym or lose weight or make a budget or quit smoking or be nicer; we’ll wonder what role God’s Spirit plays in your new-found commitment. After we study “self-control” for two weeks, we’ll enter a season of love. Explore’s theme will focus on the most popular word associated with God today: love. We’ll study love on January 24, 31, and February 7.

New Officers

The Jones Room will be buzzing on Saturday, January 2nd as our new officers are trained and prepared for their years of service as elders and deacons. They’ll learn more about the Presbyterian Church (USA) and our Form of Government as well as how we organize ourselves locally for ministry and mission. They’ll then meet with members of the Session and be received as ready to be ordained and installed in worship on Sunday, January 3.

Elected at a congregational meeting on November 22 to serve:

Elders-elect: Marcia Buell, Eric Bachmann, Condy Dixon, Jamie Smith and Nate Yates
Deacons-elect: Lori Carsten, Katie DeVries, Michelle Hennessy, Judy McAtee, Linda Murray, Erin Sullivan

Mental Health First Aid Training  -  Saturday, February 6
8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

PCWS is honored to host this valuable course for adults offered by the DuPage County National Alliance on Mental Illness. Participants will learn how to help someone who is developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. They will learn risk factors and warning signs for mental health and addiction concerns, strategies for how to help someone in both crisis and non-crisis situations, and where to turn for help.

The course is free and open to all church members as well as the community. Look for sign-up information in upcoming church bulletins and e-blasts.
Before and throughout Advent, I had so many conversations with members and friends of this congregation which drifted to news of seemingly endless violence and tragedy. Some folks say prayer is not enough and that we must act to play a part in being peacemakers. I don’t think prayer and action are mutually exclusive. In fact, I think persons of faith are called to pray AND to act, as our conscience directs us.

So, in the face of great personal, community, national and global challenges, I hope you’ll find peaceful ways to act upon your faith. Check out our presbytery’s website, www.chicagopresbytery.org, our denomination’s website, www.pcusa.org, or our own www.presbyws.org, for ideas that offer ways to be peacemakers. In addition, I hope you’ll take to heart that the Bible uses the words “fear not” 365 times. And, as never before, I hope you’ll commit to work and to pray for peace. In this new year, my prayer for you, dear Presbyterian Church of Western Springs, is that you would live your faith in God and Jesus in ways that are beacons of hope, love, joy and peace....especially peace...in our world.

Peace,
Jennifer

Greetings from the Past

In 2004, PCWS helped a Croatian family re-settle locally. David and Jane Boxell recently received this email:

Hi Jane and Dave,
We miss you very much. I apologize that I have been absolutely terrible at keeping in touch with you. I can blame it just like the rest of the world on being busy, but that would only be a horrible excuse. I have many things to share with you all. I am sure that the Bozeks might have tried to keep everyone in the loop of how everything is with the Ahmetis. The family is doing fine. Mom is taking care of dad to the best of her abilities and according to the doctors and the nursing staff that comes to visit him; she is doing an amazing job. Eldin has gotten married the summer of 2014. He has been working on his wife’s visa since. November of this year her visa application was approved and she received the green light to come here. He is going on December 26th to get her and bring her to the US. They will then be moving out. I am finishing a double major in Finance and Accounting, accompanied with a minor in Biology-Pre Med at North Park University on December 18th. It took me a tad a big longer than I had initially expected but it payed off as I already have a job lined up at Swedish Covenant Hospital in Chicago. I interned there for a year and was offered a full time position as a lead Contracting Consultant. I hope that all of you are doing well this holiday season, and that this email reaches you at a time filled with happiness and joy.
Say hello to everyone and have a blessed holiday season.

Elvin Ahmeti

OUR PASTORS

Rev. Jennifer Burns Lewis, Pastor/Head of Staff  jlewis@presbyws.org
Rev. Matthew Paul Schmidt, Associate Pastor  mschmidt@presbyws.org

For a complete list of our staff, visit our website: www.presbyws.org.
The Power of a Legacy

Michelle & Kevin Hennessy recently made a trip to Naples, FL to attend a dedication of a Habitat for Humanity Home. Eight homes were dedicated Saturday, December 4, one of which was made possible by a bequest from Michelle’s father, Robert Atwood. His generous gift, which he left to Habitat after his death in 2014, now gives a young Collier County family a new life, a safe place to raise their children and a real chance to succeed.

Michelle was invited by Habitat to help raise the walls last May and was thrilled to don her father’s Habitat workshirt and hat and help get the house started. As she drove nails into the frame of a house, she knew her father would be proud. A U.S. Air Force veteran, and pilot who flew missions during the Korean War and Cuban missile crisis, he spent more than three decades in the Air Force Reserves and retired as a lieutenant colonel. He donated hundreds of hours to Habitat for Humanity of Collier County, and would be beaming.

Atwood’s painting, roofing and tiling as a Habitat volunteer began a little over two decades ago when his friend, Habitat Chief Executive Officer Sam Durso, introduced him to the need for affordable housing in Collier County. With an interest in wood-working and building everything from bedroom furniture to renovating kitchens, he found a new passion.

“At Bob was the consummate volunteer. He loved the camaraderie of working with his friends and meeting homeowners who were just trying to provide a better life for their children. He was always happy to teach a young volunteer a new construction technique. Bob’s spirit of service to others continues to impact our community even beyond his lifetime,” said Habitat CEO, Sam Durso. So thrilled, Michelle said, that when he was living at Moorings Park, her dad made the rounds and recruited, encouraging other residents to pitch in for Habitat.

Atwood’s respect for the families can be summed up in own words in 2013: “As a volunteer, I am impressed by Habitat partner families and their dedication to earn a home to provide a better standard of living. Over the years, I have seen such positive growth in those families through children’s academic success and employment advancement for parents.”

“He would be so proud and happy. He never bragged about what he did, but he really did enjoy what he was doing for Habitat,” Michelle said. “It was an inspiration to hear the stories of where the families came from and how happy they all are to have a home of their own.” Her dad, who died in March, 2014 at 84 years old, was a regular at the construction sites, a place where he would often bring his daughter and the rest of his family to see the work being done. “He always liked helping people,” Michelle said. “And he was just thrilled about Habitat and would be excited to know he helped a family have a home.

Habitat for Humanity of Collier County has built nearly 1,800 homes and is one of the largest and most successful affiliates in the nation. Atwood is one of many former members of the military who travel to a Habitat job site in Naples or Immokalee to lend their time and talents to the mission.
This month at a glance...

**JUPYs (Grades 6 – 8)**

**Jan 22-24, 2016**

East Bay Camp, Bloomington, IL

Join us for a great weekend - just ask anyone who went last year!

Call Carolyn if you are interested in going

**Family Camp**

Sat Mon Jan. 16-18 2014

1.5 days of skiing/snowboarding and other activities for non-ski-people.

Registration forms due Jan. 5.

**This month at a glance...**

Sunday, Jan. 3, Winter Break

Sunday, Jan. 10, Family Camp

Sunday, Jan. 17, No JUPY’s

Jan 22-24- Jr. High Winter retreat

Sunday, Jan. 31, 5:00-6:30 p.m.

**Coming Events:**

FEB 7

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING

Feb 15 (Mon)

FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN

**UPYs (Grades 9 – 12)**

**SNUBS**

Sunday Night UPY Bible Study

Jan. 24 7:00-8:30p.m.

Not your typical Bible Study. We’ll ask interesting questions about sex, drugs and rock-n-roll, basically we’ll talk about anything relevant to youth and faith today.

Jan 31 7-8:30 p.m.

YOUTH

**SUNDAY PLANNING**

We need your ideas. Please Come!
Alternative Giving Event

On behalf of all of the agencies our generous congregation supported during the Alternative Giving Event last month – THANK YOU! As examples of the reach your gifts have, this event raised almost $1,000 for Heifer International, over $700 for Church World Service and bought 46 Walmart gift cards for our friends at Maria Shelter. What a wonderful way to share our gifts in mission with those in need locally, regionally and globally!

Advent Season Collections

The Mission committee is pleased to also report that your generous gifts of coats, hats, gloves, mittens and boots were especially appreciated during the Holiday season by our friends at Maria Shelter, Believe Shelter and Sharing Connections. We were able to deliver 23 gently used coats and jackets, 38 hats, 22 pairs of mittens and gloves, 5 scarves and 2 pairs of boots.

The non-perishable food items under the Christmas Giving Tree in the Narthex were delivered to the Pine Avenue Food Pantry in the Oak Park/Austin area after Christmas and helped to restock the pantry after a busy Holiday season.

Hanging of the Greens

Thank you to our volunteer team for a successful hanging of the greens on Friday, November 27th. In about two hours, the Narthex and Sanctuary and lower hallways were decorated with festive greenery and trees. Thank you to Jennifer Lewis, Dan Lewis, Claire Bellamy, Ben Bellamy, Laurie Merrifield, Walt Kovalick, Bill Lawser and Janet Andersen for their efforts. Thanks to Kurt Smyers and the sextons for getting everything out of storage and supplying ladders.

Thank you, too, to the children who helped decorate the crèche as they left Worship on their way to Sunday School and the adults who placed food tags on the Narthex evergreen tree as part of the morning offering. A variety of folks of all ages helped decorate the Jones Room Christmas tree, set up the crèche in Graham Charter Room and decorate the church office. Many loving hands helped make the season come alive around our church home! THANKS!

Presbytery News

First Presbyterian Church of LaGrange has graciously offered to host the February meeting of the Presbytery of Chicago on Saturday, February 13. We’re their partners in hosting because the presbytery will be installing Pastor Jennifer as moderator of the presbytery for this year. It’s going to be a great day, and we’d welcome your assistance with some of the volunteer jobs that First LaGrange and PCWS members will be undertaking.

If you would be willing to direct people to parking, act as a greeter, help with registration or help serve lunch, or bake some cookies for the morning reception, please contact Marcia Buell at marciabuell@gmail.com.

Thank You for a Cookie Walk Success

Thanks to all the bakers who made delicious treats for the UPY Cookie Walk! Also thank you to anyone who purchased cookies. We raised $805 for the Summer Youth mission trip. We’re so thankful for your generosity because we would not be able to consistently have meaningful trips without it.

Finally, special thanks to the leaders who helped organize the Cookie Walk, Alison Slezak and Megan Sindelar and the rest of the youth, as well as the adults like Jane Melilli, Ann De Vries, Amy Seus and everyone else who helped!
Thank you for your service at PCWS in December! We can’t do it without you.

Collated and/or folded bulletins: Laura Fruit, Carol Ulreich, Harriett Potenza and Craig Harris

Helped in the office and with scanning and database updates: Carol Ulreich, Ruth Riordan, Michelle Hennessy, Donna Strunk, Laura Fruit, Sue Eck, Diane Bonner, Harriett Potenza, Craig Harris

Crushed cans: David Boxell, Mary Jo and Ron Blough

Second Baptist Food Pantry run: Jane and David Boxell

Prepared Glad Tidings for mailing: Mary Kae Headland, Ruth Riordan, Joyce Habermann and Dorothy Andersen

Flower Guild designers and flower setup in December: Sue Kovalick, Nancy Glickman

Giving Options in the New Year

As you consider your pledge commitment or periodic giving in the new year, please also consider the many options available to you to fulfill those commitments:

- **Online at presbyws.org**: Pledging and giving on line is available at presbyws.org – just look for the Giving tab on the banner. Select “online giving” to submit a one-time donation or set up automated, recurring giving. There is also a link to submit a pledge commitment by email to the Stewardship Committee.

- **Electronic transfers** can be set up online or through your financial institution. These payments can be set up to automatically transfer from a designated account on a specific day each month, or you can charge your credit card weekly, monthly or quarterly to fulfill your pledge.

- **Offering envelopes**: If you prefer offering envelopes, these are available for pick-up now through January 3rd at the church office. Alternatively, they can be sent to you (the cost of mailing is $3.50).

- **Consider a special gift with an endowment**: Another option is to endow your pledge to PCWS. It is simpler than you might think: by making a lump sum donation to the church, the interest earned can fulfill your annual pledge commitment.

- **Please submit your per capita dues**: As you thoughtfully reflect on your pledging and giving for 2016, please consider fulfilling the per capita amount for each member of your household (the amount this year is $33.00).

If you would like information about any of these giving options, please contact a member of the Leadership & Ministries Committee.
Birth:
Margaret Lynn Kelly (Maggie), born December 1, 2015 to Brett and Jenny Kelly. Proud paternal grandparents are Taylor and Terry Kelly.

Sympathy to:
The family of John Jessen who passed away after a long journey with Alzheimer’s on November 20. Joyce continues to reside at: 3525 Cass Court #514 Oak Brook, IL 60523

Christmas Caroling
On the 13th, we had 24 festive carolers spread cheer to church members and neighbors at both Wilshire Green and Plymouth Place. The participants, young and seasoned, gathered at the church at 3:00 and wrapped up the singing with a warm dinner back at the church. Thank you to all who provided food, and served on the set up or clean up crews. Special thanks to Kevin and Michelle Hennessy for hosting this event that warms many hearts!

Glad Tidings Deadline
Articles for the next month’s Glad Tidings are due by the 10th of each month.

To ensure your submission is received, please email articles and pictures to: GT@presbyws.org

Help prepare the February Glad Tidings for mailing Tuesday, January 25th. Meet @ 10:30 a.m. in the Jones Room.

Bulletin Deadline
Please submit all announcements to the church office by 9:00 a.m. Wednesday morning.
Email to pcws@presbyws.org or fax to 708-246-4276.

www.facebook.com/presbyws
You don’t need to join Facebook to see photos of all the activities that happen at PCWS.
January Events:

- Jan. 1   New Year's Day
  (Church and Offices Closed)
- Jan. 2   New Officer Training
- Jan. 3   Ordination/Installation of New Officers
  Communion
- Jan. 5   Deacons’
- Jan. 6   Committees
- Jan. 7   Sunday School Teacher Meeting
- Jan. 8—10 Family Camp
- Jan. 10  “Glad Tidings” Article Deadline
- Jan. 11  Theology & Brew Evening Edition
- Jan. 18  Martin Luther King Day
  (Church Offices Closed)
- Jan. 19  Presbyterian Women
- Jan. 20  Interfaith Book Group Session
  Theology & Brew Session
- Jan. 27  Holland Christian School in Worship
  Book Club

February Events:

- Feb. 2   Deacons’
- Feb. 3   Committees
- Feb. 4   Presbyterian Women
- Feb. 6   Mental Health Workshop
- Feb. 10  “Glad Tidings” Article Deadline
- Feb. 14  Valentine’s Day/ Balloon-a-Gram Deliveries
- Feb. 17  Session

Balloon-a-Grams

Balloon-a-gram Sales will be January 24, 31, and February 7 in the Jones Room during fellowship. Deliveries will go out on February 14.