

From the Pastor...

September 2024 Newsletter

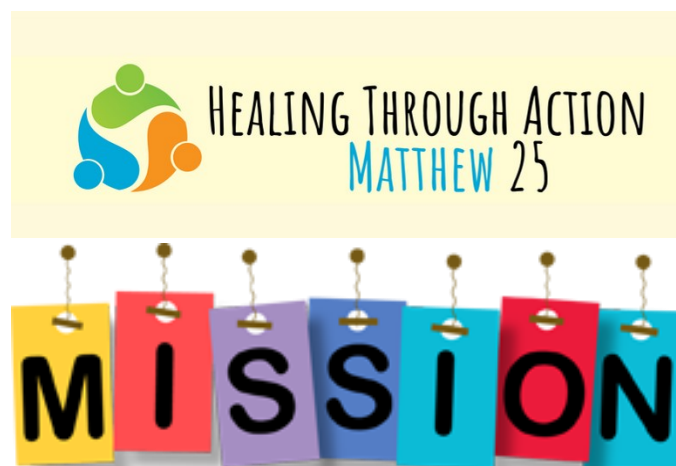
Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal.

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Matthew 6:19-21

We often hear this passage from Matthew when it comes to stewardship session, reminding us about our need to give to the church for its ongoing mission. However, it's not only individuals that need to follow Jesus' teachings about how to have a proper relationship with money, it is also congregations that need to do that as well.

Last year was a very good year for Living Hope Presbyterian Church financially. During 2023, our income was \$156,560. Our actual expenses (without depreciation) for that same year were \$144,116. This left us with \$12,444 more money than we needed. This is a great position to be in when you consider many other congregations in the presbytery are working with deficit spending and having to find ways to cut expenses to meet their income. It also shows that we, as a congregation, are dedicated to our ministry and willing to give for the work of the church.

Even so, this surplus also raises some difficult questions for us as a congregation as we confront the words of Matthew 6. Currently, we have over \$300,000 in reserves. Do we really need to be adding \$12,000 more to that? Session wrestled with this question for a few months this year and came to the conclusion that we actually don't. While we want to be financially responsible and make sound decisions that allow us to continue our mission and ministry into the future, we also recognize that the gifts we are given from the generous community of faith are meant to help others, not just ourselves. *Continued...*



In light of this, last month the session made a decision that makes sense, but might be a bit controversial. Every year that the congregation receives more money than we actually spend, we will give 90% of that to our mission partners in addition to our budgeted amount of mission spending. In 2024, that means we will be giving an additional \$11,000 to our mission partners. In the coming months, we will share how the Mission Committee has distributed this bounty and invite some of the recipients to come and share what they are doing with the funds that they have received.

This will help us, as a congregation, to not store up treasures on earth where things break down and inflation reduces spending power. Instead, it will help us deepen relationships and assist those who are in need, giving us a greater sense of connection to the work of ministry that God calls us toward. In short, we will put our treasure where our hearts are, working ministry and mission in the community and beyond.

In Christ,

Will



Monday Bible Study

Mondays at 9:45 AM

Join us for a discussion about the coming Sunday's lectionary readings either in-person in Fellowship Hall or watch on Channel 966.

Sept 2: No Bible Study

Sept 9: James 3:1-12; Mark 8:27-38

for Sept 15

Sept 16: James 3:13—4:3, 7-8a; Mark 9:30-37

for Sept 22

Sept 23: James 5:13-20; Mark 9:38-50

for Sept 29

Sept 30: Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:5-12; Mark 10:2-16

for Oct 6

Changes for PC(USA) Offerings for 2026

Salt Lake City GA226– The four special offerings currently received by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will be reduced to three, and proceeds will be distributed to causes instead of programs after the denomination's 226th General Assembly (GA) accepted the recommendations of a special task force that studied the current structure. The changes will take effect for the 2026 offerings.

The Special Offerings Task Force's recommendation (FIN-12) included eliminating the Pentecost Offering and moving the ministries it has supported to a restructured Christmas Joy Offering. They also removed congregations retaining portions of monies collected and gave Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) more room to give where needed.

An underlying concept of the task force's suggestions stems from the move from program-based to cause-based. Among the benefits the task force cited were fewer offerings with clearer themes and more desired impacts; increased flexibility for allocation to make ministries more adaptable by removing fund restrictions; and empowering the PMA board and executive staff to fulfill mission objectives.

"We are committed to ensuring that all congregations know about the impending changes to the church-wide Special Offerings," Wilson said. "We look forward to sharing more information as plans are confirmed."

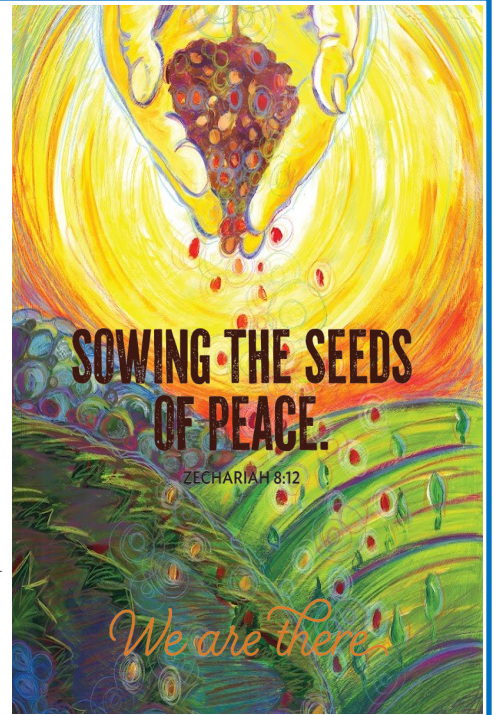
Christmas Joy Offering, during Advent: at-risk children, youth and young adults, leadership development for people of color, Presbyterian-related Schools & Colleges Equipping Communities of Color, and the Board of Pensions assistance program for servants of the church in need.

One Great Hour of Sharing, interpreted during Lent and received on Palm Sunday and/or Easter Sunday: disaster, hunger, poverty, climate change and immigration, migration and refugees.

World Communion Offering, interpreted beginning Labor Day and received on World Communion Sunday: grants to other councils of the church reflecting WCO values. Proceeds would also be available for causes that include aspects that may be described as reconciliatory, including racial justice, gender justice, peacemaking, global witness and ecumenical and interfaith relations.

Peace & Global Witness offering collected on October 6 World Communion Sunday

On World Communion Sunday, we celebrate that Christ's peace extends throughout all creation. Whenever the church gathers for worship, we are assured of Christ's peace. We celebrate that we are connected, we are loved and we are not alone. We worship together and are fed from Scripture and at Christ's table of peace. Extending the peace of Christ is part of an active, engaged faith — a witness to what it means for us to be the Church, together. Through participation in the Peace & Global Witness Offering, our church is extending Christ's peace throughout our community and our world. We begin at the communion table, with our siblings in every time and place, and we celebrate the peace we find there and commit to building a more just and peaceful world. God is with us ... and God in Christ is with us through the Sacrament of Communion, celebrated on World Communion Sunday.



We are not alone.

Peace begins with each of us not waiting.

Food Pantry Sundays

Sept 1 Oct 6 Nov 3

Our food pantry collection bin is now
inside the church office hallway.
You can access it Sunday mornings
and office hours.



Food Pantry Sunday

First Sunday of each month





We are a connectional church...connected in faith to God – Father, Son, Holy Spirit. Jesus taught us that prayer connects us to the Divine...and to each other.

Each month we list our faith community. Every family has a date when we ask you to hold them in prayer.

September Prayer Calendar

SEPTEMBER 2024



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 10 AM Worship - with communion 	2 Office Closed No Bible Study 	3	4	5	6	7
8 10 AM Worship 11:15 AM Mission Meeting	9 9:45 AM Bible Study—CH 11 AM - CE meeting	10	11	12	13	14
15 10 AM Worship	16 9:45 AM Bible Study—CH	17	18	19 9 AM Finance	20	21
22 10 AM Worship	23 9:45 AM Bible Study—CH	24	25	26	27	28
29 10 AM Worship	30 9:45 AM Bible Study—CH	1 October	2	3	4	5



Average Summer Attendance

In person: 35
Zoom/livestream: 9
(when available)

Total Average Attendance: 44

The Care and Concern of the Congregation is with:

Anniversary Wishes to:

Did we miss your birthday or anniversary?
Please let the office know so we can
update our files.

FINANCIAL UPDATE - As of July 31, 2024								
					Actual	Budget		Fav/(Unfav) Variance
Total Income - YTD					\$ 90,884.70	\$ 71,855.00		\$ 19,029.70
Total Expense - YTD					\$ 97,944.50	\$ 97,055.00		\$ (889.50)
Net Income - YTD July 31, 2024					\$ (7,059.80)	\$ (25,200.00)		\$ 18,140.20
Unrestricted Funds as of July 31, 2024					\$338,154.51			



Thank you to all who contributed to the school supply drive!

Here is the list of things we took over to St. Catherine's School:

- 28 Backpacks
- 324 pencils
- 28 pencil cases
- 52 packages of markers
- 64 packages of Crayons
- 84 glue sticks



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Office Hours: Mon and Th 8:30-12:30 (remote email rest of the week)

Clerk of Session: Kathryn Fresch

Treasurer: Steve Sinner

Church Musician: Teresa Ledford

2024 Session Members: Karl Bertram, Michael Brady Joe Fresch, Kathryn Fresch, Curtis MacDonald, Mike McBride and Marcia Sinner

2024 Deacons: (A-B) Tom Tennyson (C-F) Ann Tennyson
(L-O) Cherie Andrus (P-R) Karen Stephan

(G-K) Diane DeBoer — Moderator
(S-Z) Mary Dalton and Kathy Mathews