

“So, let us approach God’s throne of grace with confidence (Hebrews 4:16) in the New Year because that’s how we experience true freedom in Christ.”

WESTERN SPIRE

JANUARY 2026

Happy New Year to you all!

A Christian writer and publisher, Van Varner wrote a poem for a new year,

“Heavenly Father,
At midnight,
When the old year dies,
And the new comes bounding in,
I draw strength from knowing
That in the next twelve months
The snows will go
The buds will burst
The heat will rise
The leaves will fly,
That all these things will happen
According to Your schedule
And in Your time,
That there is order in Your universe
And that I am part of it.”

A New Year may feel underwhelming for you because it is just a date change and it can be “more of the same.” But I believe it is an opportunity (Given by God or man-made? It doesn’t matter.) to think of bettering ourselves and our lives with spiritual modesty. The paradoxical nature of spiritual modesty is that it requires an underestimation of one’s good qualities but the volition to live up to his/her good qualities.

How is it possible? How can someone live in him/herself but think from outside him/herself? Apostle Paul beautifully cultivated his self-awareness in tension between “good enough” mentality and the drive for self-improvement throughout his faith journey. For example, in 1 Corinthians 15:10, he said, “By the grace of God I am what I am and His grace toward me has not been in vain” (‘good enough’ mentality). Then he said a conflicted statement in Philippians 3:12~13, “Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal, but I press on to lay hold of it for which Christ has laid hold of me. I do not consider that I have laid hold of it, but one thing I have laid hold of, which is to forget what lies behind and strain forward to what lies ahead.” This tension may remain only in a theological discussion, but I believe it reflects our real-life struggles.

During our TMI (Thursday Morning Institute, which is the name for the Bible study at WPC) classes on the Book of Exodus, some of you might be bothered by Exodus 20:5~6 where it said, “You shall not bow down to the idols or serve them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.”

Some people who have negativity bias tend to complain, “It would be unfair for God to hold the children guilty for the sins of the parents from generation to generation,” while never mentioning God’s blessings for thousands of generations in the same verses.

However, this statement in Exodus 20:5~6 (also in 34:5~7) (both locations in Exodus are important) is descriptive, not prescriptive. It explains how things are rather than how they should be. In other words, the expression of ‘thousands of generations’ focuses on God’s long-term faithfulness to be remembered and restored in the family, while ‘three or four generations’ are meant to look at human dynamics with a more microscopic lens. It doesn’t mean that a family continues to be blessed for thousands of generations without ceasing or can be freed from a curse only after three or four generations are passed. It means that anything can happen during the thousands of generations and a reversal is possible before three generations are reached.

For example, Benjamin Franklin left his family at the age of seventeen without telling anyone about his whereabouts. He was bitter about family conflicts, especially with an older brother, James, to whom he had been apprenticed as a printer since he was twelve. This brother had beaten and humiliated him whenever he made a mistake. He could not stand his situation and the lack of his parents’ support. Since then, Franklin appeared to have never repaired his relationships with his brother and his parents.

In the next generation, Franklin had an illegitimate son, William, to whom he became very attached and who became his companion for many years until that relationship ended in a bitter split. Even though Franklin tried to do the opposite of what his parents did to him, a repeat of the same pattern might have occurred. Franklin’s son, William, also experienced challenges within his family life. He fathered a son out of wedlock and tried to form a close bond; however, their relationship ultimately resulted in a bitter estrangement. The pattern continued with Franklin’s grandson who fathered two children out of wedlock, with whom he, too, eventually became estranged.

Again, the problems of the parents are inherited as a generational cycle, or a generational pattern. Their learned behaviors pass down to the next generation through emotional connections and disconnection consciously and unconsciously. Even positive traits can be perceived in a negative way, particularly when taken to an extreme or expressed in an inflexible manner. It is only by the grace and mercy of God that this pattern may be broken or developed in a positive way. As Psalm 127:3 says, “Children are indeed a heritage from the Lord (not from the parents).”

As we begin a new year, let us pray for our spiritual transformation and for breaking free from negative life cycles to live a new life so that we may become the first generation of thousands of blessed generations. It is possible, not because we are innocent or everything we do is well-thought-out, but because in humbleness we trust in God who can reweave all things for good in our life, even our mistakes and weaknesses. So, let us approach God’s throne of grace with confidence (Hebrews 4:16) in the New Year because that’s how we experience true freedom in Christ.

01/2026, Peace of Christ,
Rev. Hodong Hwang



The Welcome Ministry Team invites all of you to join us in praying this scripture through the month of January.

2 Corinthians 5:17

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ,
the new creation has come:

The old has gone,
the new is here!”


Ribbit Report




What's Hoppin'?

Upcoming Events:

- › 12/5 UPK no school/all others Early Dismissal
- › 12/12 Early Dismissal
- › 12/23 POLAR EXPRESS DAY
- › 12/24 Close at 12 pm/GRINCH DAY
- › 12/25 & 12/26 CLOSED
- › 12/31 Close at 12 pm
- › 1/1 CLOSED



Welcome our new friend Colin to Little Froggies!



Frog-tastic Moments






Friendsgiving

Hoppy Birthdays!

We hope your day
is toad-ally special
Joey- 12/9
Doug- 12/16



Parent Pond Tips

Quick tip for this month:

Please try to pack a healthy lunch for your child each day. Balanced meals help keep them energized, focused, and ready to learn. Simple options like fruits, veggies, whole grains, and protein go a long way! Thank you for helping us support their well-being. 🍌🍎

****School age kids: Please don't forget an after school snack****

Friendly Reminder..... 🧤



Cooler days are here! Please be sure your child has warm outerwear for outdoor time — we try to get outside every day, even if it's just for a quick walk. Feel free to keep an extra hat or pair of gloves in your child's cubby just in case.



CLOSING CROAK



- Reminders: If paying by credit card, a 3% fee will be added
- Please note that since December includes 2 half days and no-school days for UPK and school-age children, any extra fees for those days your child attends will be added to your next invoice.

Thank you for being part of our Little Froggies family! We love watching your children grow, learn, and leap into new adventures every day.

101 E.Main St., Palmyra ~ 315-502-0100 ~ www.littlefroggieschildcare.com



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

There are no anniversaries this month.

January 4	Marietta Rose Koeberle
January 6	Sally Chase
January 12	Dave Taylor
January 16	Erika Mitchell
January 24	Norm Underwood
January 25	Rev. Hodong Hwang
January 28	Jack Moak
January 29	Roxanne Dobson

If we have missed your birthday or anniversary, please contact the office at 597-9171 so we can add it to our list next time!

The team minutes received for January include:

Deacons Team Meeting Minutes

11/4/2025

Present: Sandy McMenamin, Randy Kennard, Nancy Talma, Patti Dlugosh, Sandy Betts, Muffie Beato & Hodong Hwang

In Support: Linda Pulicini

Meeting opening with lighting of the Christ Candle

• Old Business:

1. Approval of September month's minutes *Motion: Sandy M. Second: Sandy B.*

2. **Treasurer's Report:** Current balance & expense/donation Status— Sandy M. —

Oct-25	Deacons Checking Account
Initial balance	\$1,095.77
Additions	\$ 22.00
Deductions	\$ -
Ending balance	\$1,117.77

a. Balances *Comment that donations have gone down since offertory change*

3. Sharing Correspondence: letters/emails/cards no cards or emails received this month

4. Next Communion – on Sunday, November 9th

a. Verify that enough Pita, loaf and juice ~ *Thanks Patty*

b. *Change set-up for trays and platters to serve 18 each*

c. Thank you for assisting in set-up/clean up – for Nov 9th ~ SM; NT; RK

5. Review of Prayer List and adjust accordingly of needs S.M.

6. Prayers for those in need and beyond

7. Visits/ Calls/ cards counts - visits with special meaningful moments of faith

2025					
Month	Visits	Phone Calls	Cards sent and Email outreach	Communion Served	Communion Date
January	15	24	69	49	1/12/25
February	5	18	56	39	2/9/25
March	16	16	99	49	3/9/25
April	22	15	57	73	4/20/25
May	11	19	50	57	5/11/25
June			24	49	6/8/25
July	18	36	70	46	7/13/25
August	16	15	57	48	8/10/25
September	13	14	46	48	9/14/25
October	13	14	53	55	10/4/25
November					11/9/25
December					12/24/25
Year to Date	129	171	581	513	

18 Lilys delivered

4 flower deliveries

4 flower deliveries

3 flower deliveries

pointettias Delivered

8. Special Needs Mailings –

a. 14 constant names and 10 rotating names from *Rotating list reviewed by RK and SB*

b. Christian Ed. Plans to make 28 cards for Christmas mailing ~ intend to use all names from constant and rotating lists.

• **Bible Verse: 2 Corinthians 9:10** *“This most generous God who gives seed to the farmer that becomes bread for your meals is more extravagant than you could ever imagine. He will do this for you, He will provision and multiply your seed sowing, and the harvest of your generosity will be abundant.”* [The Message Bible (MSG)]

• New Business:

○ Session Update – pray for toddler time in worship and search for music director

○ Transfer of responsibilities from Sandy Betts to Patty Dlugosh she leaves Deacons at EOY

Meeting closed with prayer.

Next meeting Tuesday 12/2/2025 @ 10:00 am

Respectfully - Randy Kennard, Chairperson

Present: Val Gendron, Bill Hassler and Alicia Lynch

The Finance committee discussed an email sent by HoDong regarding the addition of a line item for a choir director at \$11,000 per year and an extra \$4,000 for special music. The \$11,000 figure came from HoDong's inquiry to a church in Fairport.

As far as adding a line item for this position to the budget, yes absolutely that's possible but Finance feels this should be addressed and approved by Session recognizing the following:

- a. We feel setting a wage by comparing WPC to a church in Fairport is unfair. They are somewhat more upscale and probably quite a bit larger.
- b. And we don't think this position should be paid out for the whole year, as our numbers drop significantly in the summer, ie. Sunday about 9 months for their year.
- c. We also think this may be premature. We feel we should have solid commitments from those wanting to participate in a choir, it's kind of a chicken versus the egg situation.
- d. The \$4,000 for special music should not be implemented in the first year.

Other business:

Val's computer problem still continues to be a problem but will be picked up by James this week and will be looked at by him as well as someone that was recommended by Eric Chapman.

The budget: We still need the Presbytery's amount for the per capita.

Also need budgets from Kathy for Administrative, Property Committee - Phil and

Worship- Courney

Pledges seem to be coming in quite quickly.

Need to verify with HoDong that \$4,000 for Continuing Ed. is still sufficient.

The deposit check from Little Froggies needs to be sent to Schwab ASAP. The check is getting older by the minute.

Hopefully by early December we can meet again to review the proposed budget.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia Lynch

Mission Team Minutes for December 4, 2025

Present: Edie Chapman, Ruth Dantz, Cassie Hughes, Irene Fadden, Rena Haigh

Excused: Sally Chase

The meeting opened with lighting of the Christ Candle, Micah 6:8 from OGHS.

Family Promise – Ruth reported on Monday night dinner. She is interested in continuing to arrange dinner once a quarter except on 1st and 2nd Monday.

Food Cupboard (\$200) – Irene will pick up food before Edie comes home.

Edie will get remaining food then.

One Bag, One Meal – make bags with all items for one meal.

Write on bag: One Bag, One Meal and name of meal.

Include Recipe only if needed.

Food Pantry (\$200)– Ruth will continue to pick up non-SNAP items for the food pantry. Reverse Advent Calendar collection.

The pantry has received a grant of \$4,000. It bought a lot of food for the shelves.

Good Neighbor Fund

Beginning Balance \$1,250.14

3 Donations 3,220.00

4 checks written 1,296.95 (2) Rent (2) Utilities

Ending Balance \$3,173.19 (5)Adults (3)children

Donations from 2 individuals, Presbytery of Geneva, Reformed Church Women

Weekend Wellness update –

Bags delivered November - 408 bags

Bags delivered 2025-2026 School year – 1,187 bags

Social Services project –

Many homeless people in Wayne County: need pajamas, winter hats, gloves, scarves, cereal cups, and hygiene kits

Rena has Warm Winter Project and will get some to Social Services director

One Great Hour of Sharing - PCUSA Website for resources. – video and Minutes

for Mission – Giving to OGHS in single donations - Cassie

During Lent, collect items for **Hygiene Kits** to give to social services

Christmas bags for Food Cupboard - ham, scalloped potatoes, applesauce, cookies, corn or beans for a family's dinner.

Victim Resource Center – Survivor Advocacy

See if someone can come in January for our next meeting. Sally will contact 10am

Hygiene kits to them also? What else do they need?

Donate \$1,000 to Survivor Advocacy

Summer Lunches at the Library

Dates of VBS may affect the number of weeks, as a few children go to the library during the week of VBS because of free lunch. May want to hold VBS one week later. Something to talk about with Christian Ed. team and ARC.

Remaining Money in 2025 Mission Budget

\$681 for Food Cupboard

\$1,037 for Food Pantry

\$250 for ARC Home – Rena will get and contact ARC

\$1,000 for Victim Resource Center – Irene will get check written

Respectfully Submitted,

Irene Fadden

Property Committee Meeting 11/19/2025

Present: Phil Opdycke, James McFarlane, Gary LaBerge, and Steve Ellis

1. The meeting opened with a short prayer at 6:34 pm.
2. The budget this year was discussed and will be the same as last year.
3. James presented a bill for an IT tech guy to connect Val's computer, so we are purchasing a new router, so Val has better connections.
4. We will put away the air conditioners into the closet for now.
5. The church's organ is being repaired by Parsons. Part of the electric board is shot so they are working with Jack Moak.
6. The window sills are to be cleaned after the fall decorations are removed.
7. The plumber repaired and installed all new fixtures and pipes for the kitchen sink for the price of \$2,360.
8. On 11/18, the fire alarm system was beeping. The pastor silenced it. It was one of the phone lines and it was reset.
9. Emcor put a new bearing assembly for the pusher motor pump.
10. Steve E. and Steve K. are in the process of replacing more fluorescent lights on 11/20.
11. The lights in the upstairs nursery room are going to be replaced from 8 foot lengths to standard 4 foot lengths.
12. The committee is looking to purge some of the ox roast materials in the now designated decoration room, because they are taking up needed space, ie. wooden sign boards and charcoal.
13. Gary is making a checklist of all the things that the state requires: locations and emergency exits, water turnoff valves, gas turnoff valves, fire extinguisher locations and even the fire plug location outside.
14. Since the meeting Gary rented the bucket lift and removed 5 buckets of leaves and gravel.
15. Gary has also retested for radon and has since ventilated the whole lower floor with multiple fans. He will retest. Plans have been made for removal and sealing of radon sources.

Respectfully submitted by Phil Opdycke

Worship Meeting Minutes

November 11, 2025

Present: Joan, Sue, Sharon, Carol, HoDong, and Courtney

Absent: Alicia

Opened with Prayer

Pie Sunday 11/16- Pies will be provided by the committee budget.

Courtney will get pies from Leos.

Sue will get ice cream and sharp white cheese.

Alicia-creamers

Carol-Thanksgiving decorations

Christmas Decorating- The first Sunday of Advent is Nov. 30.

We will meet on Tuesday Nov. 25th at 3 pm.

Contact Gary for trees and Randy for faith painting.

Christmas Eve Service- 9 pm Candlelight Service on Christmas Eve

Advent readers- we will ask for volunteers.

Poinsettias-

Sue to call florist for a price.

Carol to record and collect money.

Courtney will ask Kathy to redo the form.

Christmas Parade- Dec. 21- 3rd Annual Be Festive Parade

Contest with prizes-for adults & kids

Christmas Music- Do we want to have special music?

Redo Wedding Contract- Will look at this in January.

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Favorite Hymns- A member gave Sue a list of favorite hymns and asked to have a few old favorite hymns to be added every once in a while-possible to make a list for entire congregation.

Offering- There have been a few concerns about the new offering procedure.

Add something in the bulletin about the offering plates, so visitors know where the plates are.

HoDong suggests a special offering box when you enter the sanctuary.

Communion- Give a message about how we take communion for visitors, especially for Christmas Eve and it would be helpful to have it written for every communion Sunday.

Playground- HoDong

A table will stay in the sanctuary in the front that will have quiet activities for kids to do while in worship. Starting in January, we will have a person who is there to help the kids with the activities.

Music Director- HoDong

HoDong met with a music director in a church in Fairport. It helped to grow the congregation. We would like to have a choir director and an organist every Sunday. The music director will lead our hymns and plan special music. Courtney will email past choir members to be on the committee to hire someone. HoDong will look into how the organist used to get paid when they were required to do more than a Sunday service (choir or special music rehearsal).

Worship Committee will need to form the committee.

Possible people to ask: Dave, Phil, Keyna, Cheyenne, Roxanne, Sara

Facebook ads to push the hiring.

Submit resume to Kathy.

Respectfully submitted by Courtney Marr

Our Prayer Concerns (updated December 17, 2025)

Grieving:

Family & Friends of Harold Schraffenberger (requested by the Deacons)

Family & Friends of Ellen Avery (requested by the Deacons)

Serving in the Armed Forces:

AJ Bliss, Josh Polle

Please pray for those of our congregation with immediate concerns:

Joan Barnard, Nancy Roets, Jan Semans

Congregation members needing continued prayers:

Joan Durfey, Pam Gnagy, Cim McFarlane, Tricia Owen, Wilma Redman, Keyna Sloan

Congregation members in nursing homes or shut-in:

Rochelle Morse, Bev Mouton, David Squier

Others for whom prayers have been requested:

Clare Boesel, Bill Brien, Sarah Carone, Gary Deys, Mark Fiegl, Jodie Frazier, Barb Gillespie, Nancy Grantling, Sarah Hovermale, Jerry Locey, Laurie Loomis, Paul McCoy, Chrissy McDonald, Kate Pfaff, Patty Rogers, Eric Schaefer, Cole Sinatra, Jake Taylor, Bill Walton, Connie West, Dmitry Wieber, Donna Wirth, Ruth Yeo

May your prayers go out to:

All caregivers; All those affected by natural disasters; All those who have no one to pray for them; All victims of violence, hatred, hunger, and homelessness; Please pray for those that wish to remain anonymous.

Names will remain on the prayer list for 30 days unless renewal has been requested.

Prayers of Intercession are offered each day by our Deacons. To request prayer for yourself or another, please contact Randy Kennard, chair of Deacons, Sandy McMenamin, or Kathy in the Church office.



JANUARY 2026

SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
	Dec. 29 Office Open 8:30 am to 2 pm	Dec. 30 Office Open 8:30 am to 2 pm	Dec. 31 New Year's Eve Office Open 8:30 am to 2 pm	1 New Year's Day Office Closed	2 Office Closed	3
4 2nd Sunday of Christmas 9 am Sunday School 9:30 am Prayer & Scripture 10 am youth led Epiphany service	5	6 9 am Annual Reports due 10 am Deacons 1 pm Men's Group 3 pm Fellowship 7 pm Session 7 pm Boy Scouts Muscle Room	7	8 9:30 am Mission/ Social Concerns No Bible Study 6-8:30 pm FH Seneca Waterways Council	9	10
11 Baptism of the Lord Communion & Cereal Sunday 9 am Sunday School 9:30 am Prayer & Scripture 10 am worship service	12	13 8:30 to Noon Toddler Time 3:15 pm Worship 7 pm Christian Ed. 7 pm Boy Scouts Muscle Room	14 7 pm FH Boy Scouts	15 11 am Bible Study	16	17
18 2nd Sunday after Epiphany 9 am Sunday School 9:30 am Prayer & Scripture 10 am worship service	19 Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday	20 SPIRE DEADLINE 7 pm Boy Scouts Muscle Room	21 1 pm FH Women's Circle Bible Study 6:30 pm Property	22 11 am Bible Study	23	24
25 3rd Sunday after Epiphany 9 am Sunday School 9:30 am Prayer & Scripture 10 am worship service Congregational Meeting	26	27 8:30 am to Noon Toddler Time 7 pm Boy Scouts Muscle Room	28	29 11 am Bible Study	30	31



FEBRUARY 2026

SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
1 4th Sunday after Epiphany Scout Sunday 9 am Sunday School 9:30 am Prayer & Scripture 10 am worship service	2	3 10 am Deacons 1 pm Men's Group 3 pm Fellowship 7 pm Session 7 pm Boy Scouts Muscle Room	4	5 9:30 am Mission/ Social Concerns 11 am Bible Study 6-8:30 pm FH Seneca Waterways Council	6	7
8 5th Sunday after Epiphany Communion & Cereal Sunday Camp & Retreat Sunday 9 am Sunday School 9:30 am Prayer & Scripture 10 am worship service	9	10 8:30 am to Noon Toddler Time 3:15 pm Worship 7 pm Christian Ed. 7 pm Boy Scouts Muscle Room	11 7 pm FH Boy Scouts	12 11 am Bible Study	13	14
15 Transfiguration of the Lord 9 am Sunday School 9:30 am Prayer & Scripture 10 am worship service	16 President's Day	17 SPIRE DEADLINE 7 pm Boy Scouts Muscle Room	18 Ash Wednesday 1 pm FH Women's Circle Bible Study 6:30 pm Property 7 pm Service	19 11 am Bible Study	20	21
22 1st Sunday in Lent No Sunday School 9:30 am Prayer & Scripture 10 am worship service	23	24 8:30 am to Noon Toddler Time 7 pm Boy Scouts Muscle Room	25	26 11 am Bible Study	27	28