

OHIO UNITED
Presbyterian Church



February 23 through March 1, 2025

Beloveds,

At the beginning of my theology 101 class, the professor asked us to share what we needed him to know in a notecard. I had just learned a few weeks before that I had a condition called Lynch Syndrome, and let the professor know that I was figuring out how to navigate life with that in mind, and that I would appreciate his prayers. Fast-forward to the end of the term and he is handing out our final paper prompts. I sat in shock and in silence as I read a prompt that was responding to somebody going through a situation and processing life circumstances similar to my own - a mother had cancer and there was a strong chance it was genetic (Lynch Syndrome means a higher risk for different types of cancer.)

Mom and daughter disagreed on how God was involved. One believed "God knit them together in their mother's womb" (as God does with Jeremiah), while the other believed that God ordered creation and left it to work as intended, but that human sin caused things to mutate and go awry. I bristled at the way the spouse stepped on the wishes of his wife and child. They did not ask for the pastor to respond and tell them who was right or wrong, but this is what the husband (and the professor) asked us to do.

After class I stepped up to the podium and I reminded him of my hereditary condition (from my maternal side) and how similar it was and he looked horrified. And then responded by saying "well I could make it a car accident that you have to respond to instead." I told him I would think about it - as horrified as he was to realize the similarities, I was equally horrified that he would consider my situation on par with a car accident as far as the nature of it. Is my missing MSH2 protein on par with a terrible car accident?!

Eventually I decided that I would respond to the particular set of circumstances that he had outlined - I may well encounter congregants with similar experiences. But because I was speaking from a place of recent experience, I shared my concerns about the prompt and told him honestly that as a pastor, I wouldn't intervene in the conflict in the way he had asked.

Here's a summary of what I said: I would respond with compassion to the husband, recognizing the pain he must feel seeing the people he loved dealing with such a condition. I would not get involved in the disagreement in the way requested, but would let the wife and daughter know I was available for conversation and prayer.

Finally, I parsed the theology of the circumstances. I looked at Job - it isn't for us to question or try to explain things away. We know what God said to Jeremiah, and we know the declaration that the psalmist shares. We know we are God's handiwork, created to do good works that God has prepared in advance. But, I have a VERY hard time believing God planned for my mom to have colon cancer three times, or for the several other members of my family to have cancer.

Instead of focusing on what we cannot know for sure, I would encourage someone experiencing such questions to reconsider what they're focusing on. We cannot have all the answers because, as God reminds Job, we're not God. They are legitimate questions, but ones that we humans don't always get to know the answers to.

What DOES matters is Jesus - Emmanuel - God with us. God is present in what we are going through. God is present in the calm and in the storms of life. Even if it seems like God is sleeping below deck, God is still in control of the storm.

God will use whatever comes our way for the glory of God's kingdom - but it doesn't mean we get to say "everything happens for a reason" or "God won't give you more than you can handle." Because we know God's got this, but also, sometimes things can just be yucky without finding the silver-lining or explaining things away.

We can sit in the discomfort of the unknown without rushing our grief or anger. God can handle it. Don't be like Job's friends who try to pick out the reasons for Job's misfortune - Instead, sit with those in need, prepare food trains, send a message to say "praying for you." In time, we may see things like Joseph - who humbly realized after all the hard things he encountered that God took everything in his life - dreams, jealous and murderous brothers, slavery, accusations, and wisdom - and used it to bless the sons of Israel, his brothers, so that someday we might also be blessed to be blessings to others. So be a blessing to someone and share God's love today.

Grace & Peace,
Pastor Kalyn



Worship

- We gather for worship Sundays
- 88 were in church on February 16
- Communion is on March 2nd.

Congregational Care

- STORY TIME ON WEDNESDAY, February 26 AT 9:30 OR 10:30
- Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner is on March 4 from 5 to 6:30. Can you help with set up, serving or clean up? Sign up sheet is in bulletin and if you have any questions contact Eleanor Pike at 724-601-4007.
- **SAVE THE DATE: VBS IS GOING TO BE JUNE 9 - JUNE 13!!**
- **Mark your calendars for the church picnic on August 17**

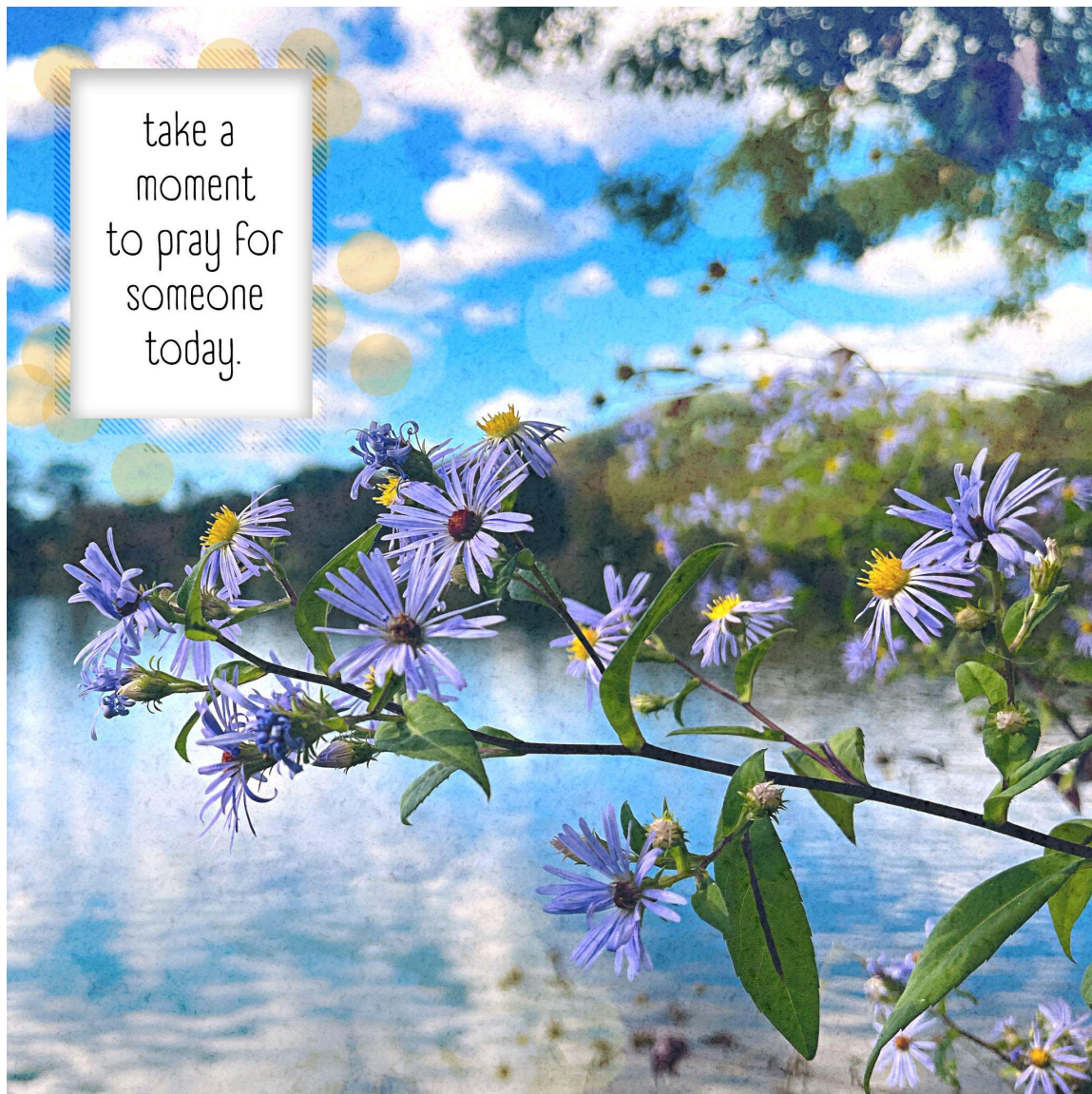
Missions

- Manna is on February 25. Volunteers are needed to bake cakes, help serve and help clean up. You can reach out to Linda Duganich at 724-622-7929 or at lindaduganich@gmail.com if you'd like to volunteer.

Operations

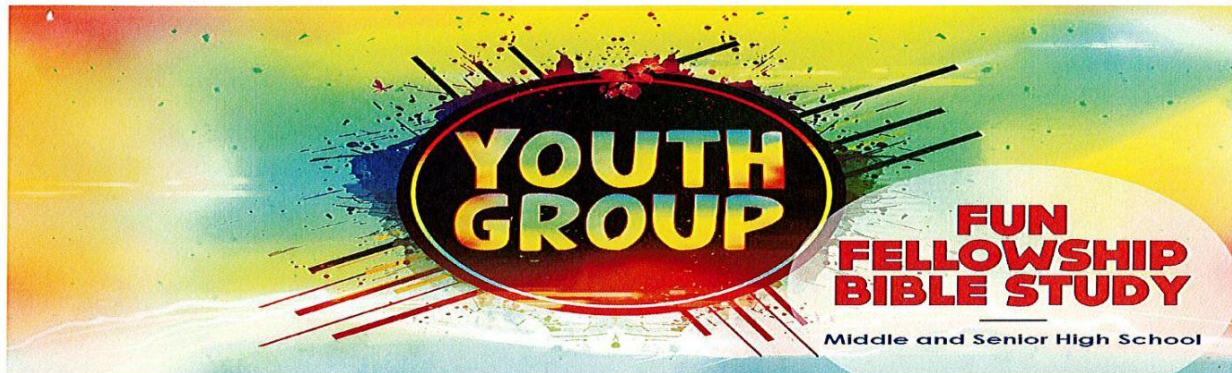
Contributions in January \$13,554
Expenses in January \$22,597

Ruth Circle is starting a new Bible Study in March called "Listening to God" by Carolyn Nystrom. Ruth Circle meets the second Wednesday of the month at 1:00pm in the Library from March through November. If you are interested in an afternoon Bible Study, contact Karen Keller to order a study book.



- Donna Olexick—Prayers for friends, Debbie and Jym. Debbie has been in bed since January. She is not eating. Jym took her to hospital where they are running tests. She is depressed and has cancer. Jym has some health issues, as well. From Freedom Crider in Beaver
- Shirley—Lost a good lifelong friend, Lou Sowell, Jr. on Valentine's Day. He lived in Boulder, CO.
- Pastor Kalyn—Is asking for prayers as she is having a medical procedure done on Thursday.
- Bonnie Martin—Thanks for prayers for Silas who had a hospital visit. He is feeling better!





January 6 – Youth Group 7:00-8:30

January 13 – Youth Group 7:00-8:30

January 20 – Youth Group 7:00-8:30

January 27 – Youth Group 7:00-8:30

February 2 – SUNDAY Ice Skating at Brady's Run 12:45-2:45 we will leave the church at 12:15. \$10.00 Skate rental \$5.00. Concession Stand will be open

February 10 – Youth Group 7:00-8:30

February 24 – Youth Group 7:00-8:30

**March 2 – SUNDAY Snow Tubing
12:30 – 2:30 We will leave church at 11:45
Costs \$21.00**



<u>Anniversaries</u>	<u>Birthdays</u>	<u>Birthdays</u>	<u>Birthdays</u>
Ray & Peggy Atwell 2/27	Harper Gavita 2/1	Weston Shaffer 2/12	Trevis Gregory 2/23
	Linda Duganich 2/4	Crystal Saxon 2/13	Brenda Jones 2/24
	Dawn Psik 2/4	Marsha Douglass 2/14	Sharon Neville 2/24
	Eric Rastetter 2/6	Jonah Honess 2/14	Chris Cronin 2/26
	Missy Sardo 2/6	Marloe Rastetter 2/15	Nathan Cronin 2/26
	Dolores Skinner 2/6	Michael Colesar 2/16	Richard Pike 2/26
	Homer Summy 2/6	Diane Gennaro 2/18	Corinna Petrella 2/28
	Noah Repman 2/9	Noah Honess 2/21	
	Ken Gregory 2/11	Tanner Lewis 2/21	



<u>Anniversaries</u>	<u>Birthdays</u>	<u>Birthdays</u>	<u>Birthdays</u>
Jason & Liz Cagnon 3/05	Mark Muslin 3/01	Logan Gregory 3/14	Betty Solinski 3/25
	Brenlee Knox 3/04	Harper Shaffer 3/14	Evelyn Cagnon 3/27
	Tracy Simmons 3/08	Richard Palmer 3/16	Kasey Hoth 3/27
	Savannah McLinden 3/09	Joshua Kocher 3/20	Debbie Ceccarelli 3/29
	Michael Duganich 3/11	Daniel Fox Sr. 3/21	
	Libby Urick 3/12	Casey Honess 3/23	

Highlights of the Deacon's Meeting 2/11/25

The Deacons met with the Session and Pastor Kaylyn for our annual combined meeting. We discussed our mission and goals for 2025. We adjourned and then had our separate monthly meeting.

We approved sending a donation to help New Salem Church recover from the recent fire and a donation to a family tragedy.

Upcoming Fellowship Events:

March 4, 2025-Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner from 5-6:30, sign up sheets will be in bulletin.

April 13, 2025-Palm Sunday Breakfast

June 8, 2025-Pentecost Fellowship Hour Following Worship

August Annual Church Picnic (date to be determined)

October-Pastor Appreciation Following Worship (date to be determined)

Continue packing and delivering student Blessing Bags and fill the Little Free Pantry

We sent 7 greeting cards.

There is a need for Liturgists during worship: Sign-up sheet is posted outside of pastor's office.

Our next meeting is March 11, 2025 @6:30 pm