

# The Vision



DECEMBER '25

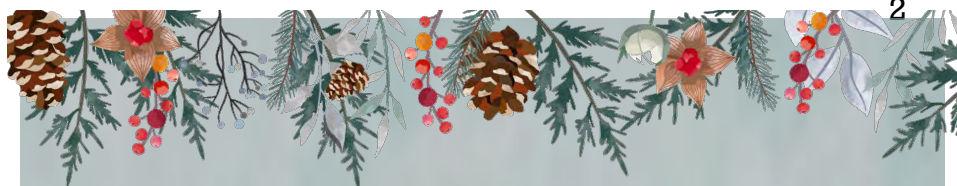
*Silent night, holy night,*

SON OF  
GOD

*love's  
pure light...*



**First Presbyterian Church**  
309 Lincoln St • Johnstown, PA 15901



Dear Members of First Presbyterian Church,

Greetings in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

It is with great pleasure that I tell you the Session, at their October meeting, approved hiring a Covenant Pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Johnstown, PA. A Covenant Pastor is an ordained pastor who serves as a temporary pastor for a period determined by the pastor and the session.

Rev. Danielle Kendig has accepted the position at First Presbyterian and will begin her ministry with us starting January 1, 2026. Her current term is three (3) years and is renewable. We look forward with excitement to beginning this new ministry with Rev. Kendig and her family.

Here is a little about Rev. Danielle Kendig:

Danielle was born and raised in the southern states. She graduated from High School in Johnstown, PA, followed by graduate school at the Art Institute of Pittsburgh, where she received her Bachelor of Science in Interior Design, specializing in historical restoration. She worked in the design field for a few years and was also involved heavily with global mission work through Lancaster Theological Seminary. Following the Great Recession in the early 2000s, Danielle relocated back to Johnstown and soon married her husband, Jon. They began a family early, and God entrusted them with 3 wonderful children. After the birth of their second child, God directed Danielle to get back into ministry. She

found a position at a local Presbyterian church as the Director of Christian Education and held that position for over a decade. In 2020, God gave Danielle the 'green light' to begin her seminary journey. Thus began her time at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. She has flourished at both internships, one in a church setting and the other as a local hospital chaplain. Danielle graduated with her Master of Divinity on May 31, 2024, and has been ordained in the PCUSA church as a Minister of the Lord and Sacrament, and has been serving at Ebensburg Presbyterian Church since the Spring of 2024 and as an Interdenominational Spiritual Care Chaplain to a local hospice company. Danielle also enjoys history and antiques, spending time with her family and friends, sewing, gardening, and contributing her time as a volunteer to a few different community organizations. At the heart of her ministry is mission, both local and global. Danielle is eager and passionate about allowing God to guide her in her ministry.

Please join us in worship January 4, 2026, for Rev. Kendig's first Sunday. We will welcome her and her family with a reception following worship. Please join us as we worship our Lord and move onto a new chapter in our walk of faith at First Presbyterian, Johnstown, PA.

In Christ's Love,  
Charnet Koch  
Clerk of Session





## Stand Up More Easily

*Tips to help you rise from your bed, chair, car, and the toilet, too.*

Getting up from a plush sofa or high bed or trying to step up into an SUV can be challenging sometimes. But help is available, and while not every solution will be right for every person, there are plenty of moves and tools that will make standing (and sitting) far simpler.

### 1. GET YOUR BED HEIGHT RIGHT

Your feet should be flat on the floor when you sit at the edge of your bed. That provides stability as you rise. If your bed is too low, you can use risers or consider a slightly higher frame. For a high or low bed, devices called bed support rails or assist handles can also help you hoist yourself up. If you use a wheelchair, your bed height should be level with the chair's seat to ease the transition from bed to chair.

### 2. ASSESS YOUR FURNITURE

When you can, sit in a chair with arms, so you can push down on them to stand. For sofas and easy chairs, consider a couch cane, which has a base that slides under the furniture and a large handle you can grip for support.

### 3. AVOID DIZZINESS WHEN YOU STAND

Some people experience orthostatic hypotension, a rapid drop in blood pressure upon standing that could cause a fall. If you're prone to it, cross and uncross your legs a few times or flex your ankles beforehand to get the blood moving. Sit at the edge of your bed or chair for a minute, then rise slowly. Drinking a glass of water before you stand up may also help because it raises your blood volume.



#### 4. UPGRADE AUTO ACCESSORIES

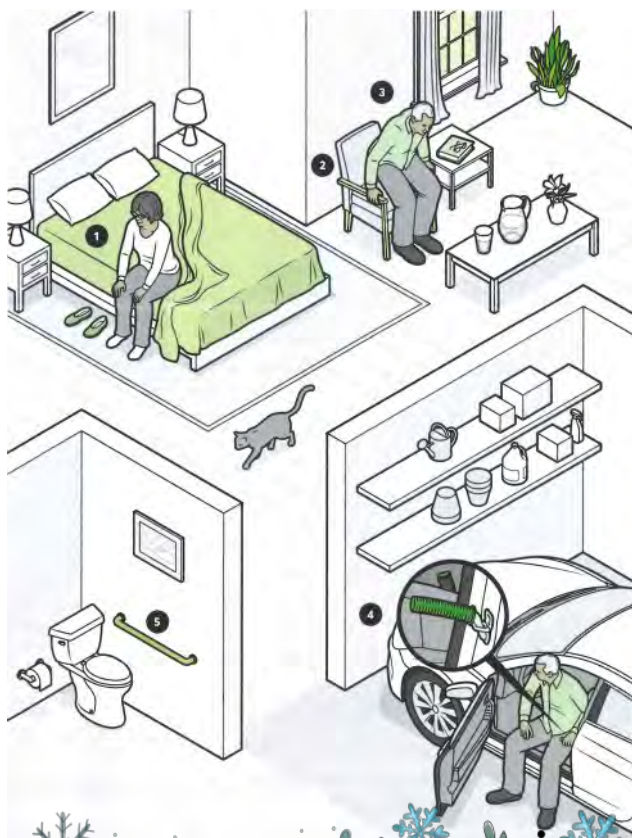
An assist bar, a portable device that hooks onto a car's door latch, can give you leverage while you enter and exit the vehicle. Shopping for a new vehicle? Seats that are too low or too high can be problematic, so make sure you take that into consideration.

#### 5. ADD THESE TO THE BATHROOM

Grab bars by the toilet and in the shower can help you stand up and prevent a fall if you stumble. Opt for ones that screw into wall studs. Use a tub? A transfer bench with feet inside and outside of it will make it easier to get up from sitting.

#### FOR MORE HELP

If standing up is often a struggle, talk with your doctor. You may be referred to a specialist such as an occupational therapist. They can advise you on the right tools and modifications for your situation and help you figure out which options insurance will cover.



**THE CELEBRATION JOHNSTOWN New Year's Eve concert** has been cancelled, due to the closing of Central Park and relocation of activities to People's Gas Park. This was the decision of the Discover Johnstown group, NOT the church. We are looking forward to its return with Jazz In Your Face next New Year's Eve.

### **Sunday School on Hiatus**



**There will be no Sunday School from November 23 through January 4.**

**We will begin a new class January 11, 2026.**



**The Women's Association will meet Monday, December 15th at noon to hold their Christmas Luncheon.**

## **3rd Sunday Program**

**There will be no 3rd Sunday Program in December.**

**There will be no Session meeting in December.**





# **42<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF THE NATIVITY**

**Fri., Sat., Sun.  
December 5, 6, & 7, 2025  
6:00 PM each night**

## **Friday December 5**

- 6 PM Swigle Mountain Brass
- 7 PM Forest Hills  
Community Band

## **Saturday December 6**

### **Assorted Keyboard Concert**

- Piano Solos
- Organ Solos
- Piano/Organ Duets

## **Sunday December 7**

- Choirs & Combined Choir

*Schedule subject to change*



**The Christmas card  
mailboxes will be up  
after the Festival.**

**The 5 Cents a Meal  
offering will be  
received on Sunday,  
December 28th.**



# Special Dates

- **Second Sunday of Advent**, *December 7, 2025*
- **Third Sunday of Advent**, *December 14, 2025*
- **First Day of Winter**, *December 21, 2025*
- **Fourth Sunday of Advent**, *December 21, 2025*
- **Christmas Eve**, *December 24, 2025*
- **Christmas Day**, *December 25, 2025*
- **New Year's Eve**, *December 31, 2025*







## CHRISTMAS JOY SPECIAL OFFERINGS

LEADERSHIP: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

# PREPARE THE WAY

—ISAIAH 40

**The Christmas Joy Offering  
will be received on  
Sunday, December 7th.**

Envelopes are enclosed in this  
issue of The Vision.



This offering supports two programs: current and retired church workers in financial need and students at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Thank you for your generosity.

# CHRISTMAS STOCKING TREE

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

### GENEROUSLY

---

Supporting  **Beginnings** Babies

---



## Choose Any Donation Item:

**Mittens • Hats • Socks • Gloves**  
**Scarves • Boots • Sweaters**  
**Coats • Pants • Snowsuits**



Thanks to the kindness of community members like you.

Supporting a local nonprofit organization serving hundreds of babies and their families every day through Early Intervention, Parent Education, Empowerment, and Sustainable Resources.

# CHRISTMAS STOCKING TREE

## CHRISTMAS IS AROUND THE CORNER-LET'S WARM THE HEARTS OF CHILDREN

As the Christmas season approaches and we prepare our homes and hearts to celebrate the birth of Christ, it's also a time to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas—**giving, compassion, and community.**

This year, the Mission Stewardship's Christmas Project will be collecting children's clothing for the charitable organization, **Beginnings, Inc.** As the temperatures drop, many children in our community are in need of something most of us take for granted: **warm clothing.** Beginnings has shared that there is a significant need.

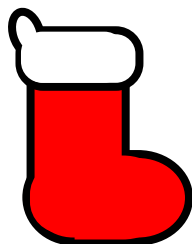
The Stocking Tree was placed in the front of the sanctuary on November 16, 2025.

Beginnings has asked for children's winter clothes ranging from premature babies to size 5T. They welcome donations of all kinds for boys and girls — from mittens and socks to sweaters, pants, and warm winter coats.

Each stocking will be labeled with the gender and clothing size. Feel free to decide what types of clothing—and how many items — to buy, based on the size and gender listed. For each donation, there will be two stockings.

Please take one with you for shopping, and sign the second one to leave on the tree as a record. Do not wrap the donations. Bring them in any Sunday in December and put them under the tree. The last day for donations will be December 28, 2025. The last day is after Christmas, since Beginnings hands out warm children's clothing throughout the winter months.

**Mission Stewardship Committee**  
Chairman: Joyce Gerlach





## Session Meeting Highlights October 2025

- Membership at 81
- Approved an Endorsement Grant for HealthStyles / Cardiac Rehab at Chan Soon-Shiong Medical Center to start a Silver Sneakers program.
- Reviewed the Draft Budget for 2026
- Sound upgrades were completed for the Chapel and Parlor
- Approved 7:30 P.M. as the starting time of the Christmas Eve service, with the instrumental prelude beginning at 7:00 P.M.
- Approved hiring a Covenant Pastor for a term of 36 months, which is renewable. It was also agreed to meet with the pastor annually for review.
- Issued a call to Rev. Danielle Kendig to fill the position of Covenant Pastor at First Johnstown.

*Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.*  
-Galatians 6:9







# CELEBRATING OUR MEMBERS

## Membership Anniversaries

We would like to recognize the following  
active members who are celebrating  
membership anniversaries  
in the month of December:

**33 years - Randy Freenock**

**25 years - Cheryl Gallagher**

**Happy Anniversary! We are blessed to  
have each of you in our church family.**



“THE VIRGIN WILL  
conceive  
and  
GIVE BIRTH  
to a  
son,”



14  
AND THEY WILL  
call him  
IMMANUEL”  
(which means “God with us”).  
MATTHEW 1:23, NIV

# December 2025

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 6:30 pm Nar-Anon	2 NO BIBLE STUDY	3	4	5 6:00 - 9:00 Festival of the Nativity	6 6:00 - 9:00 Festival of the Nativity
7 No Sunday School Worship 10:45 6-9 Festival of the Nativity	8 6:30 pm Nar-Anon	9 Bible Study 10:30	10	11	12	13
14 No Sunday School Worship 10:45	15 Women's Assoc. 12:00 PM  6:30 pm Nar-Anon	16 Bible Study 10:30	17	18	19	20
21 No Sunday School Worship 10:45 Christmas Choral Concert 3pm	22 6:30 pm Nar-Anon	23	24 CHRISTMAS EVE Prelude 7:00 PM Worship 7:30 PM	25  MERRY CHRISTMAS Office Closed	26 MERRY CHRISTMAS Office Closed	27
28 No Sunday School Worship 10:45  5 Cents a Meal Offering	29 6:30 pm Nar-Anon	30	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE			



## OUR STEWARDSHIP

<b>GIVING IN OCTOBER</b>		<b>YTD</b>
Member Giving	3809	48000
Major Repair Fund	90	1020
Organ Fund	0	45
Loose Offering	494	5641
Special Offerings	0	473
First Fruits	0	1123
<b>Total Giving</b>	<b>4393</b>	<b>56302</b>



## ATTENDANCE

October 07	-	42
October 12	-	31
October 19	-	26
October 26	-	35

**FOR TO US**  
**A SON IS GIVEN**



The Christmas Eve Service of Lessons & Carols will begin at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 24th, preceded by an instrumental prelude at 7:00 PM



# COMING SOON!

## 1st Presby Has Talent

Our annual talent show will be coming in January! Time to put your thinking cap on and start preparing your talent! Contact Pat Betts to participate.

If you, a family member, or friend from 1<sup>st</sup> Church has been admitted to the hospital and would like a visit, be sure to contact Pat Betts or Caroline in the church office. The lines of communication are not always open between the hospital and spiritual care visitors, and we don't want to miss anyone.



R each  
O ut  
T o  
O thers

GIVE GOD  
WHAT'S RIGHT,  
NOT WHAT'S LEFT

FOOD PANTRY  
ITEMS ARE  
COLLECTED  
EVERY SUNDAY!  
THANK YOU!!





## PUZZLE

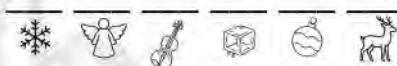


### GOOD NEWS TO THE SHEPHERDS

What did the angel of the Lord say to the shepherds?

**Directions:** Write the first letter of each picture on the lines.

“



”

**Luke 2:11, NIV**

# Christmas Card treasures



Turn old Christmas cards into beautiful keepsake ornaments! It's a fun, simple way to give new life to cards you've received and add a handmade touch to your tree.

## What you need:

- Christmas cards
- Scissors
- Glue
- Circle pattern (cut from cardboard or trace around object)
- Hole punch
- Yarn or ribbon
- Glitter (optional)



## What you do:

1. Trace a circle onto two Christmas cards.
2. Cut out the circles and glue the backs together.
3. Decorate the edges with glitter or ribbon for extra sparkle.
4. Punch a hole at the top and thread yarn or ribbon through to hang.



Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights.  
— James 1:17 (NIV)



## JOLLY ELF

Enjoy these kid-friendly elf jokes!

What's the first thing elves learn in school?

— The elf-abet

How do elves keep their hands so clean? — *They use lots of Santa-tiser!*

What do you call an elf who learns independently?

— *Elf-taught*

What's the best way to gain confidence? — *Believe in your elf.*

What is elves' favorite sport? — *Miniature golf*

What currency do elves use? — *Jingle bills*

What goes inside elves' pointy shoes? — *Their mistletoes.*

What do you get when a group of 11 elves adds another? — *Twelf!*

How many elves does it take to change a light bulb?

— *Ten: One to change it and nine to stand on one another's shoulders.*



## THE ADVENT WREATH

### Candles That Tell A Story

Lighting its candles each Sunday is a treasured tradition during the four weeks of Advent.

Depending on denomination, churches use different color combinations for the candles. Some place four blue candles around the wreath with a white one in the center, while others use all white. Many light purple candles on the first two Sundays, pink on the third, purple again on the fourth, and then a large white candle on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

Each part of the wreath carries symbolic meaning:

- The wreath: Its circular shape represents the everlasting love of God, having no beginning or end. The green symbolizes eternal life.
- The four candles: Mark the four weeks of Advent. One tradition says that each candle also represents 1,000 years, totaling 4,000 **years from Adam and Eve to Christ's birth.**
- Purple candles: in ancient times, purple was expensive and was considered the color of royalty and kings. On Christmas, Christ is proclaimed King of Kings. Purple also symbolizes humility and penitence. The first purple candle represents Hope; the second, Peace; and the final purple candle, Love.
- Blue candles: Blue is another color often used as a symbol of royalty. Some churches use blue candles to symbolize the night sky **and the anticipation of the announcement of Christ's birth. Blue also** symbolizes the beginning of a new creation as in the waters of Genesis 1.
- The pink candle: Lit on the third Sunday, it represents Joy and marks the halfway point of Advent.
- The white candle: The large white candle in the center is the Christ candle. Its light symbolizes Christ the Savior — **"the light of the world."**

The beauty and brightness from the glow of all five candles is a **reminder that Christ's life was the light for all earth's people** — "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it" (John 1:5, NRSV).

The Advent wreath is more than just greenery and candles—it's a symbol of watchfulness and growing joy as Christmas draws near.



- 1 Leslie Freenock**
- 1 Faye Huber**
- 2 Glenn Kresak**
- 4 Carrie Berezansky**
- 6 Liese Reeder**
- 6 Kevin Gerlach**
- 9 Nathan Braude**
- 11 Heith Bragg**
- 16 Joyce Gerlach**
- 16 Kasia Foster**
- 17 Kevin Porsch**
- 18 Dylan Berezansky**
- 21 Kelly Wagner**
- 24 Elexys Bickel**
- 28 Ava Kresak**

*Celebrating  
-WITH-  
you*



**Kris & Randy Cortese**  
**36 years**  
**on December 8th**

*There is no more lovely,  
friendly and charming  
relationship, communion  
or company than a good  
marriage. -Martin Luther*

HAPPY  
Birthday  
FROM YOUR  
CHURCH FAMILY





## The Tower of the Flock (Migdal Eder)

*-Submitted by Jim Ridella*

*Micah 4:8 (AMP)*

[8] And you, O tower of the flock, the hill and stronghold of the Daughter of Zion, unto you the former dominion shall come, the kingdom of the Daughter of Jerusalem.

“Daughter of Zion” is a poetic personification of the city of Jerusalem, and by extension, the people of Israel.

When Jacob came back to Canaan he settled in the place called Migdal. His wife Rachel died while giving birth to Benjamin and was buried in the area of Migdal Eder.

At the time of the birth of Jesus, the land around the Tower of the Flocks or Migdal Eder was the only parcel of land around Jerusalem that held the flocks of sheep. These sheep, raised by shepherd priests, were destined to become sacrifices in the Temple at Jerusalem. The lambs had to be without blemishes.

When the lambs were born, the shepherds (shepherd priest) delivered them very carefully and wrapped them in swaddling clothes (strips cut from worn high priest garments) and laid them in mangers until they calmed down and were able to walk to their mothers.

The only sheep flocks in this area of Judea, around Jerusalem, were sheep raised for sacrifices at the temple. The temple flocks of sheep were raised and watched by the shepherds all year round. The tower was used to watch over the numerous sheep to protect them. All other sheep flocks of Israel were further **out in the land near the “wilderness”**.

When Joseph and Mary came to Bethlehem, there was no room in any inn. They sought shelter in the manger area of the tower. When Mary delivered baby Jesus, most likely, she had the help of the Shepherd priests who had plenty of experience assisting in the delivery of baby lambs. After his



delivery, baby Jesus was even wrapped in swaddling clothes just like the lambs and placed in a manger. These lambs would later go to be the one year old lambs used for Temple sacrifice.

What a joy to know that even at Jesus' birth among the temple lambs, he was destined to be the sacrifice for us and also became our Lord and king as prophesied by Micah and other prophets.



# CHORAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PRESENTS

A  
**CLASSICS**  
■ CHRISTMAS ■



*Celebration*

MUSIC WITH MEANING

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2025**  
**3:00 PM • FREE ADMISSION**

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
**309 LINCOLN STREET**  
**JOHNSTOWN, PA 15901**

# HYMN SING

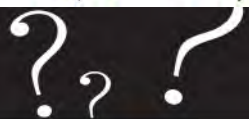
A decorative border featuring gingerbread cookies, snowflakes, and snow globes. The border is set against a light green background with small white dots. The elements include several gingerbread cookies in various shapes (stars, circles, and a snowman), snowflakes, and two snow globes. The snow globes show a winter scene with a snowman and a small house. The gingerbread cookies are decorated with icing and have a golden-brown color. The snowflakes are white and have a delicate, crystalline structure. The snow globes are clear with a silver base and a small silver ball on top. The entire border is framed by a thin white line.



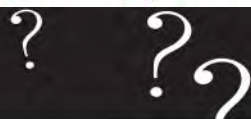


## +Christian Symbol+

**POINSETTIA** — This shrub, native to Mexico, is at the heart of legend about a poor girl who wanted to bring Baby Jesus a gift one Christmas Eve. As she walked to church, she gathered a bouquet of weeds — which Jesus miraculously transformed into lovely red flowers. Thus the poinsettia (named for Joel Poinsett, the U.S. ambassador to Mexico who first brought the plant to America) is known in Mexico as la flor de la Nochebuena (flower of the Holy Night). The poinsettia is also an ideal Christmas symbol because its leaves turn red when deprived of sunlight and its flowers (the red inner buds) bloom in December.



## Bible Quiz



Who told Mary that her child would be called “the Son of the Most High”?

- A. Zechariah
- B. Gabriel
- C. Simeon
- D. Joseph





**Rene Bacon (Gindlesperger)**

**Sarah Bantly (Muncert)**

**David Barrett (B. Thiel)**

**Family of Bill Barkhimer**

**The Don Bash Family**

**Bonnie Bash**

**Judy Bash**

**Dave & Dorothy Belz**

**Sherri Bennett (Mapes)**

**Chuck Benson**

**Robin Bergeron (Cruse)**

**Deb Bickel**

**Michelle & Heith Bragg**

**Family of Mary Cruse**

**Family of John Davis**

**George Demchak & Family  
(Koch)**

**Hunter Donaldson Family**

**Marlene Eisenhauer**

**Francis "Ike" Eisenhuth**

**A. Scott Eisenhuth (Ike)**

**Ashlee Fecko (Koch)**

**Richard Feller**

**Randy & Leslie Freenock**

**Dave & Marilyn Gehlman**

**Roy & Agnes Gindlesperger**

**Jacob Gram (Gerlach)**

**Griffith Family (Rummel)**

**Rex Hutzell (Davis)**

**Marlene James**

**Tom Koch & Family**

**Carolynn Kolesar**

**Ava & Dylan Kresak**

**Family of Mark Kresak**

**Peg Lambert**

**Walt Leitenberger**

**(Gindlesperger)**

**John Markley (Markley)**

**Bill & Bobbi Markley (Bragg)**

**Family of Connie Meyers**

**Emma Miller (Gerlach)**

**Serena Miller (Clark)**

**Family of George Moehler**

**Stephanie Neill (B. Thiel)**

**Ron & Brenda Noon**

**Tom Osterbloom**

**(Gindlesperger)**

**Larry & Susan Pearce**

**Sue Porsch**

**Pat Ripple**

**Tina Risbon**

**Kent Roach**

**Sheila Rogerson (B. Thiel)**

**Debbie Rummel**

**John & Judy Sierocky (Foster)**

**Family of Michelle Smith**

**J. Andrew Smith**

**(Gindlesperger)**

**Paul Sprague (Williams)**

**Evan Sutching (Rummel)**

**Owen Szanto (Gindlesperger)**

**Zowalla Thiel**

**Trista Wagner**

**Jackie Weaver**

**Susan Weaver (B. Thiel)**

**Cynthia Weimer (Weaver)**

**Lynne & Bill Williams**

**Sharon Yoder (Bash)**

**Yost Family**

## Serving in the Military

**Luther Flores**

**Richard Kovach**



## CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA DISPLAY

POINSETTIAS will adorn our sanctuary again this Christmas. If you would like to order one or more poinsettias to place in memory or honor of someone special, please fill out the form provided below and send with your remittance by December 5th to the church office. Please make checks payable to First Presbyterian Church. You may also order by calling the church office at (814) 536-8141.

**ORDERS MUST BE RECEIVED BY DECEMBER 5, 2025**

6" Red, White, Pink, or "Jingle Bells" (red w/white speckles)

Poinsettia - \$8.75 ea.

**YOUR  
NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

(as you want it printed in the bulletin)

(circle one) **In Memory / Honor of:**

**Color:**

☐ Red

☐ White

☐ Pink

☐ Jingle Bells

(circle one) **In Memory / Honor of:**

**Color:**

☐ Red

☐ White

☐ Pink

☐ Jingle Bells

(circle one) **In Memory / Honor of:**

**Color:**

☐ Red

☐ White

☐ Pink

☐ Jingle Bells

**Quantity Ordered** \_\_\_\_\_ **Total Enclosed** \_\_\_\_\_

**\*THE BULK OF OUR ORDER MUST BE PLACED TO  
THE GREENHOUSE BY DECEMBER 5, 2025.**

First Presbyterian Church  
309 Lincoln Street  
Johnstown, PA 15901



**GOD'S BLESSINGS TO:**