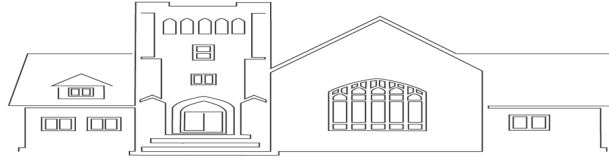


FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
NEWTON, IOWA
641-792-2790

"The Mission of First Presbyterian Church of Newton, Iowa is to share the love of God and grow the body of Christ through joyful worship and fellowship, devoted prayer and study, and humble service in our community and world."

THE MESSENGER



FEBRUARY 2018

Meghan's Musings

Reflecting and Visioning

The spiritual practice of contemplation has been famously defined by Jesuit theologian Walter Burghardt as taking a "long, loving look at the real." In the spirit of contemplation, I would like to invite you to join me in taking a long, loving look at the real of our church family. Our church is facing some real challenges; unfortunately, as our congregation ages, we find that we are losing members at a much faster rate than we are bringing in new members. And it's not our fault: most of the members we're losing are to death or moving away. And it's not just us. These are challenges that almost all churches throughout the country across denominational lines are facing. Knowing that we are not alone in this situation can be both comforting and discomfoting. On one hand, knowing that it's "not just us" can be a relief but on the other hand, knowing that everyone else is going through the same thing can make our situation seem hopeless.

In our January retreat, I asked the deacons and session members to take some time reflecting on the past and envisioning the future of First Presbyterian Church of Newton, Iowa. It's important to remind ourselves what FPCN means to us and why it makes a difference in our lives in order to not only survive but thrive long into the future.

Below are the questions on which the officers have been asked to reflect. I invite all of our church family to do the same. I look forward to hearing from you what memories, hopes and goals these questions evoke for you, as well as what you're willing to do to help achieve those goals and dreams.

Looking at the last year in this church (or in your life of faith):

- *What was your most memorable day/experience?
- *For what are you most grateful?
- *Who has inspired/influenced you most?
- *What gave you the most energy?
- *What is one of the most valuable lessons you have learned?

Continued on page 2

Be Praying For ...

- ✚ Tim Leonard as he continues to recover at home following surgery and a 12-day stay in the hospital, which started Christmas Day. It will likely be March or April before he will be able to be up and about. At this time, they are requesting no visitors, but would certainly appreciate your prayers and cards.
- ✚ Charlie Bruce, Jen Norvell's father, who is home recovering from outpatient surgery to put a stint in a vein of his leg. He will have the other one done in a week.
- ✚ Those who are battling the flu or suffering from other medical conditions.
- ✚ Those facing uncertainties at their jobs, due to possible downsizings.
- ✚ The people of our country and the world as we continue in such uncertain times.

Safety Measures

For some time, the kitchen door on the East side of the building has been locked when the greeters go up to Worship. This has been done as a safety measure for those in the nursery. A suggestion was received from a member that perhaps the elevator door should also be locked during worship.

Session discussed this at the Leadership retreat and agreed this was a good idea. As of Sunday, January 21, the Host Elder or Deacon began locking the elevator door and turning off the toggle switch when they go up for worship.

The front door will remain unlocked during this time and needs to be used should you happen to run a little late and find the door you normally used locked.

Continued from page 2

Looking ahead to this upcoming year, in this church (or in your life of faith):

- *What is the one thing that would make FPCN's year great?
- *What will you do to make the upcoming year as good as, if not better than, last year?
- *On what do you want to devote more time?
- *In which area(s) do you want to develop yourself?
- *What do you want to achieve this year?
 - *What will you do (or not do) to achieve your goals and dreams for FPCN?

My greatest hope for this church family is that we each as individuals would commit to growing in our own relationship with God so that we as a church family will do the same. May it be so.

Building and Grounds

George Wilkening, Chair

We are having problems with our older furnaces. We have a total of seven in the building. We may need to replace them in the next 1-2 years. The one that heats and cools the offices is the oldest.

Regarding the sanctuary ceiling, the committee has received one bid for \$5,000, another for \$2,250. We are waiting on the receipt of a third bid. Manleys have found a possible leak above the chancel area, so repair and repainting will have to wait until we know exactly what the problem is. We had hoped to have this taken care of in January, but obviously that won't happen.

Kid Assist will be asking the Jasper County Foundation for funds to refurbish the bathroom and shower in Friendship House and make them handicapped accessible. Volunteer labor would be needed to complete the project. Further information will be coming as it is known.

Financial Status of Church

A letter has gone out from the Session regarding the current financial status of our church. As a church family, we need to face and help eliminate the deficit we have for our 2018 budget.

We appreciate the amount many of you have already pledged. That is how we are able to build our budget for the year. Unfortunately, we are coming up short and cannot continue to draw the difference from our reserves.

The Session is asking each member to contribute an additional \$5 per week. That would amount to a Starbucks drink or a sandwich at your favorite fast food restaurant.

For the past few years, Session has also asked members to pay their per capita, which is \$44 per person this year. A description of what "per capita" means is found on page 6.

In both cases, we understand that some members cannot make this additional commitment, while others can pay more. We ask you to help in any way you can.

Worship and Music

Linda Kirchhoff, Chair

The committee didn't meet in January. As noted on page 7, Mary Jane Tripp has been hard at work and secured the members that will prepare breakfast or offer a devotion during the Wednesday mornings during lent. Please read the article on page 7 for times and further information.



OUR CHURCH AT WORK

The following officers are now serving our church. This is a listing you can save so you will know who the current Ruling Elders and Deacons are. The listing also lets you know when each group meets and who the Moderators are along with the Clerk of Session and Secretary of the Deacons.

On January 20 our officers held their yearly retreat. At this time, the Elders determined their committee assignments and these are listed after their name.. The committee chair's name is in bold. On January 21, the newly elected Elders and Deacons in attendance were ordained and installed during our church service. Those unable to be there will be installed at a later date.

SESSION

Meets third Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.
 Rev. Meghan Davis, Moderator
 Toni Peska, Clerk of Session

2018

Linda Kirchhoff (Worship & Music)
Marilyn McCallister (Mission)
George Wilkening (Building & Grounds)
Tara Zehr (Church Life)

2019

Larry Anderson (Worship & Music)
Karen Quinn (Christian Nurture)
Jen Norvell (Budget & Finance)
 Kay Parsons (Church Life)

2020

Mary Roskilly (Budget & Finance)
Mickey Van Baale (Personnel)
 Helyn Wohlwend

BOARD OF DEACONS

Meets second Sunday, 9:00 a.m.
 Diane Moles, Moderator
 Dave Stolper, Secretary

2018

Dana Hashman
 Elsie Nelson
 Dave Stolper

2019

Barb Taylor
 Diane Moles
 Nancy Mott
 Kevin Peska

2020

Linda Erickson
 Barb Gallaher
 Janet Shields
 Shirley Stevens

Please hold them in your prayers, as they begin their leadership of our church, and remember our pledge to them of upholding their unanimous decisions in the operations of our church.

At the regular Session meeting the following elections, for a one-year term, were held:

George Wilkening, President of the Corporation
 Toni Peska, Clerk of Session
 Cheryl Ritter, Treasurer

Church Life

Tara Zehr, Chair

Our committee met to discuss the events for 2018 and get them on the calendar. The dates and events were reviewed, with the goal of one event per month. January already has the annual meeting potluck and the Grinnell basketball trip, so no Church Life event was planned for that month. Also nothing was planned in June as that is typically left open for the annual ice cream social.

February 18, 2018, 11:30 a.m.	Potato Bar
March 10, 2018, 5:00 p.m.	Dinner and high school play jointly with Membership Committee
April 1, 2018, 9:15 a.m.	Easter Breakfast
May 27, 2018, 9:00 a.m.	Graduation Breakfast jointly with Christian Nurture Committee. Natalie Camp and Garrett Sturtz - graduates.
July 15, 2018, 10:00 a.m.	Worship at Woodland (\$30 shelter rent; Session approval needed), jointly with Worship and Music Committee
August 26, 2018, 10:00 a.m.	Rally Day ecumenical worship service
September 16, 2018, 4:00 p.m.	Hayride and weenie roast at the Ritter Camp
October 14, 2018, 4:00 p.m.	Progressive Dinner
November 18, 2018, 11:30 a.m.	Thanksgiving Feast and Communion, jointly with Worship and Music Committee
December 16, 2018, 4:00 p.m.	Christmas caroling followed by chili supper



Our January meeting was held during the Leadership retreat on January 20. Business taken care of during our meeting was:

- * New deacons were welcomed, followed by a review of the purpose and duties of deacons.
- * Members also received updated contact information sheets as well as the 2018 schedule of visitations.
- * They were also reminded that if duties needed to be switched, they should notify both Toni Peska (Clerk of Session) and Barbara Vasquez (Administrative Assistant).
- * The minutes of the December meeting were read and approved.
- * Reports of December visits were discussed.
- * Diane Moles agreed to serve as Moderator, and Dave Stolper agreed to continue as secretary.
- * A sign-up sheet was passed around for devotions and flower delivery.
- * Diane read a thank you note from Friends in Hope for the \$100 donation by the deacons in late 2017.
- * Meghan closed the meeting with a Scripture reading and prayer.

Diane Moles, Moderator

MEMBERSHIP



MOMENT

In addition to the activities our committee oversees regularly (greeters, bake & take, volunteer reminder, etc.) we were involved in the following during January:

January 13-Grinnell College basketball games-we saw both the men’s and women’s games against Beloit College. They were very good games. They were close games and Grinnell won both. As is our tradition we went to Pagliai’s Pizza afterward. We didn’t have quite as good attendance as usual due to other commitments and illness, but we had a great time and plan to do it again next year.

Warren Erickson arranged for Ekram Kachu, from the Sudanese congregation in Des Moines, to preach our sermon on January 14 and in cooperation with the Mission Committee a soup and bread lunch was provided afterward. Ekram and several other Sudanese in attendance spoke at the lunch also. It was a very interesting and worthwhile morning.

January 19-a number of us attended the Newton High School basketball game (and wore our church t-shirts). Newton played Indianola. Unfortunately they lost but it was still a fun game. Allie Norvell performed with the Pacesetters at halftime. We had about 15 in attendance not counting participants and their families. Great turnout!

We will be attending the Pacesetters winter program on Feb. 3. More info to come via intra-church communication and email. Come out and support Allie.

On March 10 our committee will be working with Church Life to provide a meal at the church prior to going to the NHS play in which Natalie Camp will be taking part.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Val McKee for moderating the committee the last three years while she was on the session. She did a really good job and it was a pleasure working with her. I look forward to working with the next moderator who has not yet been determined.

Gary Parsons, moderator pro tem

What exactly is the per capita?

Every Presbyterian Church (USA) congregation is asked to pay a per member assessment (per capita). Per capita is not membership dues. About twelve years ago, the General Assembly approved the following definition of per capita. “Per capita is an opportunity for all communicant members of the Presbyterian Church through the governing bodies to participate equally, responsibly, and independently by sharing the cost of coordination and evaluation of mission; of performing ecclesiastical, legislative, and judicial functions that identify a reformed church, while at the same time strengthening the sense of community among all Presbyterians.” In short, per capita is the way churches share in the work of the wider church family: The Presbytery of Des Moines, General Assembly (national level) as well as the international mission. Assessing based on membership makes it equitable across churches. Some of each member’s assessment goes to each level of governance: Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly.

2018 Lenten Breakfasts and Devotions

A wonderful tradition that continues in our church is the Lenten breakfasts and devotions. These start on Ash Wednesday and continue every Wednesday morning through Lent. We start breakfast at 6:45 am with devotions following. We strive to finish by 7:45 to 7:50 for those needing to get to work.

Below is the schedule for this year. A big “thank you” goes out to Mary Jane Tripp for making the contacts to find those who will prepare the meal and those who offer the devotions each week.

We hope to see many of you there.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Breakfast</u>	<u>Devotions</u>
2/14	Tom & Nancy Mott	Rev. Meghan Davis
2/21	Carl & Jane Repp	Dave Stolper
2/28	John & Barb Taylor	Barb Taylor
3/ 7	Gary & Kay Parsons	George Wilkening
3/14	Dave Stolper& Linda Curtis-Stolper	Linda Curtis-Stolper
3/21	Don & Sharon Black	Don Black
3/28	Larry & Shari DeCook	Mickey Van Baale

We have been talking a lot lately that we are truly a family - a church family. One thing we do within our families is try to make things easier for each other. Well ... a request for help comes from Barbara Vasquez, our church administrative assistant. Below are three areas that would really help out:

- Fill out the memo line of your check
- Giving Statements for those members who have not picked them up on the last 2 Sundays will be mailed 1/29/18.
- Change of address, telephone number or email, please advise

And an added one is:

- Pick up your Messenger on the Sunday they are distributed (normally the last Sunday of the month or the first Sunday of the next month) and also pick up and deliver ones to your neighbors that aren't in church. This cuts back on postage costs.

Budget and Finance Corner

Jen Norvell, Chair

Operating Revenue and Expenses for the month:

- ◇ Pledges for the month of December were \$12,108. This was \$1,464 above budget for the month.
- ◇ Other Regular Giving, which represents donations from people who tithe, but do not pledge, was \$2,506 for the month, which was \$1,669 above budget.

Other Income for the month:

- ◇ Additional Prepaid 2018 pledges were received in the amount of \$6,800. The total 2018 pledges in the amount of \$12,969.78 will be shown as income in January.
- ◇ The Christmas Joy offering totaled \$1,387 and an additional \$10 was received for the One Great Hour special offering. The Rural Harvest offering of \$355 was remitted to Presbytery.
- ◇ The Foundation investment account value increased \$2,909.31 during the month.

Expenses for the month:

- ◇ The Deacons made donations to the Food Bank of Iowa (\$100), Salvation Army (\$100), and paid for the poinsettias for Deacon visits (\$94.04).
- ◇ The International Mission fund received \$8 for the sale of olive oil and \$655 in contributions for Days for Girls. They paid expenses of \$139.85 for Days for Girls supplies.
- ◇ The Undesignated Mission fund paid \$100 for Neighbors Helping Neighbors, \$480.87 to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, and \$346.49 for ramp building expenses. It also transferred \$490.88 in style show profits to the Ramp Building fund.

In total for the month, expenses were \$1,503.18 above budget.

Year-to-date through December:

- ◇ Pledges are \$1,331 under budget.
- ◇ Other Regular Giving is \$5,250 over budget.
- ◇ Investment Income is \$10,433 over budget.
- ◇ Expenses are \$2,165 over budget.

For the year, the church is experiencing a shortfall of \$13,605. The 2017 anticipated annual shortfall was \$26,417.



Mission Committee

Marilyn McCallister, Chair

The purpose of the Mission Committee is to recommend, approve, manage, and terminate mission projects. The committee communicates about opportunities for mission involvement and promotes congregational participation.

** Neighbors Helping Neighbors has decided to provide “laundry night” on the second and fourth Monday nights of every month. These events allow persons who don't have access to laundry facilities an opportunity to wash and dry their clothing and bedding. Laundry soap, stain removers, dryer sheets, and plastic bags for carrying clean clothing are provided. These nights depend on the community for two essential resources: volunteers and lots of quarters.

Laundry night volunteers act as friends and helpers for the persons bringing in laundry. Volunteers put quarters in machines, may help move laundry from washers to dryers, and may help fold dry items. Volunteers make sure persons being helped find the food that is provided for supper, ask if there are other resources available that night that may be useful, and serve as friendly and caring contacts for persons who are not always given lots of positive attention. A “team” of volunteers for one laundry night would include four-six volunteers for the first two hours of the night (4 pm-6 pm or 5 pm-7 pm) and three-four volunteers for the second shift (6 pm-8 pm or 7 pm-9 pm). The hope is that First Presbyterian volunteers will be able to cover both shifts of laundry nights for one month (two laundry nights) sometime in 2018. Persons interested in volunteering for a couple hours on a Monday night are encouraged to contact Linda Curtis-Stolper (641-840-2417).

Persons who have quarters to donate should look for the laundry detergent jug in the narthex on Sunday mornings. Quarters can be left in the jug for collection and delivery to the next laundry night. Rolls of quarters or bills are also welcome! A “regular” sized load of laundry costs \$2.25 (9 quarters); a “jumbo” sized load costs \$7.00. One quarter buys six minutes of dryer time - think about how long it takes to dry a load of jeans or socks... Thank you for your generous support of this mission!

** Thank you for your generous donations to the Christmas Joy Offering. Total collected was \$1,387.00 which celebrates God's indescribable gift to us, Jesus Christ, as well as the gift of our church leaders – past, present, and future.

** Isaiah 58 is the basis for this year's One Great Hour of Sharing Offering! During this Lenten season, we will identify the needs the OGHS provides for and how you can participate. Each Sunday, a symbol of the week's emphasis, the verses related to the day, and some international food at coffee time will be shared. We hope these ideas will help you understand the OGHS, its mission and emphasis.

** Days for Girls final tally for feminine hygiene kits completed in 2017 is 192. Forty kits were sent to Austin, Texas to be taken to Zambia, Africa in January, 2018. Plans are to send 100 kits to Marion, Iowa to be taken to Haiti in February, 2018. The next workshop is scheduled for Thursday, January 25, 9-2 pm, in fellowship hall.

** We continue encouraging the monthly Salvation Army Food Pantry donations to benefit those in need in our community. Standard needed food items to fill the pantry shelves include: mac and cheese, Tuna Helper, canned soups, and ramen noodles.



2018 BIRTHDAYS & EVENTS

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

				1 6:30a Early Men's Group 9a Men's Group 3p Chair Yoga	2	3 7p Pacesetter Winter Show
4 Jen Norvell	5	6	7 Joan Rusk 7p Choir	8	9	10 Carl Repp 8:30a - 3p Presbytery Meeting in Johnston
11 9a Deacons	12 5p Personnel	13 Dylan Camp 11a Gentle Yoga 3:30p Mission	14 Valerie Barney Susan Weeks Ash Wednesday 6:45a Lenten Breakfast 9:30a Women's Bible Study 5:15p Membership 7p Choir	15 6:30a Early Men's Group 9a Men's Group 3p Chair Yoga	16	17
18	19	20 11a Gentle Yoga 6:30p Session	21 6:45a Lenten Breakfast 9:30a Women's Bible Study 7p Choir	22 9a-2p Days for Girls 3p Chair Yoga	23 Articles due for the Messenger	24 Sandy Cheney
25	26	27 11a Gentle Yoga	28 6:45a Lenten Breakfast 9:30a Women's Bible Study 7p Choir		9 00 a Adult Sunday School 10:00 a Fellowship 10:30 a Worship 11:30 a Fellowship	

**SCHEDULE
OF**



VOLUNTEERS

February	4	11	18	25
Worship Leader <i>Mickey Van Baale</i>	Deanna Manley	Gary Parsons	Jane Repp	Linda Campbell
Host Elder/Deacon <i>Church Life</i>	Elsie Nelson	Barb Gallaher	Jen Norvell	Mary Roskilly
Greeters <i>Julie Brodersen</i>	Terry Rickers Bev Rossow	Cole Doerring Carroll Brodersen	Chris & Peggy Lickiss	Janet Shields Kim or Kert Schnell
Ushers <i>Mickey Van Baale</i>	Dan & Cheryl Ritter	Gary & Kay Parsons	George Wilkening Shirley Stevens	Terry & Cat Rickers
Audio <i>Doug Cutts</i>	Shirley Stevens	Kyle Doerring	Erick Zehr	Dan Ritter
Counters <i>Budget & Finance</i>	Jonnie Carpenter Sandy Cheney	Jen Norvell Tom Weeks	Terry Rickers Peggy/Chris Lickiss	Mickey Van Baale Bev Rossow
Bread Ministry Baker <i>Barb Taylor</i>	Linda Campbell	Jane Repp	Val McKee	Dixie Zegers
Bread Ministry Taker <i>Barb Taylor</i>	Linda Campbell	Carol Russell	Toni Peska	Dana Hashman
Communion Set up <i>Worship & Music`</i>	George Wilkening Helyn Wohlwend			

First Presbyterian Church
PO Box 7
220 N 2nd Ave E
Newton, Iowa 50208

641-792-2790

Return Service Requested

Lectionary —

February, 2018

February 4 - 5th Sunday after Epiphany

Isa. 40:21-31; *Ps. 147:1-11, 20c*;
1 Cor. 9:16-23; Mark 1:29-39

February 11 - Transfiguration of the Lord

2 Kings 2:1-12; *Ps. 50:1-6*;
2 Cor. 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9

February 18 - 1st Sunday in Lent

Gen. 9:8-17; *Ps. 25:1-10*;
1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15

February 25 - 2nd Sunday in Lent

Gen. 17:1-7, 15-16; *Ps. 22:23-31*;
Rom. 4:13-25; Mark 8:31-38

March, 2018

March 4 - 3rd Sunday in Lent

Ex. 20:1-17; *Ps. 19*; 1 Cor. 1:18-25;
John 2:13-22

March 11 - 4th Sunday in Lent

Num.21:4-9; *Ps. 107:1-3, 17-22*;
Eph. 2:1-10; John 3:14-21

March 18 - 5th Sunday in Lent

Jer. 31:31-34; *Ps. 51:1-12* or
Ps. 119:9-16; Heb. 5:5-10; John 12:20-33

March 25 - Palm/Passion Sunday

Palms: Mark 11:1-11 or John 12:12-16;
Ps. 118:1-2, 19-29
Passion: Isa. 50:4-9a; *Ps. 31:9-16*;
Phil. 2:5-11; Mark 14:1-15:47 or
Mark 15:1-39 (40-47)