

**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



JANUARY, 2014

Message from Pastor Linda

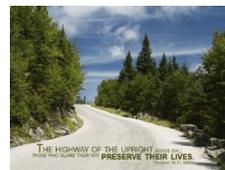
I have fallen into the habit of choosing the Scripture passages and creating probable sermon titles for the coming month before writing this message for each month's Messenger. This has usually resulted in a connecting theme (at least in my thinking) between the sermons for that month. The "theme" for January could be "travel".

Now, travel in January in Iowa is frequently an adventure, to say the least. Trips taken at this time of the year in this part of the world may be completely normal and as expected, with no surprises of any sort. Some winter trips allow us to witness incredible scenes of beauty – freshly fallen snow or ice-encased trees and bushes are beautiful when reflecting sunlight with a crystal-clear blue sky above. However, going places this month may involve allowing extra time, dealing with dangerous road surfaces or visibility challenges, packing extra clothes and blankets and equipment "just in case"... And there are times when travel plans get postponed or outright cancelled because the journey is not worth the risk.

It strikes me that this presents an interesting parallel with traveling through life with Jesus. On many days we may not do, say, or think anything that particularly identifies us as being Christians to those around us. (This is unfortunate, but that's another message...!) Some days, we may witness to our faith and have opportunities to give or receive great blessings as a result. But there are those other journeys, the ones that are filled with hard work and discomfort and challenges. While not usually the case in Iowa, in some parts of the world traveling as a Christian may involve very real and present danger.

Jesus did lots of traveling. He was constantly on the move, going to new places and encountering new people as He spread the message of God's love to as many people as possible. As disciples joined Jesus, they too were sent out to new and different locations with instructions about what to do and say when they got there, and with assurances that God was with them even when they met opposition. I don't remember Jesus ever telling one of the disciples, "It's too risky to go to that town. You can stay home today."

I think there's a message for us in those "marching orders". If we are sincere in our commitment to live as followers of Jesus, we need to be ready and willing to go wherever we are sent, regardless of the weather conditions or attitudes of people we might encounter along the way. Whether we're using car, plane, train, dogsled, skis – whether it's clear and dry or icy with white-out visibility – whether the earthly destination is across town or across the world – we are called to go in the name of Jesus, and to be ready to serve others in His name when and where we meet them. As with travel in January in Iowa, it may not be comfortable, but we are being sent. Let's get packed and ready to go!



Be Praying For:

- + Betty Lou Johnson, who is dealing with physical challenges.
- + Warren Erickson, who fell on the ice Saturday, December 21 and broke his shoulder.
- + Elaine Vander Broek, whose nephew-in-law died unexpectedly last week, leaving a wife and four young children.
- + Dave Shannon's brother who has brain cancer and isn't doing well.
- + Elsie Nelson's granddaughter, Peyton.
- + The delegation which will be leaving January 21 for a trip to Muñoces.
- + The new Ruling Elders and Deacons as they begin their work on behalf of our church.
- + Any others we may be carrying on our hearts.

Worship & Music Committee

Kim DeGraff, Chairperson

We would like to thank all the volunteers who enhanced the services and helped organize many different events during the Advent and Christmas season.

Our thanks goes out to George Wilkening, who led the December 29 worship service in song and history of some of our favorite Christmas carols/hymns.

Sara Hopkins has graciously agreed to fill the pulpit January 12th, while Linda C-S is attending her son's wedding that weekend. Congrats to the Stolper family!

Thank you to each of you who helped to make the 2013 Advent Book a success. Perhaps you composed an article that appeared in the book, or perhaps you assisted with the preparation to mail the books to members. Your efforts are greatly appreciated by the co-editors and the many persons who enjoyed reading the book during the advent season.

We are so thankful to Jenny Verwers for her efforts toward the book. Thank you so much.

Co-Editors Marilyn McCallister and Jane Repp



- ◆ **Ordination and Installation of Officers – January 5 during Worship.**
- ◆ **Elder/Deacon Training Retreat – January 11, Held at First Presbyterian Church starting at 9:00 am, noon potluck.**
- ◆ **Annual Congregation and Corporation Meeting – January 26.**

A potluck meal will be served immediately following worship on January 26, preceding the Annual Meeting. Please bring a dish to share. Table service and drinks will be furnished. At this meeting, the congregation will receive the reports of the various committees, receive the 2014 budget, which has been approved by the Session and vote on the compensation package for Interim Pastor Linda.

Following the Congregational Meeting, a Corporation meeting will be held to approve the bylaws that have been changed due to the new form of government. A copy of the revised bylaws has been in the church office the past 2 months for your review and is also on the website. Please read it prior to the meeting on January 26.

What a blessing I have been given – the opportunity to live, love, learn and serve in this place at this time! Thank you so very much for all the gifts you have given me: gifts of your ideas and enthusiasm, gifts of your support and care, gifts of your patience and understanding.

May your Christmas shine bright with the light of the love of the newborn baby, and may your new year be filled with reasons to say, "Thanks be to God!"

With my deepest gratitude and love,

Pastor Linda

From the Deacons

The Deacons continued making their visits in December, spreading some Christmas cheer.

All funds we donate are made possible by the gifts received from the loose offering on communion Sundays. From our fund, \$150 was given to the Salvation Army for Christmas needs and \$100 to RRCAP (Red Rock Community Action Program) for heat energy assistance.

In January, we will welcome Sandy Cheney, Sara Hopkins, Nancy Mott and Jeanette Shannon to the Board of Deacons. Sara will serve as Moderator, and Dave Stolper will continue as our off board secretary.

We express our heartfelt thanks to retiring Deacons Jay Koenen, Kristin Stanton and Warren Erickson. Their dedication has been greatly appreciated.

My term will also expire. It has been my sincere honor to have worked with so many wonderful, caring individuals during my six years on the Board, five of those years as Moderator. The people we have visited have touched my heart more than words can express, and I will always remember the times we have shared. My best wishes are given to the new board as they continue this vital ministry of our church.

Linda Kirchhoff, Moderator



Sermon Schedule for January, 2014

Jan. 5 - He Chose Us Ephesians 1:3-14, Holy Communion, Ordination and Installation of new officers

Jan. 12 - Sara Hopkins will be leading worship and preaching

Jan. 19 - Serving the Servant Isaiah 49:1-7, John 1:29-42 (Blessing and Commissioning of Delegation to El Salvador)

Jan. 26 - G.P.S. Isaiah 9:1-4, Matthew 4:12-23

Budget and Finance Corner

Bill Shields, Chairperson

Pledges for the month of November were \$13,970. This was \$2,220 above budget for the month. Other regular giving for the month was \$1,210, significantly above budget for the month, as we have been experiencing all year. Total expenses were \$3,613 below budget for the month.

Year-to-date pledges are \$6,031 below budget. Expenses are \$20,619 under budget.

The Foundation received a contribution from Joyce Nicholson's memorial. The Memorial Fund received contributions in memory of Dorothy Eaton. We received \$3,850 in investment income from the Foundation account, which transferred to the church capital maintenance fund. An additional \$50 was received for the Rural Harvest offering, so a total of \$437 will be remitted in December.



Emergency Closure of the Church

With winter weather approaching, we have reviewed and updated our policies at First Presbyterian. In the event of severe weather, any changes to scheduled activities at the church will be communicated to KCOB Radio. They have assured us such information will be sent out over all 3 of their stations (1280 AM, 95.9 FM and KRTI 106.7 FM which covers Grinnell, Marshalltown, parts of Des Moines, etc.) In addition we have

established an account with KCCI Television and WHO Radio. When severe weather occurs, check these sources. If First Presbyterian is not mentioned on any of these, then there is no change in our plans. However, if you have any doubts, please err on the side of caution and be safe! The Session

Highlights from Session

Dave Boyd, Clerk of Session

- Approved a budget for 2014
- Approved fund raisers for El Salvador and Work Week
- Heard a report on the progress of the Presbytery's transition to a new Task Force format which Mickey will be active in. Her work supporting congregations in need will continue
- Set a deadline of January 15 to have all committee reports to Jenny as preparation for our Annual Meeting January 26.
- Received information that the Per Capita assessment for 2014 will be \$37.00

This year our church had an entry in the Christmas lighting parade for the second year in a row. As we did the last time we featured the choir with some differences. This year we invited anyone to join. There was no need for them to be a choir member and we did have several "extras". Another difference this year was that there was no attempt to align the carols we sang with the theme. We just sang those good old well known Christmas carols and a lot of the crowd joined in. I would like to thank Cathy Rickers for arranging the entry decorations, Carl and Jane Repp for the generator, Larry and Linda Anderson for the trailer, and Doug and Ann Cutts for the pickup and for picking up and returning the trailer. Rachel Rickers and Samantha Cutts joined us in the preparation of the entry before the parade started. We had around 20 people in the parade which was great! Afterward we were invited to Joan Tyler's for hot chocolate and treats. It was a really fun event. We hope you can join us next year.

The Membership Committee is planning to arrange another church trip to a Grinnell College men's basketball game. If you haven't already heard about them let me simply say that if you enjoy basketball at all you must see them play at least once. They play a VERY fast paced game with lots of scoring. They usually are the highest scoring men's basketball team in the U.S. and have been for 10-15 years. They average about 120 points per game and scored 173 in one game this year. One of their team members holds the record for most points scored in a game (for all divisions, I think) at 138 points last year. He has scored over 100 once this year and 78 once this year. We will probably be going on January 25th which is a Saturday. There will be an opportunity for

Work Week 2014

The Work Week steering committee has met twice in the past month to set the wheels in motion for our 2014 trip. We have identified several possibilities as destinations and will be choosing one soon. The dates for the trip have been identified: July 5 to 12. Since July 4 falls on Friday, we chose to plan for a trip requiring one day of travel rather than two. Another aspect we are making a priority is having opportunities for construction work.

We are basically starting over with funding for Work Week, so several fundraisers are being planned. In addition to the annual ice cream social, which is planned for June 3, 2014, Mode Huis will be doing a spring style show similar to the one we hosted last fall. That is scheduled for April 11.

Mark your calendars now for our first fundraiser, which will be after church on January 12. We will be hosting a free-will offering lunch following worship. At that time, we will announce where we are going on work week and give additional information to those interested in making the trip.

Youth and parents, please pray and listen to God to see if you are being called to go on this trip. It is open to any youth going into the 9th grade. We do know that 2 adults and perhaps 3 youth from the Brooklyn Presbyterian church will be going with us. Don't miss out on this rich experience of being a community of God serving others.

The Steering Committee -- Larry & Linda Anderson, Julie Fisher, Dana Hashman, Mickey Van Baale and George Wilkening

carpooling or we can simply meet at Darby Fieldhouse. The game starts at 1:00 and they play Ripon College. We have done this several times before and we usually go to Pagliai's for pizza after but since it is an early game we may want to return to Newton for pizza. We can decide later. Please put it on your calendars and join us. I will keep you updated on this through Church Happenings, bulletin and announcements.

Gary Parsons, chair



Christian Nurture

Virginia Bennett, Chair

All Church Pageant:

Over 65 people participated in the All Church Pageant on Sunday, December 15. We had Marys, Josephs, Angels, Animals, Shepherds, Stars and Wise People. The pictures below show just a sampling of those who participated. Thank you to the Christian Nurture Committee: Stephanie Critchfield, Jen Norvell, Kelly Koenen and Virginia Bennett for putting this together and helping the "actors" get into costume. Special thanks also to Pastor Linda for giving the cues for people to come forward, to Sandy Smit for playing and to Jen Ventling for being the narrator. And a big thank you to all who participated. What a nice surprise to have such a high level of enthusiasm and participation.

WOW:

Tentatively the dates for the next session of WOW is set for January 15 to February 19. Please watch the Church Happenings and bulletins for more information.



All Church Pageant - 2013

Josephs and angels , stars and animals, shepherds and Wise People all joined together singing hymns of praise to the new born King. "Oh come let us adore him, Christ, the King."

Mission Committee

By Linda Erickson, Chair

Wednesday Night Community Meals

We will once again be serving meals on the 4th Wednesday. Our meal will be on January 22 with a menu of tuna and noodles, peas and frosted angel food cake. Helpers are needed for food preparation, serving and clean up. Please contact Barb Taylor at 792-6990 or barbjohn@pcpartner.net, if you can help in any way. Also, there are 5 Wednesdays in January, so the 5th week will be an all church meal on January 29. The menu for that night will be a super nachos meal - all of the ingredients you can think of that go into a Mexican salad with tortilla chips. The committee decided that they would set up food prep from 11-2 for this all church time and serving from 4:30- 7 to facilitate signing up to help.

Delegation to visit Muñoces

A delegation from First Presbyterian Church will be visiting our friends in Muñoces, El Salvador during the week of January 21-28. Members of the delegation are Larry Anderson, Brian Anderson, Anders Hopkins, Isaac Mathison-Bowie, and Warren and Linda Erickson. They will be visiting all the families in Muñoces as well as meeting with the directiva (think "city council"), the school board and teachers, and the scholarship students. They hope to end the visit with a fiesta for the whole community. In addition, they plan to offer "day camp" courses in drum circles, photography, and beginning English for adults. When not in Muñoces they will visit important historical sites in El Mozote, Perquin, and around San Salvador.

The delegation travels entirely at their own expense but they could use some help to bring a gift to each household. In the past our delegations have brought gifts of picture books, calendars, trees, and health and personal hygiene kits. This year we plan to give each family a food bag with rice, oil, and other Salvadoran staples they cannot raise themselves. Each food bag will cost about \$15. Please consider donating \$15 by January 12 to help feed a family in Muñoces. Just write a check to First Presbyterian with "food for Muñoces" on the memo line.

You will have an opportunity to wish the delegation well when they are commissioned during worship on January 19, and a full report with pictures will be presented after they return.

Always Another Opportunity!

First, we wish to say a big "Thank You" to all of you who bought gifts at the Advent Bazaar, gave to the Christmas Joy offering, or donated gifts for Progress Industries or the Angel Tree during Advent. As usual, First Presbyterian proved to be a generous group!

And....there's always another opportunity! It is the time of year to send fertilizer and scholarship money to Muñoces. With your generosity in the fall fund-raising campaign and the very successful Style Show in October, we have almost all the costs covered this year, but we are a little short. A bag of fertilizer is \$60 to \$65 dollars this year and a full year scholarship for a high school student is \$100. If you feel moved to contribute in any amount to the El Salvador funds, please write a check to First Presbyterian with "El Salvador fund" on the memo line by January 12. The January 12 deadline will allow us to wire all the money at one time, thus saving on wire fees.

Christmas Greetings from Munoces

Warren and Linda Erickson

On Christmas Eve we were surprised and delighted to find in our mailbox a box of more than 30 Christmas greetings from the families in Muñoces to the members of First Presbyterian Church in Newton. They are quite a treasure, particularly when you consider that some families had to find someone to write the message for them if they don't read or write. Also, our mission co-worker, Katherine Pater, translated all the letters and hand carried them into the United States to mail them in time for Christmas. We will be making a bulletin board in Fellowship Hall to display the greetings and we hope that you will all find time to read the messages. To whet your appetite we will give you a few previews:

(Continued page 7)

(Cont. from page 6)

"Hello dear brothers and sisters thanks for all the help that you give us we remember it always and like us (may) you have a Merry Christmas beside your loved ones.

May God illuminate the path today and always I thank you for the water tank that you gave us. Thanks to all the brothers and sisters of your church that help us... For all of you brothers and sisters of your church. Thanks for everything" Jose Israel and family

"Merry Christmas! Dear and respectable brothers and sisters with all the love and the affection that we have for you we wish you much happiness this Christmas and Happy New Year. The reason for writing to you this little letter is so that all of you feel the appreciation that we have for every one of you; my family and I feel very happy when you come to visit us at our houses. We wish every one of you many blessings and very good health, brothers and sisters, we thank you for the great effort that you make to send us this help that we have been receiving from you. We thank you so much!"

Maria Ernestina Hernandez Santos, Geovanny Alberto Alvarenga Hernandez, Diego de Jesus Hernandez, Melvin Alfredo Cruz Sigaran

PNC UPDATE

The committee is very excited about our progress and we are hoping to be able to give you much more information very soon. We are very grateful to Pastor John Reynolds, Pastor Linda, the session and to you, the congregation, for your support, cooperation and patience in this long term endeavor. As our presbytery liaison often said, "Don't get in too much of a hurry, you have to let the system work."

Gary Parsons, chair, Larry Anderson, Ann Cutts, Steve Hopkins, Linda Kirchhoff, Kelly Koenen, Joan Tyler

Church Life Activities

Randy Camp, Chair

We do not have an activity planned for January. Instead, we will be assisting the Work Week group with their fund raiser on January 12. Please see page 4 for further information.

First Presbyterian Church
220 N 2nd Ave E
641-792-2790

Email: new1pres@iowatelecom.net
(this email goes to Jenny Verwers, Office Mgr.)

Website: www.newton1stpresbyterian.org

Church Office Hours: M, W, Thurs: 8:30 am to 4:00 pm

Custodian Hours: M-Thurs: 8am to 11am

Pastor Linda's Schedule:

Sunday: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Monday: 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Tuesday: Out of Office

Wednesday: 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Thursday: 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Friday: as needed

Saturday: as needed

(Hours may vary from week to week based on her need to be at the church for meetings, etc.)

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2014 BIRTHDAYS & EVENTS

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
9:00 am Adult S. S. 9:15 am Kid's Action Hour 10:00 am Fellowship 10:25 am Announcements 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Fellowship			1 Lyndee Hashman	2 6:30 am Early Men's group 9:00 am Men's group	3 Jay Koenen	4 Mary Jo Niskin James Leonard Zach Roskilly 9:00 am Spanish Plus
5 John Carl Ordination & Installation of Elders & Deacons	6 4:45 pm Personnel 7:00 pm Christian Nurture	7	8 Patty Skokan 9:30 am WBS 5:30 pm Community Meals 6:00 pm Spanish Plus 7:00 pm Choir	9 Marlys Grimm 10:15 am Park Centre Nursing Worship 10:45 am Park Centre Library Worship	10 Emily Miller Linda Erickson Jane Repp	11 Tom Weeks 9:00 am Spanish Plus Session / Deacon Training
12 Tom Atwood Barb Ferguson Karen Liebl Work Week Fundraiser - After Church Luncheon	13 6:00 pm Worship & Music	14 Rhonda Cupples Dorothy Van Elsen	15 Megan Ritter Jenna Blunt 9:30 am WBS 5:30 pm Community Meals Membership 6:00 pm B & F Spanish Plus 7:00 pm Choir	16 Macy Leonard 6:30 am Early Men's group 9:00 am Men's group	17	18 Bill Shields 9:00 am Spanish Plus
19 Barb Woythaler	20	21 Gary Kirchhoff Jennifer Carson Shae Koenen 6:00 p.m. Session Meal 7:00 p.m. Session	22 Sara Moore 9:30 am WBS 5:30 pm Community Meals 6:00 pm Spanish Plus 7:00 pm Choir	23	24	25 9:00 am Spanish Plus
26 Annual Meeting	27	28 Shari DeCook	29 Allison Norvell 9:30 am WBS 5:30 pm Community Meals 6:00 pm Spanish Plus 7:00 pm Choir	30	31 Scott DeGraff	



January



Volunteers

January	5	12	19	26	Feb 2
Worship Leader <i>Office</i>	Linda Campbell	Val McKee	Gary Parsons	Dave Stolper	Kathy Ventling
Host Elder/Deacon <i>Diane Moles</i>	Gary Parsons	Barb Gallaher	Margaret Atwood	Annual Meeting 2015 Elders & Deacons	Terry Rickers
Greeters <i>Julie Brodersen</i>	Gary & Kay Parsons	Randy & Carol Camp	Kevin & Toni Peska	Terry Rickers Bev Rossow	Chris & Peggy Lickiss
Ushers <i>Office</i>	John & Barb Taylor	Gary & Kay Parsons	Mary Jane Tripp Sandy Cheney Suzie Funk	Terry & Cat Rickers	Don & Sharon Black
Audio <i>Les Gause</i>	Dan Ritter	Brad Ritter	Brad Ritter	Brad Ritter	Doug Cutts
Candlelighter <i>Office</i>	Allie Norvell	Joshua Ventling	Megan Ritter	Emily Miller	Natalie Camp
Counters <i>Terry Rickers</i>	Kelly Koenen Marshall Critchfield	Terry Rickers Dave Boyd	Dan Ritter Bill Shields	Roger Harmelink Dave Stolper	Jonnie Carpenter Gary Haynes
Bread Ministry Baker <i>Barb Taylor</i>	Barb Taylor	Linda Campbell	Jane Repp	Joan Tyler	Pat Mitchell
Bread Ministry Taker <i>Barb Taylor</i>	Barb Taylor	Linda Campbell	Carol Russell	Joan Rusk	Barb Gallaher
Communion Set up <i>Kim DeGraff</i>	Terry Rickers Steve Hopkins				Virginia Bennett Diane Moles

First Presbyterian Church
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641-792-2790

Return Service Requested

Lectionary —

January, 2014

January 5 - 2nd Sunday after Christmas

Jer. 31:7-14; *Ps. 147:12-20*; Eph. 1:3-14
John 1:(1-9) 10-18

January 12 - Baptism of the Lord

Isa. 42:1-9; *Ps. 29*; Acts 10:34-43
Matt. 3:13-17

January 19 - 2nd Sunday after Epiphany

Isa. 49:1-7; *Ps. 40:1-11*; 1 Cor. 1:1-9
John 1:29-42

January 26 - 3rd Sunday after Epiphany

Isa. 9:1-4; *Ps. 27:1, 4-9*; 1 Cor. 1:10-18
Matt. 4:12-23

February, 2014

February 2 - 4th Sunday after Epiphany

Micah 6:1-8; *Ps. 15*; 1 Cor. 1:18-31
Matt. 5:1-12

February 9 - 5th Sunday after Epiphany

Isa. 58:1-9 (9b-12); *Ps. 112:1-9 (10)*
1 Cor. 2:1-12 (13-16); Matt. 5:13-20

February 16 - 6th Sunday after Epiphany

Deut. 30:15-20; *Ps. 119:1-8*; 1 Cor. 3:1-9
Matt. 5:21-37

February 23 - 7th Sunday after Epiphany

Lev. 19:1-2, 9-18; *Ps. 119:33-40*
1 Cor. 3:10-11, 16-23; Matt. 5:38-48