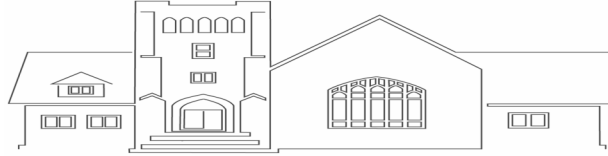


FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
NEWTON, IOWA  
641-792-2790

*"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 2016

### Meghan's Musings

Happy New Year!

If you're like me, you might find yourself feeling a bit of a letdown after Christmas. The lights and parties and excitement of the holidays help to offset the cold and dreariness of winter. But then when all that's over, we still have a few long months of winter before we'll have the joy and new life of spring. And given the mild winter we've had so far, chances are good that we still have the worst of it ahead.

But I was recently reminded that, after Winter Solstice (December 22) we'll be on the upswing, at least in terms of light. Every day we'll have a few more seconds of light and that many fewer seconds of darkness. So that's something to look forward to, right?

As a reminder of the hope and promise of the season that has passed, which we are called to keep alive in our hearts throughout the year, I offer this Epiphany prayer from the *Feasting on the Word* worship companion:

God, you placed a star in the sky  
to draw wise folk to the place of Christ's nativity.  
There you revealed the mystery  
of your eternal purpose for all humanity:  
God made flesh, born of Mary,  
opening to all the world the promise you made  
to Abraham and Sarah.  
Empower your church to be as the light of the star,  
that we may draw the world  
to the glory of Christ, our Lord, through whom we pray. Amen.

Just as the Wise Ones followed the star for years before discovering the Christ Child, may we continue to follow, and may the light of the Star brighten all our days.



### Be Praying For...

- ✚ Warren Jontz, as he continues to recover from a stay in the hospital.
- ✚ Macy and Warren Jontz as they sell their home and move to Park Centre.
- ✚ Janie Moles as she recovers from a hospital stay for fluid retention.
- ✚ Jeanne Bridenstine, who was recently in the hospital but is now back home recuperating.
- ✚ The new Ruling Elders and Deacons as they begin their work on behalf of our church.



To Kirk Porter and his family in the loss of his father, Francis. A visitation service as held on Friday, November 27 at Wallace Family Funeral Home. Kirk often worships with us, and had been asking for prayers for his ailing father. In addition to Kirk, Mr. Porter is survived by 4 other children, 7 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild, which is on the way, and his 2 brothers.

### A Monumental Event

On Sunday, December 20, our own Wendell Wendt turned 101 years old! Not a feat accomplished by many. Wendell was recognized during the worship service that day and was serenaded by the singing "Happy Birthday". His daughter from Chicago accompanied Wendell to church and stayed through Christmas.

Happy birthday, Wendell, from your church family!



### Highlights from Session

Mickey Van Baale, Clerk of Session

These items are technicalities required of the Session in the Book of Order and must be done and recorded each year.

- ✚ Elected Toni Peska as Clerk of Session for a one year term.
- ✚ Elected Cheryl Ritter as Treasurer for a one year term.
- ✚ Elected Linda Kirchhoff as President of the Corporation for a one year term.

Other business:

- ✚ Rev. Meghan Davis will be on vacation December 25 to January 4.
- ✚ Approved moving communion from January 3 to 10, due to Rev. Davis' vacation.
- ✚ Reviewed the proposed 2016 budget.
- ✚ Approved asking members to pay their per capita fee, if able.



On page 3, under the Budget and Finance report, you will see that there is a deficit in next year's proposed budget. To help alleviate part of this deficit, Session is asking members to contribute toward their own per capita fee, if able. Per capita is the amount each church pays our denomination--Presbyterian Church (USA)--for the mission of the wider church family: the Presbytery of Des Moines, General Assembly (the national level) as well as international mission. Per capita is based on current membership and the amount of the 2016 per capita is \$40 per member.

It has become a common practice in many churches that members pay their own per capita fee, if they are financially able. It is understandable that some may not be able to do this, and that is fine. If you are not able to pay the entire amount, any amount at all would be helpful. If you cannot pay any of this, that is fine also. For those who are able to pay theirs, and would also be able to pay extra, we appreciate it and thank you.

A letter and return envelope will be sent to our membership in the very near future. Please prayerfully consider how you might help.

Budget and Finance Committee and the Session



Meghan reported that she had visited with Janie Moles in the hospital. She also said Jeanne Bridenstine had been in intensive care recently but now was back in her room at Park Centre.

In addition, Meghan said that she had talked with Cheryl Ritter about initiating "care packages" for the church's college students. Dana said she would talk with Cheryl about how deacons could help with the project.

**Card Report**

Shirley reported sending out 28 cards during the month of November.

**New Business**

Deacons were told that prayer shawls are available for them to take as Christmas presents. There also was a reminder that the January meeting will take place as part of the new church officer retreat Jan. 9

Dana Hashman, Moderator

**Emergency Closure of the Church**

With the arrival of winter weather, 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



**Annual Meeting**

Our annual meeting will be held after worship on January 31. Preceding the actual meeting, we will have a potluck luncheon hosted by the Junior classes of Session and the Deacons. Drinks and table service will be furnished. Please bring a dish to share.

Following the meal, we will receive the reports of the various committees of our church and will vote on the compensation package for Rev. Davis. The 2016 budget that was approved by Session will be presented.

**Budget and Finance Corner**

Jonnie Carpenter, Chair

Pledges for the month of November were \$15,675. This was \$3,857 above the amount we had budgeted. Other Regular Giving, which represents donations from people who tithe, but do not pledge, was \$510 for the month, which was \$226 below budget. In total for the month, expenses were \$384 over budget. Year-to-date pledges are \$10,587 over budget and year-to-date expenses are \$6,497 over budget.

Paint for the upstairs Power room was \$302 and paid for from the Memorial Fund, where the Power endowment is housed. The Maintenance fund received \$3,850 from the Foundation investments. The International Mission fund paid \$74 in food expenses for the El Salvador anniversary celebration held in October. We received an additional \$370 in November for the Rural Harvest Offering, bringing our total to \$437. The offering will be sent to the Presbytery in December.

The **proposed** budget was presented to Session at their December meeting, and at this time there is a deficit since pledges were \$17,000 below last year. Some options were presented to Session of possible actions to be taken to makeup this deficit. These options included asking members to pay their own per capita of \$40 per person, if they are able. The committee heads were also asked to look over their part of the expenses and find ways to decrease those. The **final** budget will be voted on at the January Session meeting and **presented** to the congregation at the Annual Meeting.



## 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.

### SESSION

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

2016	2017	2018
Jonnie Carpenter	Val McKee	Linda Kirchhoff
Bret Doerring	Tom Mott	Marilyn McCallister
Norm Grimm	Karen Quinn	George Wilkening
Sandy Simbro	Bev Rossow	Tara Zehr

### BOARD OF DEACONS

Meets second Sunday, 9:00 a.m.  
 Dana Hashman, Moderator  
 Dave Stolper, Secretary

2016	2017	2018
Sandy Cheney	Janet Shields	Steve & Sara Hopkins
Dana Hashman	Elsie Nelson	Sandy Shaver
Nancy Mott	Shirley Stevens	Dave Stolper
Kevin Peska	Elaine VanderBroek	Mickey Van Baale

On January 9 our officers will hold their yearly retreat. At this time, the Elders will determine their committee assignments. These will be published in next month's Messenger. On January 10, the newly elected Elders and Deacons will be ordained and installed during our church service.

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.



**Church Leadership**

## Worship and Music

Linda Kirchhoff, Chair

Since the Worship and Music Committee met on December 1, most of the tasks we undertook have been completed. Gluten free bread is now an option during communion. The Advent book has been placed in people's homes. The sanctuary, hallways and Fellowship Hall have been decorated. The Chrismons have been placed on the tree. Church family members have lit the Advent Candles. Pew candles have been added for the Christmas Eve Service. Candles for the traditional singing of Silent Night have been passed out and collected. Poinsettias have graced the sanctuary. A carol sing was held on December 27.

Please note that you may take the poinsettias home. Any left for too much longer will need to be disposed of. Thank you for providing them to honor others and to make our sanctuary festive for the Advent and Christmas seasons.

All of these undertakings have required the assistance of many of you, and we are indebted to you all for your help.

Linda Curtis-Stolper will be preaching on January 3 while Meghan is enjoying time with her family.

Sharon Black and Kim De Graff have been faithful, caring members of our committee and have decided to give others the opportunity to serve. We thank them for their dedication. Barb Gallaher has volunteered to join us. If you would be interested in becoming a part of this committee, please contact Sandy Simbro or myself.

## MEMBERSHIP



### MOMENT

Our committee continues to work on a church marketing project.

Joan Rusk has resigned as our volunteer caller as of December 31. Her job has been to call several of the people who have jobs at church on Sunday to remind them. She has done it for 1-2 years and we really appreciate her good work and dedication. Thanks Joan! Ruby Davis has consented to continue Joan's work. Thanks Ruby! Volunteers are so important to a church.

Membership has several things planned for January but have not yet established all the exact date. We will attend a Grinnell College men's basketball game January 30. It is our intent to have a work night at the church some evening in January. We will have a light dinner, short devotions and then do some work around the church. We would also like to schedule a Sundays at 4 presentation with a speaker and pizza. Please keep watching for date finalization in Church Happenings, the bulletin and by announcements at church.

Gary Parsons



Basketball Outing

## Church Cleanup



## Building and Grounds

Norm Grimm, Chair

We are still awaiting the bidding materials from the architect for the new steps and sidewalk. We are expecting to receive these in the next few weeks.

We will be seeking a bid soon on ceiling repairs, as soon as we determine that the leak is fixed. This appears to be in the same location as before. It was our understanding that the problems had been fixed, but evidently not.



## Mission Committee

Linda Erickson, Chair

### Thanks!

The Mission Committee would like to say a hearty “Thank you!” to all who rang bells, bought gifts for Salvation Army angels and Progress Industries clients, signed cards for our friends in Muñoces, bought gifts at the Salvadoran gift bazaar and through the Presbyterian mission catalog, or contributed to the Christmas Joy offering. December is a month that can strain our schedules and our budgets but your generosity of spirit rose to the task. Thank you for all the ways you contribute to the mission of this church.

The Mission Committee

At our December meeting, the following reports were given. This is work being done by our committee in addition to what is mentioned above.

#### Regional:

##### *Mariners in Mission:*

John & Barb Taylor indicated they really enjoyed the trip to Kemmerer Village in November. At the annual meeting of Mariners, discussion was held if it would be necessary to dissolve this group, due the ageing of the members and some having health issues. The vote was to continue for at least one more year.

#### National:

##### *Work Week, 2016:*

Mickey reported that the steering committee has met. The committee discussed inviting the Youth Downtown group to become a part of the group going. Rev. Meghan will contact her fellow pastors of the Youth Downtown group to get their input. She is also going to discuss this with those youth attending. The group from Brooklyn is still interested in being a part of this mission trip. Investigation has begun on a location for the 2016 trip. Final decisions will have to wait until we know how many youth and adults will be going.



It may take a village to raise a child, but it takes an “All Star Team” to put the Messenger together and get it out to you. I’d like to publically thank those team members and let you know what part they play.

- ◆ Jenny Verwers, Office Manager - Submits the volunteer list and calendar, and prints the Messenger
- ◆ Committee Chairpersons - Submit news
- ◆ Dave Stolper - Proofreads the Messenger
- ◆ Rev. Meghan Davis - Submits her Message and proofreads the Messenger
- ◆ Mary Jane Tripp - Prepares the printed Messenger for distribution, and takes the copies to Newton Village and Park Centre
- ◆ Gary & Kay Parsons - Sort the Messengers on the Sunday we distribute, based on who is sitting on the North side and South side of the sanctuary, so handing these out is easier.
- ◆ Parsons, Shirley Stevens, George Wilkening, Dave Stolper and Linda Curtis-Stolper, Harriett Harmelink and all of you who deliver ones not picked up.



Thank you all! Many hands make for light work - and in our case, it’s an .....

Mickey Van Baale, Editor

## Christian Nurture

Virginia Bennett, Chair

Thanks to Val McKee, the Power room has received a coat of white paint. Youth of the church will be invited to put their handprints on the wall in bright colors. Discussion was held on whether we will continue Children's Youth Hour every other week, as attendance has not been good. Many times volunteers prepared lessons and crafts only to have no young ones in attendance.

The All Congregation Pageant was held on Sunday, December 20. Thank yous are extended to the following:

- ✝ All those who participated. It is so meaningful when so many members of the congregation can join together to display the birth of our Savior. Forty-two members, along with 4 members of the Christian Nurture committee and organist, Sandy Simbro took part.
- ✝ Kelly Koenen and Jen Norvell for heading this up.
- ✝ Brad and Megan for being our narrators.
- ✝ Doug Cutts for getting pictures of this special event, which are shown below.
- ✝ Marlys Grimm for taking a video and putting it on our website.



## Church Life Activities

Diane Moles, Chair

### Caroling and Chili Party

Approximately 34 people joined in the caroling and chili party, on a drizzly Sunday afternoon just before Christmas . Twenty-one met at the church at 4 pm and all but 2 carpoled to various stops. Diane Moles and Nancy Mott stayed at the church to make sure the food was ready for the carolers upon their return and for those who came to just the supper. Those singing started at Skiff Medical Center to visit Janie Moles. From there we went to Park Centre, entertaining those in the assisted living cafeteria. The group proceeded to the homes of several individual church members before finishing up at Newton Village. At each stop a few carols were sung and Christmas greetings shared. When the group returned to the church, they were joined by 13 more who came for the chili party. Everyone enjoyed soup, combread, other bread, shredded cheese, sour cream, corn chips, crackers, veggies, and a variety of goodies and desserts. Below are some candid shots of our Caroling escapades. If you have not joined in caroling, please consider this a new tradition for next year. As happens so many times, the joy brought to those we visit is returned to us 10 fold.





## New Church Logo

Membership Committee

Session has approved a logo developed to replace our "Looking to the Future" theme we used while the Church transitioned from one pastor to the next. Our new logo's slogan is a much shorter version of our mission statement and is meant to promote our open, welcoming culture. The colors, calm and comforting, also reflect that.

The church logo is not going anywhere. That is our identity mark and will remain. The hand/slogan logo is a marketing theme or branding device and will be used for a period of time to promote our church to the public. As with the "Looking to the Future" theme, this will be in use only as long as it is relevant or effective, then it will be replaced with a new one.

A new web banner for Facebook, a fresh bulletin cover and an updated church brochure using this new theme are also in the works. Thank you to Cathy Rickers for creating our new logo and the other items mentioned here. Below is the new logo.



## New Yoga Challenge

Rev. Meghan Davis

We've survived the busy holiday season, and now's the time to resume (or begin) healthy habits. In light of our Advent Yoga Challenge success and to encourage all you First Presbyterian yogis (past, present and future) in your practice: the New Year, New You Yoga Challenge! Every time you come to a class in January, you will be entered for a drawing for fabulous prizes. The more classes you attend, the more entries you receive. Whether you're a yoga regular, it's been a while since you've been to a class or if you've yet to try it, you are invited make the commitment to yourself to connect with Christ--mind, body and spirit.

## Doing Work for the Presbytery

Some of the members of First Presbyterian Church have agreed to take on positions for committees on the Presbytery level.

Rev. Meghan Davis is the chairperson for the Compassion Peace and Justice Task Force.

Gary Parsons is a member of the Nominating Committee.

Cheryl Ritter is a member of the Budget and Finance Committee.

Mickey Van Baale is secretary on the Congregational Reconciliation Task Force and the Moderator for the New Sharon Administrative Commission.

If you are ever interested in sharing your talents on the Presbytery level, please let one of these people know and they will get your name to the proper persons.

## Bread Taker Needed

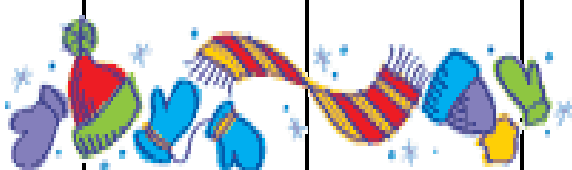



Barb Taylor

A group that is under Membership Committee's umbrella is the Bake and Take bread ministry that I head up. A little explanation about the workings of this ministry is that we have a person who bakes bread for their assigned Sunday and leaves it in the kitchenette off the parlor that morning. The same person or another person who is also assigned for that Sunday notices who is a guest at our morning worship and gives them the loaf of bread, along with a copy of our current Messenger, information about our church, a welcome to the service, gets their contact information (if applicable) and encourages them to visit our church again. If we do not have a guest that morning, the bread is given to a member who has had a recent celebration, been sick or in the hospital or perhaps participated in the morning service.

A member of our group, who is a bread taker, has resigned due to other obligations. Please pray about joining our group. If you feel it is something you would like to do, please let me know at [barbjohn@pcpartner.net](mailto:barbjohn@pcpartner.net) or 792-6990. We would love to have you.

# January

# 2016 BIRTHDAYS & EVENTS

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
9:00 am Adult S. S. 10:00 am Fellowship 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Fellowship						1 Lyndee Hashman	2
3 Jay Koenen  6:00 pm Youth Downtown	4 MaryJo Niskin James Leonard  4:45 pm Personnel	5  11:00 am Gentle Yoga 6:30 pm Worship & Music	6  9:30 am WBS 5:30 pm Membership 7:00 pm Choir	7  6:30 am Early Men's Group 9:00 am Men's Group 3:00 pm Chair Yoga 4:30 pm Missions 7:00 pm Christian Nurture	8 Patty Skokan	9 Marlys Grimm  9:00 am  Officers Training  No Yoga	
10 Emily Miller Linda Erickson Jane Repp  Officers Installation 6:00 pm Youth Downtown	11 Tom Weeks  6:15 pm Yoga Flow 7:00 pm Christian Nurture	12 Tom Atwood Barb Ferguson  11:00 am Gentle Yoga	13  9:30 am WBS 6:00 pm Budget & Finance 7:00 pm Choir	14 Dorothy Van Elsen Rhonda Cupples  3:00 pm Chair Yoga	15 Megan Ritter Jenna Blunt	16 Macy Leonard  10:00 am Yoga Flow	
17  6:00 pm Youth Downtown	18 Bonnie Rassmussen Bill Shields  6:15 pm Yoga Flow	19 Barb Woythaler  11:00 am Gentle Yoga 6:30 p.m. Session	20  9:30 am WBS 7:00 pm Choir	21 Gary Kirchhoff Shae Koenen  6:30 am Early Men's Group 9:00 am Men's Group 3:00 pm Chair Yoga	22	23  10:00 am Yoga Flow	
24  6:00 pm Youth Downtown	25  6:15 pm Yoga Flow	26  11:00 am Gentle Yoga	27  9:30 am WBS 7:00 pm Choir	28 Shari DeCook  3:00 pm Chair Yoga	29 Allison Norvell	30  1:00 pm Grinnell College Basketball Game	
31 Scott DeGraff  							

# January



# Volunteers

January	3	10	17	24	31	February 7
<b>Worship Leader Office</b>	Linda Kirchhoff	Terry Rickers	George Wilkening	Gary Parsons	Kathy Ventling	Mickey Van Baale
<b>Host Elder/Deacon Diane Moles</b>	Jonnie Carpenter	Norm Grimm	Sandy Cheney	Mickey Van Baale	Class of 2017	Linda Kirchhoff
<b>Greeters Julie Brodersen</b>	Terry Rickers Bev Rossow	Kevin & Toni Peska	Chris & Peggy Lickiss	Doug Cutts Cole Doerring	Janet Shields Valerie Barney	Gary & Kay Parsons
<b>Ushers Office</b>	Gary & Kay Parsons	The Ritter Family	Barb Gallaher Shirley Stevens	The Ventling Family	Kevin & Toni Peska	Don & Sharon Black
<b>Audio Doug Cutts</b>	Brad Ritter	Brad Ritter	Jay Koenen	Jay Koenen	Jay Koenen	Doug Cutts
<b>Candlelighter Office</b>	Skye Koenen	Natalie Camp	Jordan Norvell	Cody Barney	Garrett Sturtz	Allie Norvell
<b>Counters Jonnie Carpenter</b>						
<b>Bread Ministry Baker Barb Taylor</b>	Shari DeCook	George Wilkening	Barb Taylor	Linda Campbell	Jane Repp	Joan Tyler
<b>Bread Ministry Taker Barb Taylor</b>	Mickey Van Baale	Mary Jane Tripp	Barb Taylor	Linda Campbell	Carol Russell	
<b>Communion Set up Linda Kirchhoff</b>		Jonnie Carpenter Karen Quinn				Tom Mott George Wilkening

First Presbyterian Church  
PO Box 7  
220 N 2nd Ave E  
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641-792-2790

Return Service Requested

# Lectionary —

## January, 2016

### January 3 - 2nd Sunday of Christmas

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

### January 10 - Baptism of the Lord

Isa. 43:1-7; *Ps. 39*; Acts 8:14-17  
Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

### January 17 - 2nd Sunday after Epiphany

Isa. 62:1-5; *Ps. 36:5-10*; 1 Cor. 12:1-11  
John 2:1-11

### January 24 - 3rd Sunday after Epiphany

Neh. 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10; *Ps. 19*  
1 Cor. 12:12-31a; Luke 4:14-21

### January 31 - 4th Sunday after Epiphany

Jer. 1:4-10; *Ps. 71:1-6*; 1 Cor. 13:1-13  
Luke 4:21-30

## February, 2016

### February 7 - Transfiguration of the Lord

Exod. 34: 29-35; *Ps. 99*; 2 Cor. 3:12-4:2  
Luke 9:28-36 (37-43)

### February 14 - 1st Sunday in Lent

Deut. 26:1-11; *Ps. 91:1-2, 9-16*  
Rom. 10:8b-13; Luke 4:1-13

### February 21 - 2nd Sunday in Lent

Gen. 15:1-12, 17-18; *Ps. 27*  
Phil. 3:17-4:1; Luke 13:31-35

### February 28 - 3rd Sunday in Advent

Isa. 55:1-9; *Ps. 63:1-8*; 1 Cor. 10:1-13  
Luke 13:1-9