FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH NEWTON, IOWA

641-792-2790

"The Mission of First Presbyterian Church of Newton, lowa 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



SEPTEMBER 2017

Meghan's Musings

What do you choose?

Greetings from somewhere over Colorado! I write this month's Musings while sitting on a plane on my way to a Well Being Retreat at Lake Tahoe. The retreat is presented by the denomination's Board of Pensions. When I first heard about the retreat, I imagined myself having a lot of free time for meditation, communing with God in Creation, maybe experiencing some contemplative spiritual practices with colleagues in ministry from around the country. I marked the May 1 date for the opening of registration on my calendar because I was sure it would fill up quickly and I wanted to be sure to get a spot. I mean, who wouldn't want to do all those things? But by the time May came around I started thinking maybe the timing wasn't great. Or maybe there was some better use of my study leave time. And so I let it pass. Then, late in June, when the Board of Pensions was still advertising the retreat, I decided maybe it was meant to be, maybe I should do it after all. So I clicked the link and started the registration and began to select my classes.

For the first morning session, all the options were related to finances. And I thought, maybe I don't want to deal with finances first thing at the beginning of my retreat but... ok... And I chose the least unappealing class. And then I went to choose my second class. And again, all the options were financial related. Come to find out, almost all the classes offered at this retreat were about financial matters. I felt like the victim of a Bait and Switch scheme. However... there's no denying that education pertaining to my personal finances and those of the church are something from which my ministry and I could certainly benefit. And so... I bit the bullet and committed to attend.

So now I'm heading to this retreat less than a week after the horrific events in Charlottesville that are fresh in everyone's mind, the news, the internet, discussions between friends and family and maybe even strangers. It's hard to escape. Nor should we. But what can we do? What indeed...

As I travel today, I happen to be wearing a sweatshirt that simply states "I Choose Love." I've had this shirt for over a year now. It was one of those impulse buys from a creepily well-targeted ad on Facebook. (I curse the algorithms that know exactly what products I cannot resist.) (Maybe I can get help with that in one of these financial classes at my "retreat.") The shirt popped up on Facebook shortly after I had an epiphany in my personal life. In a time of struggle, the phrase popped into my head: choose love. So simple, right? Especially for us as Christians. Aren't we always supposed to be choosing love? But sometimes choosing love is not our first instinct. Oftentimes, choosing love is not our first instinct. And so I needed the reminder. I needed the reminder in my head and the reminder on my shirt was helpful, too.

This isn't the first time I've worn this shirt while traveling. The first time I wore it to fly I I lamented that wearing this shirt, I had to be extra careful about how I behaved and reacted Continued on page 2



For Dick and Linda Means and family in the death of their son, Steve, 56, who died on July 25, 2017. A Memorial Service was held in Middleton, Wisconsin, on Friday, July 28, 2017. Steve lived in Madison, WI at the time of his death. He was a 1979 graduate of Newton High School. Following graduation, Steve received his BA from Luther College and then went to the University of Iowa law school. He practice law in

Madison since 1988. Steve was noted for his collegiate swimming. Steve is survived by his wife, Anne, and his daughters, Katherine of Seattle, WA and Claire of Madison, his parents Richard and Linda of Newton, IA, brothers Michael (Melinda) of Port Charlotte, FL and Daniel (Carole) of Urbandale, IA, and their families.

- For Rev. Don Freeman, pastor of United Presbyterian Church, and family in the death of his mother on August 9, 2017. She lived in California.
- For the family of Mary Ann Ringgenberg. She died on Friday, August 18, 2017, at the Mayflower Community in Grinnell. A funeral service was held Thursday, August 24, at the Wallace Family Funeral Home and Crematory with interment at Newton Union cemetery. Mary Ann, the daughter of Alfred and Mary Florence Ponder, was born on March 13, 1935 in Newton. She graduated from Newton High School in 1953 and received a degree in music from Monmouth College in Monmouth, Illinois. Mary Ann was united in marriage with Don Ringgenberg in 1957 and they were blessed with two sons, Donnie and Kirk. Mary Ann worked on the floor of the statehouse and then later with an insurance company in Des Moines filing insurance claims and other administrative duties. Mary Ann was a member of the First Presbyterian Church where she sang in the church choir. With her vocal talent, Mary Ann was a member of a signing group out of Grinnell and the Metropolitan Opera from Simpson College. She was also active with the lowa State Fair and the Democratic Party. Mary Ann is survived by her two sons, Donnie Ringgenberg and Kirk Ringgenberg (Tricia Maher and her children, Peyton and Morgan), both of Newton; granddaughter, Danette (Phil) Wells; great-grandchildren, Markus and Kai; and her sister, Betty Debban of Cedar Rapids.

Continued from page 1

lamented that wearing this shirt, I had to be extra careful about how I behaved and reacted in the hustle and bustle and frustrations of modern airline travel. People who have any self-awareness are going to think twice before making a terse remark or losing their patience while wearing a shirt that says, "I choose love." So while I was kind of sorry I wore the shirt that first time, this morning I intentionally wore it knowing that it would help keep me accountable to being the kind of person, the kind of Christian, I should be anyway.

And this phrase—I choose love—makes me think of the One who always chooses love. We are reminded throughout scripture of the love of God. In 1 John 4:8 we read "Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love." God *is* love. I am also reminded of God's words spoken through the prophet Isaiah, "Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?" (Isaiah 58: 6-7) In other words, God chooses love and God chooses for us to choose love.

So while our country reels from the resurgence and seeming "mainstreaming" of hatred that was until recently considered fringe, taboo and on the verge of extinction, our primary task is to choose love. To choose love and to demonstrate love. To behave each and every day as if we were wearing a shirt that says "I choose love." May "I choose love" be tattooed on our hearts, flowing from our words and made visible in our actions. Today and every day.



For students, teachers and administrators, who have started another school year. Especially little ones who are going for the first time and those starting college.

For Roger and Harriett Harmelink, as they relocate to Park Centre.

For Steve and Sara Hopkins, as they relocate to Des Moines and to Sara as she begins a new job with Optimae Life Services in Des Moines.

For the people around the country who have experienced natural disasters, forest fires, riots, civil unrest and all other forms of conflicts and unrest.



- Congratulations to Katelyn Camp on two recent accomplishments. She has taken a job being the Assistant Volleyball Coach at Grinnell College. She also interviewed for the Physician Assistant program at Des Moines University and found out only three days later that she got in!
- Congratulations to Rachel Peska and Bryce Skaags on their recent engagement. An April, 2018 wedding is being planned.
- Congratulations to Rachel Rickers and Ben Anderson on their upcoming marriage on September 24.
- Congratulations to longtime Knoxville Raceway fan, Carl Repp, who has witnessed all 56
 Knoxville Nationals! Carl was interviewed during this year's event and shared what he
 remembers about the inaugural Knoxville Nationals in 1961 and told some great stories about
 how much the Knoxville Raceway has changed!

New Plumbing Fixtures!

Using the memorial funds donated in honor of our mother, Janie Moles, the family decided to use the money for a project that would be tangible and help out with the work of the church. Dave, my older brother, was a church member before his move to Waukee and chair of the Buildings and Grounds committee; my sister-in-law, Jackie, has done her share of dishes (Dave was an elder... need I say more?), and I've been messing about for years in the kitchen. We decided to replace the *Continued on page 7*

Messenger September 2017 Page 4



The Deacons did not have a meeting in July and August, but did continue with their monthly visits. The next meeting will be on Sunday, September 7 at 9 am.

The group received the bittersweet news that Steve and Sara Hopkins will be moving to Des Moines the end of September. Steve and Sara were in their second year of serving as Deacons and were a great asset. While we are sorry to have them leave, we wish them the best of luck in their next chapter in life.

Mickey Van Baale,. Moderator



September 23 will be our Fall luncheon and style show. The event will take place from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm in our Fellowship Hall. During the luncheon, prepared by Linda Campbell and her crew, fashions from The Hall Tree of Pella and Urbandale, will be modeled by members of our church and other community friends. As in the past, Tami from The Hall Tree will be bringing items that attendees can purchase following the luncheon and style show. There will also be drawings for gift certificates and other prizes.

Tickets, limited to 85, will be \$20 each and available by calling the church office between the hours of 9 am and 2 pm Monday through Thursday or Mickey Van Baale at 641-521-0549.

Proceeds will go to our Missions fund.

Budget and Finance Corner

Bev Rossow, Chair

Pledges for the month of July were \$10,353. This was \$291 below budget for the month. Other Regular Giving, which represents donations from people who tithe, but do not pledge, was \$1600 for the month.

Other income for the month:

- \$225 was received from the Retired Teachers Association for using our building each month.
- Membership Income of \$320 was received from t-shirt sales.
- ♦ An additional \$100 for per capita contributions was received bringing our total to \$4,056.

Expenses for the month:

- ♦ Administrative/Office expenses for a supply of bulletin covers and the annual fee for our web hosting.
- Membership for the purchase of t-shirts, which will be offset with payments from those who purchased them.
- Personnel Expense for payment of the pastor's semi-annual FICA stipend.
 In total for the month, expenses were \$2,190 over budget.

Year-to-date through July:

- Pledges are \$4,322 over budget.
- Other Regular Giving is \$2,219 over budget.
- Expenses are \$780 over budget.



We want to stay in touch with our young people who are either at college or have moved for their job. Parents: please send us their address. We will send them the Messenger and perhaps some other items to let them know their church family is thinking of them and keeping them in our prayers. Information should be given to Barbara at the church office.

Friends in Hope

Linda Curtis-Stolper

Elsewhere in the Messenger, the Mission Committee report says that the committee voted to donate \$100 to Friends in Hope. For those of you who don't know about this group, read on...

Friends in Hope (FIH) is a very small group of volunteers that has been in existence for the past three years. The aim of the group is to be available to extend a helping hand to persons trying to get out of the cycle of homelessness. Volunteers combine their knowledge from professional training and life experiences to act as mentors, advocates, sounding boards, cheerleaders, and friends ready to listen – as needed by the person(s) being helped.

People are referred to FIH by community organizations such as IMPACT Community Action Program, Jasper County Community Services – General Assistance, Discover Hope 517, Pregnancy Center of Central Iowa and Salvation Army. Persons needing help may also learn about FIH through area churches or from people who have been helped by FIH.

Friends in Hope has: helped individuals and families find places to live; located and moved furniture and household goods; made payments for deposits, rents, utilities, or car repairs; paid for short-term motel stays when no other options for housing are available; provided transportation to medical and legal appointments; helped with repairs, repainting, etc.; helped individuals and families develop and follow a household budget and learn responsible financial practices; referred individuals to community resources for help with transportation, job searches, medical and dental care, housing issues, domestic disputes, treatment for abuse issues, and more; accompanied persons to court appearances, counseling appointments, meetings with landlords or other "authority" figures, and more. FIH volunteers try to be as flexible as possible to meet the unique needs of each individual set of circumstances

As a volunteer organization, FIH is always looking for others who are interested in getting involved. There are as many ways to support FIH as there are needs for the help provided. If you feel called to help with this ministry, consider: donating no-longer needed furniture or household items; offering to help with transportation for persons or hauling furniture to new apartments or the FIH storage unit; volunteering to be a mentor and walk with someone through the process of searching for a place to live or a job; coordinating outreach presentations to inform community organizations about FIH; arranging fundraising events to allow FIH to help with emergency financial situations as they arise; or making a financial donation to FIH.

For more information about Friends in Hope, please feel free to visit our Facebook page (Friends in Hope) or contact Linda Curtis-Stolper (641-792-4920).



If you are the last one to leave the church, please check to make sure all the lights are off and that all the doors are locked. We have had several instances lately where the front door has been left unlocked. In making sure the doors are locked, this includes making sure the toggle switch is turned off for the alley door for the elevator.

Your help is appreciated.

Mission Committee

Marilyn McCallister, Chair

At our August meeting, the following reports were given:

- Ramp Building Project at Friendship House, Saturday, June 17: Linda Anderson reported that
 the ramp was successfully completed and that a small group will complete the basement
 "walker" project.
- Take Away Hunger event, Saturday, July 8: John Taylor reported that a team of 9 participated with one scholarship participant.
- Salvation Army School Supplies campaign: Supplies were collected and delivered to the Salvation Army.
- Fall Fashion Show and Luncheon: Committees are at work. There will be 85 tickets for the September 23 event. See more information on page 4.
- Ramp building projects: A ramp in Colfax will be the next project. On Saturday, August 19, a group of 5 went to the work site and cleaned out a lot of the brush. Acts of lowa has contributed a design for the ramp. The property owner may be able to contribute some used wood for the project with the remaining costs to come from the ramp funding created by the ice cream social. Future work days have not been established.
- Mission Donation Opportunities: After discussion it was voted to contribute \$100 to Friends in Hope and later voted to donate up to \$75 for school supplies being assembled by the Taylors for Church World Service School Packs being assembled by the Mariners in Mission at their September mission in Idaho.
- *Mission Coalition:* Linda Curtis-Stolper reported that there has been no meeting since spring. Upcoming events will probably be the pie sale fund-raiser and the CROP walk but no information is available at this time.
- Share Project: Linda Anderson reported that orders are somewhat down during the summer. The next orders are due on September 11 for pick-up between 7 and 8 AM on September 23.
- Presbyterian Women: Barb Taylor reported that the Fall Connection will be October 14 in Creston and will hopefully feature a peacemaker from Guatemala being sponsored by the Compassion, Peace and Justice committee of Presbytery. Barb will acquire the PW quilt from the Heartland Church and Mickey will contact Julie Fisher about helping with a display this fall of both the PW quilt and the work week quilt. The display should be up in time for the fashion show and luncheon on September 23.
- Mariners in Mission: John and Barb Taylor will be participating in a mission Sept. 17-23 at Camp Sawtooth, Idaho. As mentioned under "mission donation opportunities" it was voted to contribute toward supplies for Church World Service school kits they will be assembling.
- Days for Girls International: 18 volunteers worked on July 27 and completed 33 kits. The next
 work day is scheduled for September 28. Julie Fisher attended a forum with the founder of DFG
 in August.

Messenger September 2017 Page 7

Church Life

Tara Zehr, Chair

Downtown worship was held August 27 at First United Methodist church due to rain. Cake and other non-sweet ford was served following.

Date & Time	Event
September 17, 2017, 4:00 pm from church	Hayride and Weenie Roast at the Ritter Camp
October 15, 2017, 4:00 pm	Progressive Dinner
November 19, 2017, 11:30 am	Thanksgiving Feast and Communion, jointly with Worship and Music Committee
December 17, 2017, 4:00 pm	Christmas Caroling followed by supper

The next activity for Church Life is the annual hayride and weenie roast at the Ritter Camp on Sunday, September 17th. For those wanting to carpool to the Ritter homestead, please meet at the church at 4:00 pm. Again this year, Bill Zegers is allowing us to use his wagon which has benches and stairs. Thank you, Bill! We hope to see everyone there!

Worship and Music

Linda Kirchhoff, Chair

We will be returning to our regular worship schedule on September 10. We will also return to serving communion by Elders to members in the pews.

Thank you to Larry Anderson for heading up special music for the summer months. He also directed the combined choir for the Downtown Worship on August 27. Our chancel choir has begun practice and the first Sunday they will sing is September 10. Larry says, "Please consider joining us this year! We enjoy wonderful fellowship around the privilege of making music for worshipping God. You don't have to be a star -- just enjoy singing and be willing to serve in that way."

Women's Bible Study will begin at 9:30 am on Wednesday, September 20. Please let Barbara know if you are planning to attend so the correct amount of materials can be ordered.

Continued from page 3

faucets in the church, and also the sink in the ladies' room that had seen better days. I have a "thing" about good plumbing fixtures – so these are all ADA compliant (meaning that they can be operated with one hand, and don't have to be gripped), are compliant with the new low-lead standard, and should be easy to keep clean. Monte was the stellar plumber with Warnick and Reeves who did all of the installation – and without any swearing, even though he had to seriously wrestle some corroded nuts and bolts on two of them!!! Dan Warnick worked with his supplier, Plumb Supply, to get the best price for us. The kitchen faucets now all have shutoff valves underneath the sinks (the rest already did), and some of the p-traps were replaced that were in bad shape. I regret to report that I missed the sink in the changing table in the nursery, so that's still old-school. Maybe some other time. There are a couple of other things that are still on my to-do list, and then the project's done. Mom and Dad were long-time members – more than 130 years between them in this church – and we thought this was a good way to honor them.

The Moles Family: Dave, Jackie, Diane, Don, Dee, Deb, Doug, and the kids

Recap on Synod School

Dave Stolper

For the fourth year, Linda and I were able to enjoy Synod School on the campus of Buena Vista University in Storm Lake during late July.

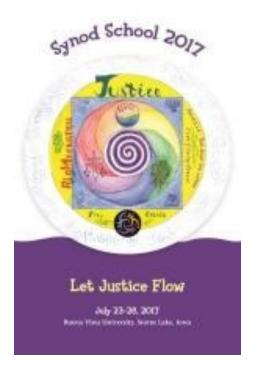
Synod School is a week-long learning and enrichment experience for adults, youth and children sponsored by the Synod of Lakes and Prairies. Those attending live in one of Buena Vista's dorms and eat in the school dining hall. Although the Synod covers the states of Wisconsin, Minnesota, lowa, North and South Dakota and most of Nebraska, participants came from a number of other states (and, this year, from the United Kingdom.)

Total attendance was nearly 700, with more than 300 children and youth.

One of the attractions (for me, at least) is the variety of the classes offered during the week. Every year they range from intense Bible study to such things as basket weaving or Latin dance. This year, the two of us took classes including praying the Psalms, music for today's church choirs, 60's music and society, and U.S. foreign policy.

Morning and evening worship also are a big part of Synod School. The morning convocation speaker this year was J. Herbert Nelson, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the PCUSA and the first African-American to lead the denomination.

I expect we will return for another year, but even though it would be year five, we're still basically rookies - some attendees have been there 20 or more times!





Though the Membership committee didn't meet during August, and have no activities planned for September, we are pleased to share with you some activities that took place during the summer. In the July/August Messenger, we reported that we would be participating in the city's 4th of July parade. Below are pictures of this event. Thank you to those who participated. The new church t-shirts look great!

MOMENT

On August 27 at 4pm we had a "Sundays at 4" concert by soprano, Randye Jones and pianist, Marlys Grimm. The program, entitled "Celebrating American Composers," featured works by George Gershwin, Scott Joplin, Moses Hogan, Richard Rogers, and others.



SEPTEMBER 2017 BIRTHDAYS & EVENTS

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
9 00 a Adult Sunday School 10:00 a Fellowship 10:30 a Worship 11:30 a Fellowship					1 Melissa Sommars	2
3 Last Sunday of Summer Hours 9:30 a Fellowship 10:00 a Worship 11:00 a Fellowship	Office Closed	5 11a Gentle Yoga 6:30p Worship & Music	6 Linda Ver Steegt 7p Choir	7 6:30a Early Men's Group 9a Men's Group 3p Chair Yoga	8	9
10 John Taylor Ruth Ann Van Elswyk Back to Regular Hours 9a Deacons	11 Kay Gause	12 Dick Mielke Ann Cutts No Gentle Yoga 3:30p Mission	13 Sara Hopkins 5:15p Membership 6p Budget & Finance 7p Choir	14 Carma Sturtz No Chair Yoga	15	16 Janet Shields
17 Harriett Harmelink 4p Hayride and Weenie Roast at Ritter camp	18 Pete Koppin	19 11a Gentle Yoga 6:30 Session	9:30a Women's Bible Study 7p Choir	21 Ann DeGrado 6:30a Early Men's Group 9a Men's Group No Chair Yoga	22:	23 11:30a-1:30p Luncheon and Style Show
24 Norm Grimm	25 Garrett Sturtz	26 Clarice Sigurdson 11a Gentle Yoga	27 Randy Camp 9:30a WBS 7p Choir	28 3p Chair Yoga	29 Larry Anderson Julie Broderson	Palestine Conference in Des Moines



September	3	10	17	24	October
					1
Worship Leader Mickey Van Baale	George Wilkening	Sara Hopkins	Terry Rickers	Kathy Ventling	Tom Mott
Host Elder/Deacon Church Life	Linda Kirchhoff	Jen Norvell	Janet Shields	Steve & Sara Hopkins	Nancy Mott
Greeters Julie Brodersen	Cole Doerring Carroll Brodersen	Dick & Shirley Mielke	Chris & Peggy Lickiss	Janet Shields Kim or Kert Schnell	Randy & Carol Camp
Ushers Mickey Van Baale	John and Barb Taylor	Tom and Nancy Mott	Gary and Kay Parsons	Dan and Cheryl Ritter	Kathy Ventling Roger Harmelink
Audio Mickey Van Baale	Shirley Stevens	Dan Ritter	Kyle Doerring	Les Gause	Erick Zehr
Counters Budget & Finance	Bret Doerring Terry Rickers	Jonnie Carpenter Sandy Cheney	Jen Norvell Janet Shields	Tara Peska Chris or Peggy Lickiss	Mickey Van Baale Bev Rossow
Bread Ministry Baker Barb Taylor	Shari DeCook	Barb Taylor	Sandy Simbro	Linda Campbell	Jane Repp
Bread Ministry Taker Barb Taylor	Mickey Van Baale	Barb Taylor	Mary Jane Tripp	Linda Campbell	Carol Russell
Communion Set up Worship & Music	Karen Quinn Marilyn McCallister				George Wilkening Kay Parsons

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Return Service Requested

Lectionary —

September, 2017

September 3 - 13th Sunday after Pentecost Ex. 3:1-15; *Ps. 105:1-6, 23-26, 45b;* Rom. 12:9-21; Matt. 16:21-28

September 10 - 14th Sunday after Pentecost Ex. 12:1-14; *Ps. 149*; Rom. 13:8-14; Matt. 18:15-20

September 17 - 15th Sunday after Pentecost Ex. 14:19-31; *Ps. 114 or Ex. 15:1b-11,* 20-21; Rom. 14:1-12; Matt. 18:21-25

September 24 –16th Sunday after Pentecost Ex. 16: 2-15; *Ps. 105:1-6, 37-45*; Phil. 1:21-30; Matt. 20:1-16

October, 2017

October 1 - 17th Sunday after Pentecost Ex. 17:1-7; *Ps. 78:1-4, 12-16;* Phil. 2:1-13; Matt. 21:23-32

October 8 - 18th Sunday after Pentecost Ex. 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20; *Ps. 19*; Phil. 3:4b-14; Matt.21:33-46

October 15 - 19th Sunday after Pentecost Ex. 32:1-14; *Ps. 106:1-6, 19-23;* Phil 4:1-9, Matt. 22:1-14

October 22 - 20th Sunday after Pentecost Ex. 33:12-23; *Ps. 99*; 1 Thess. 1:1-10; Matt. 22:15-22

October 29 - 21st Sunday after Pentecost Deut.34:1-12; *Ps. 90:1-6, 13-17;* 1 Thess. 2:1-8; Matt. 22:34-46