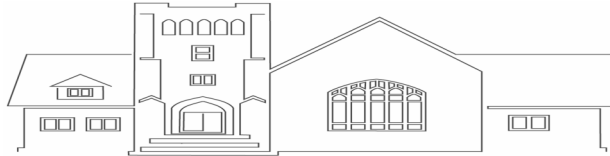


FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
NEWTON, IOWA  
641-792-2790

*"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  
2023

## Meghan's Musings Finding our "Why?"

In recent years there's been a new buzz phrase in businesses, organizations and the self-help industry: find your "why". The idea is that in order to do what we do effectively, we need to know WHY we are doing it and what our purpose is. In a church, this "why" or "purpose" can be summed up in a Mission Statement.

Last month at the officer retreat, our session and deacons began to consider possibilities for a new Mission statement for the church. The Mission statement we have been using was written about ten years ago by the pastor nominating committee. It's a lovely statement, however, it's due for an update.

A few years ago, Session read *Canoeing the Mountains* in which Presbyterian pastor Tod Bolsinger writes:

*"When I work with clients in brining transformation, I facilitate a half-day exercise based on the work of the Mulago Foundation, a nonprofit venture capital firm that funds projects for combating children in poverty [sic. I'm pretty sure it fights the poverty, not the children]. Mulago requires grant applicants to write a simple proposal with an eight-word mission statement. The statement must be in this format: verb, target, outcome. And it can used only eight words. Some of the examples offered are, 'Save endangered species from extinction' and 'Improve African children's health.' When I have done this exercise with church leaders, they chafe under the demand of limited words. But it forces a conversation that help build the adaptive functioning: what words are most important? What are we really all about?"*

Session and Deacons have brainstormed possibilities at their retreat and the rest of the congregation was invited to join the fun in worship the Sunday of the annual meeting. If you didn't get the chance to submit something and would like to or if you've thought of something new, please let me know. **What's your idea for what our mission statement** in eight or fewer words. (ok, ok. You can have 9 or 10 if absolutely necessary but no more!)

As Session and I continue to work on discerning our Mission Statement for the next season in the life of FPCN, each of these contributions will be taken into consideration. Thank you for your participation.

See page 3 for "word salad" based on the Mission Statements from the officers' retreat. Stay tuned for more!

## Meghan's Musings Continues

### Is that even Presbyterian?

At our annual congregational meeting I told everyone to fasten their seatbelts because I had a big announcement. At this year's officer retreat, Session decided to try going committee-free for a year. I know, I know, how can we even call ourselves Presbyterian if we don't have committees. Surely committees are commanded somewhere in the Bible, or at least the Book of Order. Well, believe it or not, there is no requirement to have committees in a church.

I have a friend and colleague whose church is very similar to ours. As the church membership was declining and aging, the pool of people willing and able to serve on Session, Deacons and various committees also got smaller and smaller. Those who were willing and able were burning out and people were reluctant to commit to serve on committees for an entire year, much less three, much much less indefinitely.

So they tried going committee-free. Instead of multiple committees meeting monthly, each Session member has an area they were responsible for and when a specific need arises, they form a "task force" that has a specific task and timeframe. Have a mission activity coming up? Have a task force to coordinate it. Sanctuary needs to be decorated for Easter? Task force. Planning a potluck or Fourth of July parade activities? Task force. You get the idea.

While there's an open call to the whole congregation to serve on these task forces, there is also an intentional effort made for the session member responsible to not only invite the people who are known to have done it in the past, but also to invite people who maybe haven't been as active to give them a chance to get involved.

This committee-free way of being church works really well for my friend's congregation and I'm hoping it will work for us, too.

So how will this work? Following my friend's structure—at least to start though we can certainly make changes if/as we see fit—there will be three areas: Ministry to the Congregation (Worship & Music, Christian Nurture, Membership, Church Life), Ministry to the Community (Mission and the outreach portion of Membership) and Ministry of Support (Building & Grounds, Budget & Finance, Personnel).

There is one important exception. Because we do not currently have an individual serving as Treasurer, the Budget & Finance committee serves in the role and will need to remain a committee. But even with this committee, our hope is to streamline processes to have fewer meetings.

Together it is our hope that fewer meetings will mean more energy and enthusiasm for being church together.

## Officers Mission Statement



Please forgive "God" not being capitalized. The app automatically put everything in lowercase.

## Member Spotlight

### Joan Tyler

Our featured member for February is **Joan Tyler**. Joan was born in Oskaloosa and lived her first years in Sully. When she was in eighth grade, her family moved to Newton where she graduated from Newton High School. Before graduation Joan was a Governor of Girls State and was selected for a trip to Washington DC for Girls Nation. Joan described this as a life changing experience: her first commercial plane ride and visits to many sites in Washington DC – United States Capitol, Washington Monument, the Smithsonian. All the delegates shook hands with the then President of the United States, Harry S. Truman. The whole experience gave her “a broader perspective.”

Joan graduated from Iowa State Teachers College which is now the University of Northern Iowa. In college, as well as high school, she was on debate teams. After graduation, Joan taught kindergarten in Des Moines for two years followed by kindergarten and Library Science for five years in Newton.

Joan married Jim Tyler in 1953 and they lived in Des Moines while Jim finished Drake Law School. They then returned to Newton. They have two sons, John (married to Tami and lives in Georgia) and Tom (married to Caroline and lives in Virginia). Tom and Caroline have two children: Alexander who is a junior at the University of Chicago and loves snow; and Eliza who is a sophomore in high school and among other activities, plays the flute in the marching band. Joan is fortunate to visit the grandchildren 3-4 times a year!

Speaking of traveling, Joan has done a lot, both road trips and overseas. During her college years she worked for two summers at Yellowstone National Park. Later, she and Jim enjoyed many vacations there. Joan has visited every state in the U.S. except Hawaii. Her international travel includes six trips to Europe. The first of these, and another life changing experience, was in 1954 when Joan and Jim spent over three months traveling by ship to Europe with companions Bob and Billie Ray. They rented a car to tour England and Scotland, and then ferried across the English Channel to continue sightseeing Central and Western Europe including Spain.

Here at home, Joan is very civic minded and has been involved in many community groups that include Kiwanis and the boards of the United Way, Newton Public Library, Newton Guild of the Des Moines Metro Opera, League of Women Voters and the Red Cross. She also belongs to a Book Club and PEO.

Joan and Jim joined First Presbyterian Church in about 1975 and Joan was immediately recruited into the choir by Betty Lou Johnson. She continued in choir until recently. She has participated in two Mission Trips, one to Washington DC and one to New York City, both with projects in the inner city. Joan has served several terms on Session; set up and promoted many Sundays @ 4 programs; served on a Pastoral Calling Committee and been a Membership Committee member for many years. She enjoys the Des Moines Symphony and does oil painting.

Joan enjoys entertaining and the baking and cooking which goes along with hosting gatherings. She has opportunities for entertaining with her many groups – civic, church, neighborhood, and more!

Thank you, Joan, for sharing your story with us.

## Days for Girls

Newton IA Team Days for Girls International (DfG)

Our next DfG workshop will be **Thursday, February 23rd, from 9 am to 2 pm** in the First Presbyterian Church fellowship hall.

At our January workshop we had 10 volunteers working together on sewing and non-sewing tasks – sewing flannel for liners, ironing and cutting cotton material for drawstring bags, surging liners and drawstring bags, sewing and attaching snaps to shields, inserting the drawstrings into the drawstring bags and more!

There's a task for everyone. Come join us on February 23<sup>rd</sup> for great conversation and connecting while working on needed menstrual products for girls and women around the world.

Everyone is welcome. Lunch is a BYOL (Bring Your Own Lunch, snack and/or beverage).

Julie Fisher & Marilyn McCallister, DfG International Newton IA Team





## Mission Highlights

- A group of cooks met following Women's Bible Study on Jan. 25 and prepared three large casseroles. They were passed on to one of the women in the community who has regular contact with homeless people in Newton. She was delighted to receive them and said the need has remained great for food for marginalized people. We're grateful for this opportunity to make a difference for people in need locally, and we expect to continue this activity on a monthly basis. Thanks to all who helped!
- Newton Public Schools has had to cut the budget for snacks for kids. We are working on how we might help with this need. While most of us may have grown up in communities where schools didn't have to be concerned with providing nutritious snacks for kids, this is a real need in order for the children to have the best shot at learning.
- Requests for food at the Salvation Army food pantry have increased. Current need is for macaroni and other pasta, pasta sauce, and cereal. Please bring items to the church or to Salvation Army directly.
- We continue to receive requests for ramps. No specific plans are in the works currently for building any ramps, but we expect to have some in the spring.

Larry Anderson, for the former mission committee



## Worship, Study and Prayer

Minutes for the Worship, Prayer and Study committee for Jan 8, 2023.

Linda G opened the meeting talking about needs for Lent.

Jane Repp will do a poll of people who used to participate in Lenten Breakfasts to see if they are eager to participate again.

We need to order palms for Palm Sunday. We need to start putting lilies out after the walk on Good Friday. We will recruit people Palm Sunday to bring the lily cross down.

Linda G will connect with Cat Rickers about a banner for Easter.

We are considering asking people to donate seasonal flowers or money to buy them for Mothers Day to be planted on church property.

When people are on the volunteer schedule for Church Services and need to change their day for service, they need to let the Church Office know and let Mary Jane Tripp know.

We need someone for Audio for the Maundy Thursday Service.

Deb Z. thanked everyone for their work with the children while she was gone.

Sunday School is going well. For music Karen needs 2 Sunday School sessions with the children when they are all here before they perform in the Church Service.

Children will be asked to pass out palms for Palm Sunday.

Children bringing in money for collections for the Heifer Project will be postponed till fall.

Deb Z. wants to have the children do more service projects.

Easter Sunday will have an Easter Egg hunt.

Deb will pick up candy for the eggs at Sam's Club.

Women's Bible Study will resume Jan. 18.

Deb Z. volunteered to do devotions for Lenten Breakfast if needed.

Deb. Z. closed the meeting with a prayer.



## 2023 ***BIRTHDAYS*** & **EVENTS**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
			1 9:30a WBS	2 9a Men's Group 3p Chair Yoga  GROUNDHOG DAY	3	4 <i>Jen Norvell</i>
5 9:45a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 11:30a Fellowship	6	7 <i>Joan Rusk</i> 11a Gentle Yoga	8 9:30a WBS 5:15p Choir 6p Budget & Finance	9 3p Chair Yoga	10 <i>Carl Repp</i>	11
12 9a Deacons 9:45a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 11:30a Fellowship	13	14 <i>Susan Weeks</i> 11a Gentle Yoga 3:30p Mission  HAPPY Valentine's DAY	15 9:30a WBS 5:15p Choir	16 9a Men's Group 10:30a Park Centre Gathering 3p Chair Yoga	17	18
19 9:45a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 11:30a Fellowship	20	21 11a Gentle Yoga 6:30p Session	22 7:30a Lenten Breakfast 9:30a WBS 5:15p Choir  Ash Wednesday	23 9a Days for Girls 3p Chair Yoga	24	25 <i>Harold Manley</i>
26 9:45a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 11:30a Fellowship	27	28 11a Gentle Yoga	1 7:30a Lenten Breakfast 9:30a WBS 5:15p Choir	2 9a Men's Group 3p Chair Yoga	3	4






	5	12	19	26
<b>Worship Leader</b>	Kevin Peska	Diane Moles	Deb Zieman	Jane Repp
<b>Greeters</b>	Randy and Carol Camp	John Taylor	Carroll Brodersen	Elsie Nelson & Jen Norvell
<b>Ushers</b>	Dana Hashman & Deb Zieman	Terry Rickers	Larry and Shari DeCook	Joan Tyler
<b>Audio</b>	Terry Rickers	Marilyn McCallister	Erick Zehr	Marilyn McCallister
<b>Counters</b>	Tom Weeks & Diane Moles	Tara Zehr & Jen Norvell	Toni Peska & Kathy Ventling Briggs	Terry Rickers & Chris and Peggy Lickiss
<b>Sunday Host</b>	Linda Gehling	Cathy Rickers	Linda Erickson	Taylor McDonnell

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

## Lectionary —

### February, 2023

#### **February 5 - 5th Sunday after Epiphany**

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

#### **February 12 - 6th Sunday after Epiphany**

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

#### **February 19 - Transfiguration of the Lord**

Ex. 24:12-18 & Ps. 2 or Ps. 99;  
2 Pet. 1:16-21; Matt. 17:1-9

#### **February 26 - 1st Sunday in Lent**

Gen. 2:15-17; 3:1-7 & Ps. 32;  
Rom. 5:12-19; Matt. 4:1-11

### March, 2023

#### **March 5 - 2nd Sunday in Lent**

Gen. 12:1-4a & Ps. 121;  
Rom. 4:1-5, 13-17; John 3:1-17

#### **March 12 - 3rd Sunday in Lent**

Ex. 17:1-7 & Ps. 95;  
Rom. 5:1-11; John 4:5-42

#### **March 19 - 4th Sunday in Lent**

1 Sam. 16:1-13 & Ps. 23;  
Eph. 5:8-14; John 9:1-41

#### **March 26 - 5th Sunday in Lent**

Ez. 37:1-14 & Ps. 130;  
Rom. 8:6-11; John 11:1-45