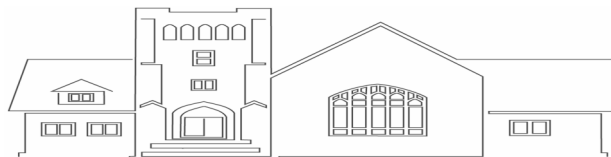


FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
NEWTON, IOWA  
641-792-2790

*Sharing God's love through worship and service.*

# THE MESSENGER



2024  
January - March

## Meghan's Musings

### Journeys

Beloveds in Christ,

It's been almost exactly ten years since I met most of you for the first time when I came to "candidate" and be elected by the congregation to be your next called and installed pastor. As I hope you know by now, the time has come for the paths of our journeys to part and our last Sunday together will be January 28, 2024, which will also be the time of our Annual Meeting.

In my last three Sundays with you, I will be preaching a series about Journeys.

- January 14, 2024: The Journey to (Camino de) Santiago
- January 21, 2024: The Journey to Iona (Scotland)
- January 28, 2024: The Journey Forward

Please join me and your church family in worship to mark these sacred journeys.

In Christ,

*Meghan*



## Days for Girls Update



Our Newton IA Team met for nine workshops in 2023 with an average of 10 volunteers in attendance. We concentrate on creating the four sewn components (washable pads, washable shields, carry pouches, drawstring bags) and preparing the four additional components (washcloths, underwear, travel size soap, care and use instruction cards) needed for a complete standard DfG kit.

Looking into 2024, our first quarter workshops will be **January 25, February 22 and March 28** (all Thursdays). Our workshops run from **9 am to 2 pm** in the First Presbyterian Church fellowship hall. All are welcome to come!

Our Team is a registered group with Days for Girls International which works to shatter stigma and limitations associated with menstruation for improved health, education, and livelihood outcomes for girls and women all over the world.

Your Newton IA Team Leads: Julie Fisher & Marilyn McCallister

### Notes:

**Annual Meeting:** *Sunday, January 28th after worship.* As always, the primary purpose of this meeting is for the congregation to receive the past year's Annual Report and the coming year's budget. This year the congregation will also be voting to dissolve our pastoral relationship with Rev. Meghan Davis-Brass. As this is a matter of timely importance, the meeting will be held via zoom in case of inclement weather.

**Severe Weather:** It's that time of year when the possibility of needing to cancel Sunday worship due to weather is never too far away. Whenever there is a question, the pastor and Session will confer via email and if worship is cancelled notice will go out via email, or facebook page and KCOB radio station (95.9 FM/1280 AM). While there was a time when this church had a proud tradition of gathering for worship no matter what (perhaps as much because of the weather as much as despite it) as our congregation has grown wiser we're more likely to place a higher priority on the safety of all our church family.

## Per Capita - What? Why?

As each new year begins, we as individual members of First Presbyterian Church, Newton are encouraged to consider paying our “per capita” amount. As part of the Presbyterian Church (USA), our congregation is expected to make an annual payment, based on the number of our active membership, to be split among the nation-wide General Assembly of the PC(USA), the Synod of Lakes and Prairies (which includes presbyteries in Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin and the non-geographical Dakota Presbytery), and the Presbytery of Des Moines (which includes 50+ churches in south central and south west Iowa). The 2024 per capita amount is \$50.00, divided as follows: \$9.80 to General Assembly, \$5.50 to the Synod of Lakes and Prairies, and \$34.70 to the Presbytery of Des Moines.

The PC(USA) is a connectional church. We believe that we are all parts of God’s body, living into the belief that we can accomplish more by supporting each other than we can individually, realizing and acting on the truth that we all need assistance from others at times and that preparation for those situations is important. Per capita funds pay for denominational governmental functions; support educational opportunities for current and future pastors, elders and deacons; facilitate ministries on local, national and international levels; and much more. Per capita funding helps to pay the Presbytery personnel who are working with our Session as we plan for the transition period after Meghan leaves and the future of our congregation.

If you are able to pay the \$50.00 per capita amount for each actively enrolled church member in your household, thank you for doing so as soon as possible. Please note “Per Capita” in the memo line of your check. If you are unable to cover the entire amount, please consider contributing whatever you feel led and able to give. If you are able to pay an additional amount to help cover the contribution that someone else is unable to completely cover, thank you.

Together, we benefit from the work made possible through per capita funding. Together, we are able to share God’s blessings through the outreach activities conducted on our behalf and with our support of the PC(USA). Our Mission Statement says that we are “sharing God’s love through worship and service.” Thank you for your support as per capita funds help with that work.

## Presbytery Meeting Report

531st Presbytery Meeting Report  
November 11, 2023  
First Arabic Presbyterian Church  
Des Moines, Iowa

This was a hybrid meeting with some members meeting in person and others joining in via Zoom.

Rev. Meghan Davis-Brass and I attended in person. Linda Curtis-Stolper was excused as she was in Louisville, KY attending the New Moderators Conference.

Highlights of the meeting were:

- As a change to our normal procedures, we held our worship service all at one time, following the call to order and land acknowledgment. Adults from First Arabic and the children's choir offered music during the service. Meghan delivered the sermon, which was based on Isaiah 55:1-6. Also held was a memorial service for Teaching and Ruling Elders who died in 2022.
- Approval of May 16, 2023. Presbytery meeting.
- Approval of the report from the Commission on Ministry
  - This involves the approval of new ministers, ministers retiring, and ministers and RE who are appointed as Moderators of Sessions or stated supply.
  - The only action item was the approval of the 2024 minimum effective salary be \$57, 500, which is a 3% increase from \$55,000 for 2023. **This motion passed unanimously.**
  - Also noted were four changes to the Des Moines Presbytery Manual of Operations.
- Received the report from the Budget & Finance committee.
  - It was indicated that long-time Presbytery treasurer, Bob Mahaffey, is retiring at the end of the year. He will be recognized at our February meeting.:
  - Approved the 2024 budget. Bill Ekhardt, chair of this committee and our new Presbytery treasurer, indicated the budget may appear different than in the past because it was discovered that previous budgets took into account changes in expenses, but not income. Also, it was noted that all three Presbyteries paid for a 5<sup>th</sup> staff member who was never hired but will be in 2024. Each Presbytery will be sent their proportion of that money.
  - The Per Capita rate for 2024 will be \$50 per person.
- Approval of the Leadership Council Committee report.
  - Approved the Anti-Racism Policy, Harassment Policy, and Child Protection Policy additions to the Manual of Operations.
  - Approved the following dates for the meetings in 2024: stated meetings on Saturday, February 10; Tuesday, May 14, and Saturday, November 9. Saturday, August 24 will be the All Iowa Gathering.

(Continued on next page.)

## Presbytery Meeting Report Continued

- Received the report from the Committee on Promotion for Social Righteousness
- Approval of the Nominating Committee report (2024 slate)
  - From our church, the following people hold offices or are on committees or commissions: Linda Curtis-Stolper, Moderator; Larry Anderson, Committee on the Promotion of Social Righteousness (CPSR); Meghan Davis-Brass, Commission on Ministry (COM), Terry Rickers, Permanent Judicial Commission. Mickey Van Baale is a staff member of the tri-presbytery (UPP).
- Received the reports of the Executives:
  - Pastor to the Presbyteries – Ian McMullen
  - Mission Executive – Amgad Beblawi – on a Mission trip to the Texas/Mexico border
  - Administrative Executive & Stated Clerk – Annika Lister Stroope
    - \* Be sure it is noted in the Session minutes each year that we have adequate insurance.
    - \* Due to a change in the Book of Order, all Session members need to have boundary training, which is Anti-Racism, Harassment and Child Protection policies. These can be done on-line. The clerk is responsible for keeping track as elders complete these training sessions. Any training done through a person's place of business would count.
    - \* Each Session needs to adopt the policies listed above. Rather than starting from scratch, they can use the Presbytery policies that were adopted at this meeting, making changes if necessary to make it personal for the individual church.
    - \* There is to be number parity between Teaching Elders (Pastors) and Ruling Elders. This has not been looked at for a while. In doing so, Annika found that it was out of sync. She proposed a new metrics to be followed, which was approved. Starting January 1, 2024, our church will now have two commissioners to Presbytery meetings, rather than one. Commissioners have voice and vote at Presbytery meetings.
- Celebrated the Installation of Sue Tomlinson as the new Vice Moderator.

Respectfully submitted,

Mickey Van Baale, Commissioner



# Our Church in Pictures





# Our Church in Pictures







## 2024 **BIRTHDAYS & EVENTS**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b> <i>Lawrence Kenyi</i>	<b>2</b> 11a Gentle Yoga	<b>3</b> <i>Curt Brass</i> 9:30p WBS 6:30p Choir	<b>4</b> <i>Riley McGonegle</i> 9 am Men's Group 3p Chair Yoga	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> 9:45a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 11:30a Fellowship	<b>8</b> <i>Patty Skokan</i> <i>Samantha Jackson</i>	<b>9</b> <i>Marlys Grimm</i> 11a Gentle Yoga 3:30p Mission	<b>10</b> <i>Emily Miller, Jane Repp, &amp; Linda Erickson</i> 9:30p WBS 6p Budget & Finance 6:30p Choir	<b>11</b> <i>Tom Weeks</i> 3p Chair Yoga	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> <i>Benila Issifou</i> 9:15a Deacons 9:45a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 11:30a Fellowship	<b>15</b> <i>Martin Luther King Jr.</i>	<b>16</b> 11a Gentle Yoga 6:30p Session	<b>17</b> 9:30p WBS 6:30p Choir	<b>18</b> <i>Bonnie Rasmussen</i> 9 am Men's Group 3p Chair Yoga	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 9a Officer Retreat
<b>21</b> <i>Gary Kirchoff &amp; Leia Vesely</i> 9:45a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 11:30a Fellowship	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> 11a Gentle Yoga	<b>24</b> 9:30p WBS 6:30p Choir	<b>25</b> 9a Days for Girls 10:30a Park Centre 3p Chair Yoga	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> <i>Shari DeCook</i> 9:45a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 11:30a Annual Meeting	<b>29</b> <i>Allie Norvell</i>	<b>30</b> 1pm Retired Teachers	<b>31</b> <i>Scott DeGraff</i> 9:30p WBS 6:30p Choir	<b>1</b> 9a Men's Group	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>



# February

## 2024 *BIRTHDAYS* & EVENTS

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
				1 9 am Men's Group	2 	3
4 <i>Jen Norvell</i> 9:45a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 11:30a Fellowship	5	6	7 <i>Joan Rusk</i> 9:30a WBS 6:30p Choir	8	9	10 <i>Carl Repp</i>
11 9:15a Deacons 9:45a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 11:30a Fellowship	12	13 3:30p Mission	14 <i>Susan Weeks</i> 6:00p Budget & Finance 6:30p Choir  	15 9 am Men's Group	16	17
18 9:45a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 11:30a Fellowship	19 	20 6:30p Session	21 9:30a WBS 6:30p Choir	22 9a Days for Girls	23	24
25 <i>Harold Manley</i> 9:45a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 11:30a Fellowship	26	27 1pm Retired Teachers	28 9:30a WBS 6:30p Choir	29	1	2

# 2024 *BIRTHDAYS* & EVENTS

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
					1	2
<b>3</b> 9:45a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 11:30a Fellowship	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> 9:30a WBS 6:30p Choir	<b>7</b> 9a Men's Group	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> <i>Kevin Peska</i>
<b>10</b> 9:15a Deacons 9:45a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 11:30a Fellowship  <i>Spring Forward</i>	<b>11</b> <i>Linda Curtis-Stolper</i>  <i>Julie Fisher</i>	<b>12</b> 3:30p Mission	<b>13</b> 9:30a WBS 6p Budget & Finance 6:30p Choir	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> <i>Godspell Issifou</i>
<b>17</b> 9:45a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 11:30a Fellowship  ST. PATRICK'S DAY	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 6:30p Session	<b>20</b> 9:30a WBS 6:30p Choir	<b>21</b> 9a Men's Group 10:30a Park Centre Gathering	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> <i>Dan Skokan</i>
<b>24</b> 9:45a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 11:30a Fellowship  PALM Sunday	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> <i>Don Black</i>	<b>27</b> 9:30a WBS 6:30p Choir	<b>28</b> 9a Days for Girls  MAUNDY THURSDAY	<b>29</b>  Good Friday	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b> 9:45a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 11:30a Fellowship  EASTER SUNDAY	<b>1</b> <i>Bob Vander Veer</i>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 9:30a WBS 6:30p Choir	<b>4</b> 9a Men's Group	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>



	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Worship Leader</b>	Dave Stolper	Karen Quinn	Terry Rickers	Mickey Van Baale
<b>Greeters</b>	Kevin/Toni Peska	Terry Rickers	Randy/Carol Camp	John Taylor
<b>Ushers</b>	Gary/Kay Parsons	Harold/Deanna Manley	John/Barb Taylor	Cat Rickers & Jeanette Shannon
<b>Audio</b>	Bryce Skaggs	Erick Zehr	Marilyn McCallister	Terry Rickers
<b>Counters</b>	Tara Zehr & Jen Norvell	Toni Peska & Kathy Ventling Briggs	Terry Rickers & Chris/Peggy Lickiss	Marilyn McCallister & Diane Moles
<b>Sunday Host</b>		Dave Stolper	Randy Camp	Taylor McDonnell





# February

SCHEDULE  
OF



**VOLUNTEERS**

	<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Worship Leader</b>	Diane Moles	Deb Zieman	Jane Repp	Linda Kirchhoff
<b>Greeters</b>	Carroll Brodersen	Elsie Nelson & Jen Norvell	Mary Jane Tripp & Suzie Funk	Chris/Peggy Lickiss
<b>Ushers</b>	Dana Hashman & Mickey Van Baale	Kevin/Toni Peska	Steve/Linda Gehling	Joan Tyler & Sharon Black
<b>Audio</b>	Bryce Skaggs	Erick Zehr	Marilyn McCallister	Terry Rickers
<b>Counters</b>	Tara Zehr & Jen Norvell	Toni Peska & Kathy Ventling Briggs	Terry Rickers & Chris/Peggy Lickiss	Marilyn McCallister & Diane Moles
<b>Sunday Host</b>	List is still being worked on. Will update when we get the list.			



**SCHEDULE  
OF**



**VOLUNTEERS**

	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Worship Leader</b>	Joan Tyler	Tara Zehr	Deanna Manley	Taylor McDonnell	Terry Rickers
<b>Greeters</b>	Taylor McDonnell & Rachel Skaggs	Gary/Kay Parsons	Kevin/Toni Peska	Terry Rickers	Randy/Carol Camp
<b>Ushers</b>	Dave/Suzie Funk	Terry/Cat Rickers	Deb Ziemann & Rachel Anderson	Gary/Kay Parsons	Cat Rickers & Jeanette Shannon
<b>Audio</b>	Bryce Skaggs	Erick Zehr	Marilyn McCallister	Terry Rickers	Bryce Skaggs
<b>Counters</b>	Marilyn McCallister & Jen Norvell	Toni Peska & Kathy Ventling Briggs	Terry Rickers & Chris/Peggy Lickiss	Marilyn McCallister & Diane Moles	Tara Zehr & Jen Norvell Briggs
<b>Sunday Host</b>					

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