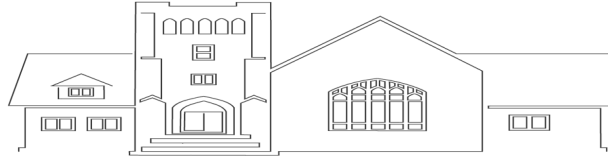


**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
NEWTON, IOWA  
641-792-2790**

*"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 2018**

**Meghan's Musings**

**Extending the Love and Light of Christmas into Winter**

I don't know about you, but for me it seems Christmas always comes too soon. Obviously, I never thought that as a kid but now, as a pastor it always comes too soon. I struggle to get decorations up. Even as I write this on the morning of Christmas Eve I do have my tree up and lit but only a handful of decorations have made their way onto my little tree, I have no other Christmas décor to speak of, my house is a mess, I'm preparing for this morning's service, still have work to do on tonight's service, not to mention end-of-year business and prep work for by time away—speaking of which, I still need to pack for my flight to California. Oh, and presents needing to be wrapped. I hope I didn't miss anyone!

Each year since becoming a pastor, it seems that Christmas always comes too soon and brings along a list that's too long of things that must be done. Typically, I can breathe a little sigh of relief after the Christmas Eve service, and greater relief comes when I get through airport security and on that plane. My holiday typically doesn't truly start until the night of December 25 at the earliest, just when most other people's holiday is winding down. (Perhaps this explains my affinity for and promotion of a full 12 days of Christmas celebration!)

But even my delayed Christmas comes to an end. Even my Christmas tree will have to be taken down eventually. When I return to Newton, most outdoor decorations will be gone and all we'll be left with is the dark and cold of the worst part of winter that still lies ahead. I wish we could just all agree to keep our Christmas lights on throughout all of winter. Maybe when the time changes in the spring, maybe that would be a better time to turn them off rather than 12/26 or even 01/02.

This Christina Rossetti poem, also a carol found in our hymnal, helps to extend the love and light of Christmas well into winter for me. May it do so for you...

**In the bleak midwinter**

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,  
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;  
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,  
In the bleak midwinter, long ago.

*Continued on page 2*

### Be Praying For ...

- ✚ Shirley Stevens, as she recovers from recent surgery..
- ✚ Tim Leonard, as he recovers from recent surgery.
- ✚ Our church officers as they attend the annual retreat and begin the work of the church for another year.
- ✚ Congregation members who may be serving on a committee for the first time, as they share their time and talents.
- ✚ People who may be suffering from the flu, colds, respiratory infections and other seasonal illnesses.
- ✚ Those who don't have enough food, or a warm place to stay during our winter season.
- ✚ Our military personnel who are away from family, while being willing to defend our freedom.
- ✚ All peoples of the world as they face whatever hardships they may have that we are not aware of.
- ✚ Peace on Earth!

### Mark your Calendar!

Prior to worship on Sunday, January 21, we will have a brief congregational meeting to elect Barb Taylor as a Deacon. Barb will be finishing Mickey Van Baale's one-year term, created by Mickey's resignation.

During our worship service that day, we will hold Ordination and Installation for our new Elders and Deacons.

Have you noticed anything different in the sanctuary? Perhaps that it's a little brighter? Thank you to Deanna and Harold Manley for climbing up into the sanctuary ceiling to clean the skylight and replace the bulbs in the lights.

### *Continued from page 1\*

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him, nor earth sustain;  
Heaven and earth shall flee away when He comes to reign.  
In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed  
The Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

Enough for Him, whom cherubim, worship night and day,  
Breastful of milk, and a mangerful of hay;  
Enough for Him, whom angels fall before,  
The ox and ass and camel which adore.

Angels and archangels may have gathered there,  
Cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;  
But His mother only, in her maiden bliss,  
Worshipped the beloved with a kiss.

What can I give Him, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;  
If I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;  
Yet what I can I give Him: give my heart.



Welcome to Leo Earl Ferguson, the first great-grandchild of Wilma Manning. He was born on December 18, which is Grandpa Randy's birthday also. Leo is the son of Landon and Nicole, grandson to Randy and Barb and nephew to Uncle Collin and Aunt Lauren. Word is that Aunt Lauren is very excited about the birth of Leo.

And what a great Christmas gift to the entire family. Congratulations to everyone.

## Congratulations, Graduates

Two of our young adults have graduated from college in December.

- ◇ Dylan Camp graduated on December 15 from Iowa State University. He received his Master's degree from the College of Family and Consumer Sciences as a Master of Family Financial Planning and he graduated with the distinction Summa Cum Laude! Dylan got a job with a firm in Kansas City and moved there and started his job in August. He is a Family Financial Planner for a firm called Prosperity Planning.
- ◇ Jen Ventling graduated from the University of Northern Iowa on December 18 with her major degree in Supply Chain Marketing and her minor in International Business. Jen is going to study abroad in Spain for the next 6 months.

Congratulations from your church family!

## Worship and Music

Linda Kirchhoff, Chair

The Advent booklet has been completed and distributed. Advent decorations have been completed. The piano has been tuned. We held the Blue Christmas service, had the All Church pageant, and Christmas Eve service. Thank you to all those who helped out in any way with these services.

Glenda Duffus will play the piano for the December 31 service and plans to invite flutist Kris McKlveen to also play. Linda Curtis-Stolper will be in charge of the December 31 service.

Lent is early in 2018, with Ash Wednesday being February 14. Mary Jane Tripp Will begin to ask members to either prepare breakfast or a devotion for the Wednesdays during Lent. Easter is April 1.





## Christian Nurture

Karen Quinn, Chair

The All Church Christmas pageant was held during our worship service on Sunday morning, December 24. Thank you to Sandy Simbro for playing the organ and Val McKee and Nancy Mott for being in charge of the costumes. Thanks to all those who participated and for everyone who helped put away the costumes and props following church. Below are pictures featuring the pageant.



Joseph & Mary, animals, angels, shepherds, wisemen, stars, and the baby Jesus.



## Church Life

Tara Zehr, Chair

A small group gathered to carol around the community on Sunday afternoon, December 17. Fifteen singers made a loop through Newton sharing the Christmas cheer. Eighteen people then met in the evening to warm up with a selection of yummy soups and hot chocolate.

Thank you to everyone who brought food items to share throughout our 2017 events. We also appreciate everyone who came and participated in the events planned. Be on the lookout for the list of our 2018 events. Hope to see everyone there!



At our December meeting we:

- ♦ Heard and approved the minutes from our November meeting
- ♦ Shared information from our visits
- ♦ Learned that Sandy Shaver has resigned from our board. Dana Hashman volunteered to finish out her one-year term.
- ♦ Were informed that the Leadership retreat date has been moved to January 20, 2018.
- ♦ Received our fund balance which was \$456.62, as of November 30.
- ♦ Went over requests received asking for donations. The group approved a donation of \$100 to the Food Bank of Iowa and \$100 to the Newton Salvation Army.
- ♦ Heard from Shirley Stevens that she had sent 20 during October and 18 cards during November.
- ♦ Suggested to the Church Life committee that our members living at Park Centre be caroled to in one location at the facility. Also provided names of others we felt the group should visit and sing to. This will be done on the late afternoon of December 17.

With the resignation of Sandy Shaver, Dave Stolper and Dana Hashman will do their December visits together.

Second-year deacons were reminded that they are among the hosts for the church's annual meeting on January 28, 2018.

Mickey Van Baale, Moderator

## SUDANESE MINISTRY

### MEMBERSHIP



### MOMENT

Warren Erickson has had further contact with Ekram Kachu, Pastor of the Sudanese congregation in Des Moines (officially First Arabic Presbyterian Church). Ms. Kachu is eager to visit our congregation, and we discussed a possible date for her visit. Rev. Davis suggested that we invite her to preach the sermon and tell us more about the present situation in Sudan, the Des Moines congregation and its worship services, her own personal story of immigration to the United States, and her experience as a refugee in this

country. We will also invite her to stay after church for a simple soup-and-sandwich type of meal with interested members of our congregation. We also hope she may be able to encourage and inform us of ways in which we can be supportive to Sudanese members of our own community. Warren will talk with her again to extend these invitations, and we will let our congregation know when we may expect this interesting and informative visitor to worship with us.

### PEW

It was decided to postpone the next PEW event until later in the spring, after the high school basketball season is over. Possible work to be tackled might include re-cleaning of upstairs areas of the church, deep cleaning in the kitchen, or cleaning of the furnace room area.

### HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES

Events that recently were attended by our church members were the NHS Winter Vocal Concert on Monday, December 18 and the Basketball Games vs. Oskaloosa on December 19 ("Christmas in the Gym"). There were 26 church members who attended the vocal concert, of which Natalie Camp is a member. She was the featured soloist when they sang "Do Not Be Afraid." Nice job, Natalie. Twenty-seven members of First Presbyterian attended the basketball games on December 19. At halftime of the girl's game, Garrett Sturtz was recognized for reaching 1000 points in his high school and is still going. During half time of the boy's game, the Pacesetters, of which Allie Norvell is a member, performed "Jingle Bell Rock" and handed out candy after to the crowd. Since it was Christmas in the Gym on the 18th, attendees were asked to donate an unwrapped toy, an activity sponsored by the Key Club, which Steve Weeks is the teacher in charge. Also Santa was in attendance. The boy's team lost a nail bitter, 56-53 with Garrett scoring 44 points. (Pictures on page 6)

Upcoming events being planned are: January 13 Grinnell College basketball games(1 PM Men's, 3:00 PM Women's), followed by a pizza supper at Pagliai's; the next high school game to attend as a group will be January 19 vs. Indianola; and the Pacesetters' winter performance program on February 3. Look for further information in the Church Happenings and bulletins as the events get closer.

### RETENTION OF CHURCH MEMBERS/ACQUISITION OF NEW CHURCH MEMBERS

Meghan Davis will soon be starting a membership class.

We placed advertisement in the Newton Daily News concerning our Christmas services, including both "Blue Christmas" on Thursday, December 21 and Christmas Eve (Sunday, December 24), each of which will start at 7:00 PM.

*Continued on page 6*



*Continued from page 5*

Taylor has been talking with the high school's technical club teacher/advisor about setting up an "app" for First Presbyterian. That club will plan to work on helping us with this project sometime before March, as their schedule allows.

Taylor reported that she has encountered reluctance among those she has asked to spotlight in her "View from the Pew" column in the Messenger. Several church members were suggested for her to ask, and we encouraged Taylor to keep trying. Taylor would welcome volunteers to be interviewed, as well!

### CHURCH BROCHURE

We agreed that we would like more "people" photos and other specific still shots to be taken with the aim of coordinating with the text in the new church brochure. Gary will talk with folks within our congregation who are good photographers to see if we can get those accomplished. The brochure will not be in production until we can include information on the church "app", once it is developed, so we have time to acquire these new photos.



Garrett Sturtz, next to the last person on the right hand side, about to get his award for having 1000 career points.

Emmett and Erick Zehr meeting Santa at "Christmas in the Gym"



NHS 2017-18 Pacesetters. Allie Norvell is in the back row, next to the last person on the right hand side.



Natalie Camp, who is a member of the NHS Vocal Choir and was a featured soloist in one of the numbers.

## Budget and Finance Corner

Bev Rossow, Chair

### Operating Revenue and Expenses for month:

- ◇ Pledges for the month of November were \$6,785. This was \$3,859 below budget for the month.
- ◇ Other Regular Giving, which represents donations from people who tithe, but do not pledge, was \$1,565 for the month, which was \$829 above budget.

### Other Income for the month:

- ◇ The church received settlement of the Noel Burton trust, in the amount of \$3,721.29. This donation will be transferred to the Foundation, in accordance with the Foundation guidelines.
- ◇ Prepaid 2018 pledges were received in the amount of \$5,159.78. This will be transferred to the 2018 pledge account in January.
- ◇ The Capital Development Maintenance fund received \$3,850 income from the Foundation earnings.

### Expenses for the month:

- ◇ Administrative Expense was \$164.73 above budget due to the purchase of some software.
- ◇ Building and Grounds Expense was \$108.61 above budget due to billing for lawn mowing done in previous months.
- ◇ The Deacons made donations to Neighbors Helping Neighbors for \$200, Salvation Army for \$200 and Friends in Hope for \$100.
- ◇ The Rural Harvest Special Offering collected an additional \$50. The total collection of \$355 will be remitted to Presbytery in December.
- ◇ The Undesignated Mission fund paid \$300 for Rain Forest wreaths, which will be resold to church members. It also paid \$1,881.52 for expenses related to the ramp building ministry.

In total for the month, expenses were \$134.70 below budget.

### Year-to-date through November:

- ◇ Pledges are \$2,795 under budget.
- ◇ Other Regular Giving is \$3,581 over budget.
- ◇ Expenses are \$736 over budget.

For the year, the church is experiencing a shortfall of \$15,592. The 2017 anticipated annual shortfall was \$26,417.





## Mission Committee

Marilyn McCallister, Chair

We would like to thank all the members who helped others on behalf of our church during the month of December. We had 25 angels from the Salvation Army that gifts were purchased for. Eight people from Progress Industries enjoyed a Christmas gift. We had bell ringers for the Salvation Army, and donations of food for the Salvation Army. Also to those who might have helped or made donations toward Neighbors Helping Neighbors or Friends in Hope.

Some of the members who built the ramp at Charlie Brown's home, went caroling to their home the Friday before Christmas. Plans had been to also carol at the home in Colfax where a ramp was built, but a date could not be found that worked out for all involved.

Days for Girls International workshops continue – The sustainable feminine hygiene kit allows a girl continue in school when she normally would have to spend a week each month confined to her home. At our last workshop, one complete kit was assembled. Our next workshop will be Thursday, January 26 from 9 am – 3 pm in fellowship hall with a delicious crock pot lunch provided. (Thank you, Linda Curtis-Stolper.) Our goal is to assemble more kits to be taken to Africa in February by our trainer, Kay Hertz of Des Moines. Donations of colorful underwear (girl's sizes 10-16 and women's sizes 5 & 6) are needed. All are welcome to participate in this great mission project.

Watch for information about Blue Sunday on February 11. This is when we celebrate the work of PDA (Presbytery Disaster Assistance). Barb Taylor will be heading up this celebration and there will be more details as the date gets closer.

John and Barb Taylor toured Dickenson, Texas First Presbyterian Church, while visiting their daughter, Marilee and family over Thanksgiving. This is the church Marilee and her family attend and it was flooded during Hurricane Harvey. Work is going well in cleaning up the damage and donations have been coming in from churches, not only in Texas, but nation wide. Our committee have offered to help if we can in some way. Marilee will keep her parents updated on what needs there might be. One idea we had was Sunday School curriculum that we have stored. Clean-up and groups of volunteers that have helped are a direct result of PDA in action.

The final figures are in and a total of \$981.75 was raised at the Luncheon and Style show. This amount was split between the ramp building project and half to PDA.

The total raised by The Rural Harvest offering was \$355.00.

At the writing of this article, money is still being received for the Christmas Joy Offering. Once we know the final amount, we will let you know. Thank you to those who have donated.

We ordered 25 Eco-Palm Presbyterian Hunger Program Christmas wreaths. All were picked up and paid for. Another thank you to those who participated.

The committee voted to donate \$100 to Neighbors Helping Neighbors and \$100 to Friends in Hope.

# **2018 BIRTHDAYS & EVENTS**

**Sun**
**Mon**
**Tue**
**Wed**
**Thu**
**Fri**
**Sat**

	<b>1</b> <i>Lyndee Hashman</i>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> <i>Jay Koenen</i> 7p Choir	<b>4</b> <i>Mary Jo Nisken</i> <i>James Leonard</i>  6:30a Early Men's Group 9a Men's Group 5p Budget & Finance	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> <i>Patty Skokan</i>	<b>9</b> <i>Marlys Grimm</i> 3:30p Mission	<b>10</b> <i>Emily Miller</i> <i>Linda Erickson</i> <i>Jane Repp</i>  5p Membership 7p Choir	<b>11</b> <i>Tom Weeks</i> 7p Christian Nurture	<b>12</b> <i>Tom Atwood</i> <i>Barb Ferguson</i>	<b>13</b>  Grinnell Basketball Outing
<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> <i>Megan Ritter</i> 5:30p Building & Grounds	<b>16</b> <i>Macy Leonard</i> 11a Gentle Yoga	<b>17</b> 9:30a Women's Bible Study 7p Choir	<b>18</b> 6:30a Early Men's Group 9a Men's Group 3p Chair Yoga	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>  Leadership Retreat and Deacon meeting
<b>21</b> <i>Gary Kirchhoff</i> <i>Shae Koenen</i>  Congregational Mtg prior to worship Ordination and Installation of Officers during worship	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> 11a Gentle Yoga 6:30p Session	<b>24</b> 9:30a Women's Bible Study 7p Choir	<b>25</b> 3p Chair Yoga	<b>26</b> Articles due for Messenger	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> <i>Shari DeCook</i>  11:30 a - Annual Meeting & Potluck	<b>29</b> <i>Allie Norvell</i>	<b>30</b> 11a Gentle Yoga	<b>31</b> <i>Scott DeGraff</i>		<b>9</b> 00 a Adult Sunday School 10:00 a Fellowship 10:30 a Worship 11:30 a Fellowship	



<b>January</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Worship Leader</b> <i>Mickey Van Baale</i>	Karen Quinn	Tom Mott	Linda Kirchhoff	Bev Rossow
<b>Host Elder/Deacon</b> <i>Church Life</i>	Linda Erickson	George Wilkening	Mickey Van Baale	Annual Meeting 2nd Year Elders/Deacons
<b>Greeters</b> <i>Julie Brodersen</i>	Janet Shields Kim/Kert Schnell	Randy & Carol Camp	Gary & Kay Parsons	Kevin & Toni Peska
<b>Ushers</b> <i>Mickey Van Baale</i>	Mary Jane Tripp Suzy Funk	John & Barb Taylor	Kevin & Toni Peska	Don & Sharon Black
<b>Audio</b> <i>Shirley Stevens</i>	Shirley Stevens	Kyle Doerring	Dan Ritter	Erick Zehr
<b>Counters</b> <i>Budget &amp; Finance</i>	Mickey Van Baale Bev Rossow	Dan Ritter Don Black	Dave Stolper Kathy Ventling	Tara Zehr Bret Doerring
<b>Bread Ministry Baker</b> <i>Barb Taylor</i>	Shari DeCook	Shari DeCook	Sandy Simbro	Barb Taylor
<b>Bread Ministry Taker</b> <i>Barb Taylor</i>	Mickey Van Baale	Mickey Van Baale	Mary Jane Tripp	Barb Taylor
<b>Communion Set up</b> <i>Worship &amp; Music</i>	Karen Quinn Bev Rossow			

First Presbyterian Church  
PO Box 7  
220 N 2nd Ave E  
Newton, Iowa 50208

641-792-2790

Return Service Requested

## Lectioary —

### January, 2018

#### **January 7 - Baptism of the Lord**

Gen. 1:1-5; *Ps. 29*; Acts 19:1-7;  
Mark 1:4-11

#### **January 14 - 2nd Sunday after Epiphany**

1 Sam. 3:1-10 (11-20); *Ps. 139:1-6, 13-18*;  
1 Cor. 6:12-20; John 1:43-51

#### **January 21 - 3rd Sunday after Epiphany**

Jonah 3:1-5, 10; *Ps. 62:5-12*;  
1 Cor. 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20

#### **January 28 - 4th Sunday after Epiphany**

Deut. 18:15-20; *Ps. 111*;  
1 Cor. 8:1-13; Mark 1:21-28

### February, 2018

#### **February 4 - 5th Sunday after Epiphany**

Isa. 40:21-31; *Ps. 147:1-11, 20c*;  
1 Cor. 9:16-23; Mark 1:29-39

#### **February 11 - Transfiguration of the Lord**

2 Kings 2:1-12; *Ps. 50:1-6*;  
2 Cor. 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9

#### **February 18 - 1st Sunday in Lent**

Gen. 9:8-17; *Ps. 25:1-10*;  
1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15

#### **February 25 - 2nd Sunday in Lent**

Gen. 17:1-7, 15-16; *Ps. 22:23-31*;  
Rom. 4:13-25; Mark 8:31-38