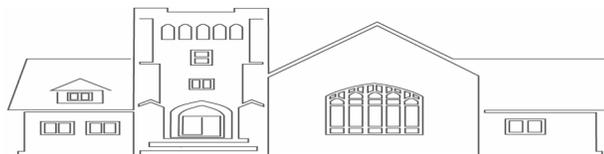


FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
NEWTON, IOWA
641-792-2790

"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
2020

Meghan's Musing

Extraordinary Time

Advent has come and gone. Christmas Day is in the history books. Many trees have been taken down and, by the time you read this, New Year's Day might have even passed. With all the excitement and activity of the holidays behind us, it can be easy to dismiss the liturgical season of "Ordinary Time" as "Boring Time," especially with the worst of winter yet to come and warmer longer days not even on the horizon.

I wonder how we might transform this little window of time between Christmas and Lent from boring "Ordinary Time" into Extraordinary Time?

The January 1 entry in theologian Frederick Buechner's book of daily meditations, *Listening to Your Life*, nudges us to see the extraordinary in the ordinary:

I discovered that if you really keep your eye peeled to it and your ears open, if you really pay attention to it, even such a limited and limiting life as the one I was living on Rupert Mountain opened up onto extraordinary vistas. Taking your children to school and kissing your wife goodbye. Eating lunch with a friend. Trying to do a decent day's work. Hearing the rain patter against the window. There is no event so commonplace but that God is present within it, always hiddenly, always leaving you room to recognize him or not to recognize him, but all the more fascinatingly because of that, all the more compellingly and hauntingly.... If I were called upon to state in a few words the essence of everything I was trying to say both as a novelist and as a preacher, it would be something like this: Listen to your life. See it for the fathomless mystery that it is. In the boredom and pain of it no less than in the excitement and gladness: touch, taste, smell your way to the holy and hidden heart of it because in the last analysis all moments are key moments, and life itself is grace.

My prayer for each one of us in the year 2020 is that we would all listen to our lives, realize that "all moments are key moments" and find the extraordinary in the ordinary. Amen.



Important Upcoming Events



A congregational meeting will be held following worship on January 12 for the purpose of electing our new officers for 2020. This will include Elders, Deacons, and a member at large for the Nominating committee. Toni Peska, chairperson and her committee thank those who affirmatively answered the call when asked to serve in one of these positions.



Installation and ordination of officers will be January 19, 2020 along with the baptism of Bennett Allen Zehr.



January 25, 2020 will be the officers retreat at the church. This is a time when church officers (Elders and Deacons) get together to go over the policies and procedures of their respective board, a time of fellowship, and the deacons will hold their January meeting. Please keep all of our officers in prayer as they their duties.



Our annual meeting to receive the reports of the committees on activities from 2019 will be Sunday, January 26, following worship. We will also receive the report from the Budget & Finance committee on our church's financial health from 2019 and be presented with the 2020 budget. This will not be voted on, as it is approved by Session. One thing that the congregation will vote on is Rev. Meghan Davis' compensation package for 2020. We will have a potluck meal prior to the meeting. Please bring a dish to share. The 2nd year Elders and Deacons will be serving as the hosts for the meal and will furnish the drinks. Table service will also be available.

The congregational and annual meetings are very important and all church members are encouraged to attend. .



A Big Christmas "THANK YOU!"

Almost 400,000 people in Malawi, Zambia, and Tanzania received one of 3,140 wells Marion Medical Mission helped build in 2019! Almost 400,000 people know Christians heard of their needs and shared the love of Christ with them!

Thank you for being part of this very visible example of faith in action!

Our Mission committee contributed \$450.00 to this project.

(This note was sent to us electronically. Since then, we have received another thank you and a picture of the actual well the donation helped build. Both of these are on the bulletin board across from the church office.)

Congratulations to Lawrence Kenyi and his wife, Rose, on the birth of their son. Rose gave birth Thursday night, December 12, 2019 to a healthy baby boy named Amos, in Juba, South Sudan. Mother and son are well. Lawrence has pictures, of course!



MEMBERSHIP



MOMENT

The Membership Committee is planning some activities in January and February that we hope you will be interested in.

We will be attending a Grinnell College men’s basketball game against Ripon College on Saturday, January 11 at 1:00. Grinnell has an unusual & fast style of play that reliably produces lots of points (they scored 172 points in a game earlier this year) and is just fun to watch. They are usually the highest scoring men’s college basketball team in the U.S. Since the game is at 1:00 instead of the usual 3:00, we will stay and watch the girl’s game and then eat at Pagliai Pizza.

Saturday February 1 is the Newton Pacesetters Winter Program at the Newton High School gym starting at 7:00. Our own Allie Norvell is one of the participants and we have attended for 2-3 years. The skill, stamina and training these girls have is amazing. The program usually lasts 1 hr. 45 min. to 2 hrs. and is fast moving and fun to watch.

Sunday, February 16 we will travel to Des Moines to see Drake University (and 1P member Garrett Sturtz) play Evansville at 3:00. We plan to eat out in Des Moines after the game (site TBD).

Please try to join us for any or all these fun events.

Church Directory with photographs: Warren Erickson and Dave Stolper will be taking photographs to update our Church Directory. Members are encouraged to personalize their photo with “props” or by dressing in attire that shows a favorite activity or hobby, or by having your picture taken in a special or favorite place, or in some other way showing who you are or what you do. You will be contacted, or you may contact Warren (275-1926 or 792-8630) or Dave (840-2422) to set up a time and place for a phot session. There will also be a form available to indicate what personal information you would like in the directory along with your photo.

Thank you to all of you who volunteer to help us be a welcoming church to our visitors and members – greeters, bread ministry, transportation, etc.

Respectfully submitted, Marilyn McCallister, Session Rep. & Chair

Christian Nurture All-Church Christmas Pageant

Karen Quinn, Chair

Sunday, December 22 was the date of this annual event. Thank you to Jane Repp and Linda Kirchhoff, who were the narrators and Sandy Simbro for playing for the congregation's singing of appropriate hymns during the pageant. A special treat was having Rev. Davis' dog, Zuzu, dressed as a cow. Don't think many churches can say they have that happen.

The collage of pictures below tells the story the best. Thank you to those who helped bring down the costumes and organize them on Wednesday night; Val McKee for assisting me in putting the costumes on the participants; everyone who played a part and finally those who helped carry the costumes back upstairs for next year.





*Warren Erickson, who is home recovering from knee replacement surgery and a few other health issues that occurred following the surgery.

*Tom and Nancy Mott's 19 year old grandson who had back surgery.

*A junior at Newton High School who committed suicide.

*Norm Grimm and family at the death of his aunt.

*Carol Goodwin who has been in the hospital.

*Linda Gehling and family in the unexpected death of her aunt.

*The people of South Sudan and our broken world.

And items of blessings and joy:

Brad Ritter graduated with his bachelors degree. He will return to UNI, graduating after another semester with his Masters Degree.

Shirley Stevens, George Wilkening, Shirley's son, Jeff, and the entire family for coming through a stressful couple of months. Jeff is living with Shirley and George and has found a job in construction.



Thank you for the carolers who came out on a cold winter evening to sing beautiful hymns. It was wonderful. I enjoyed the children who came along. It truly warmed my heart. I am so blessed to have such a wonderful, caring church family.



Love,
Clarice Sigurdson

=====
I want to thank the people who came caroling for me. It was so beautiful. I also want to thank the Deacons for their many visits and for the beautiful Poinsettia I was given.

Love,
Gladys Sparks

=====
Please accept this donation from church member, Joyce Moen. She is doing well here in Wheat Ridge, CO. She enjoys the cards from members of the Bible Study group she was in.

Happy Thanksgiving
And
Merry Christmas,
Joyce Moen and
Susan Moen

Church Life

Kay Parsons, Chair



One of our largest crowds gathered at 3:30 pm on Sunday afternoon, December 15 for our final activity of 2019—caroling and chili. Including Emmett, Garrett, and Bennett Zehr, and Aubrianna McDowell-McKee, we had 32 people and ZuZu in attendance. Twenty-six went caroling while the other 5 plus Bennett, stayed at the church and got the meal ready. The group stopped at both Independent and Assisted living of Park Centre, Newton Village, Nelson Manor and the homes of Matt Illingworth, Clarice Sigurdson, Ann DeGrado, and Ruby Davis. The group then went back to the church and warmed up with delicious chili, veggies and a variety of goodies. (See pictures below).

Thank you to everyone to participated in our activities in 2019. We look forward to having several opportunities for Fellowship in 2020.

Church Life Committee: Tara Zehr, Diane Moles, Dan Ritter, Nancy Mott, Bonnie Rasmussen, and Kay Parsons, chair



Gladys Sparks



Clarice Sigurdson



Matt Illingworth & Zuzu



Garrett & Emmett Zehr



Wilma Manning

At our December meeting, we:

- * Heard and approved the minutes of the November meeting.
- * Received updates on visits. Everyone was reminded to not do visits if experiencing a cold or running a fever.
- * Were reminded of the Christmas caroling on December 15, which will be another opportunity to visit people.
- * Found out we have \$836.66 in our fund.
- * Learned that fourteen cards were sent in November.

Diane reported poinsettias and cards have been purchased, to be delivered during the December visits. She also reported that another church member would like Deacon visits.

A request for a child care deposit from a family that is a recent arrival to Newton, who has attended First Presbyterian, has been met by church members.

A list of requests for funds from the deacons was shared. After discussion, it was decided to leave \$200 in the deacons fund and meet requests with the balance, those being \$250 to West Academy for food and personal care items; \$250 to IMPACT for heating assistance; and \$100 to Neighbors Helping Neighbors for its programs, including laundry night.

Diane Moles, Moderator



Rylie McGonegle at a Deacon visit with Wilma Manning.



Budget and Finance

Jen Norvell, Chair

Thank you to everyone who returned your pledge card. We are now in the process of doing the 2020 budget based on the amount of income we will have. The budget will be presented to Session at their next meeting. They, rather than the congregation, are the ones to approve the budget. The congregation will vote on Rev. Meghan Davis' compensation at the annual meeting.

Another way you can help is by paying your per capita. The amount of \$45 per person is the same amount as last year. We realize that some may not be able to pay the entire amount. It is fine to pay what you can. If you are able to pay your per capita amount plus some extra, that would be great. By having amount, it saves us from having to account and allows us to use the church.



Mission Committee

Larry Anderson, Chair

The Mission Committee met Dec. 2. We celebrated the collection of \$1030 for the Harvest Offering last month. We also took advantage of a one-day 2 for 1 matching grant to provide \$450 for the building of two new wells in Africa through the Marion Medical Mission, whose representative spoke at our church several weeks ago. We responded to a plea from the Friends from Iowa Foundation in Polk County for \$300 to construct a new roof on the church building in Munoces, El Salvador. That community was in relationship with our church for several years, and our feelings for them continue; this was a great opportunity to help.

We continue to support Neighbors Helping Neighbors through laundry nights and the Salvation Army food pantry through donations and funds. During this Advent season we organized bell-ringers for the Salvation Army red kettle campaign, and gift-giving to Progress Industries clients and to the Salvation Army Angel Tree. The Christmas Joy offering will be received Dec. 22.

Plans to assist recipients of the food programs at Salvation Army continue to evolve. The goal is to help promote better use of food items received – items that may be unfamiliar to some people and that may offer more healthy nutritional options.

Thank you all for your generosity in supporting these projects.

Administrative Assistant position open. Do you know of anyone who would be interested in applying to be our Administrative Assistant? We are seeking a detail orientated person to work this part-time position of approximately 20 hours per week, with some flexibility in the actual hours. Normal hours are 9:00 am to 3:00 pm with an hour lunch.

Responsibilities

- Perform basic administrative duties, such as answering the phones, producing the weekly bulletin and monthly newsletter in Microsoft Publisher, and some bookkeeping using QuickBooks.
- Work closely with the minister and other staff.
- Interact with church members and the public, both over the phone and in person.
- Responsible for office management.

Qualifications:

- Tact and the ability to maintain confidentiality and good interpersonal skills.
- Ability to work independently and with minimal direction or supervision.
- Detail oriented, making sure deadlines are met while maintaining accuracy.
- Must be a self-starter with proven organizational skills and the ability to prioritize assignments, adapt to changes in tasks as needed, and multi-task throughout the day.
- Excellent customer service skills.

We will begin accepting resumes on January 2. If you know of anyone who might be interested, please have them submit their resume to First Presbyterian Church, 220 N. 2nd Ave. E.

Nancy Mott helps the children put on the last of the Chrismons as Rev. Meghan Davis and Kathy Ventling told the story of them, explaining their design and what each stands for. Thank you Nancy for your impromptu help in finishing the decorating of our “Chrismon” tree.



The children who helped were Godspell, Benila, and Regina Issifou, and Emmett and Garrett Zehr.

Senior Discussion Group

Karen Quinn

On January 22 at 1 pm, the Senior Discussion Group will meet at Park Centre because many of our congregation are living there. Park Centre will set up chairs and 3 big tables and a long table for food. Everyone at Park Centre is invited, not just our members. Seniors Group would appreciate any cookies, cheese and crackers or chips and dips others in the congregation would be willing to provide. Contact Karen at 641-275-1432 with questions or offers. Thanks.

Worship and Music

Jeanette Shannon, Chair

A heartfelt "thank you" to everyone who submitted things for the Advent booklet. It has been a thought provoking and meaningful part of this season. Each one lifted me in some way.

Another “thank you” to those of you who have agreed to serve as worship leaders, ushers and audio techs for the coming year. Your help is appreciated more than you can know.

**Peace & Grace,
Jeanette**

January 2020 **BIRTHDAYS & EVENTS**

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thur

Fri

Sat

			1 Lyndee Hashman Office Closed 7p Choir	2 6:30a Early Men's Group 9a Men's Group 3p Chair Yoga	3	4 Mary Jo Niskin
5	6 4:45p Personnel	7 3:30p Mission 6p Book Club Peanut Pub	8 Patty Skokan 9:30a WBS 2:30p Membership 6p Budget & Finance 7p Choir	9 Marlys Grimm 3p Chair Yoga	10 Emily Miller Linda Erickson Jane Repp	11 Tom Weeks 1:00p—Grinnell basketball and dinner @ Pagliais
12 11:30a Congregational Mtg to elect officers	13	14 11a Gentle Yoga 4p Worship & Music	15 Megan Ritter 9:30a Women's Bible Study 7p Choir	16 6:30a Early Men's Group 9a Men's Group 3p Chair Yoga	17	18
19 Installation & Ordination of Officers Baptism of Bennett Allen Zehr	20	21 Gary Kirchhoff 11a Gentle Yoga 6:30p Session	22 1p Senior Discussion Group meeting at Park Centre 7p Choir	23 9a-2p Days for Girls 3p Chair Yoga 6p-9p Evening Days for Girls	24	25 9a-2p Officers Retreat Training
26 11:30a Annual Meeting and Potluck	27	28 Shari DeCook	29 Allie Norvell 7p Choir	30	31 Scott DeGraff	

Regular Worship Schedule	
9:00a Adult Sunday School	10:30a Worship
10:00a Fellowship	11:30a Fellowship

**SCHEDULE
OF**



VOLUNTEERS

January 2020	5	12	19	26
Worship Leader <i>Worship & Music</i>	Jane Repp	Tom Mott	Linda Kirchhoff	Gary Parsons
Host Elder/Deacon <i>Church Life</i>	Linda Erickson	Taylor McGonegle	Janet Shields	Annual Meeting Class of 2021 (Elders & Deacons)
Greeters <i>Julie Brodersen</i>	Terry Rickers Bev Rossow	Chris & Peggy Lickiss	Janet Shields Rachel Skaggs/Taylor McGonegle	Dick & Shirley Mielke
Ushers <i>Worship & Music</i>	Kathy Ventling Jeanette Shannon	John & Barb Taylor	Bonnie Rasmussen Shirley Stevens	Larry & Shari DeCook
Audio <i>Worship & Music</i>	Erick Zehr	Kyle Doerring	Marilyn McCallister	Terry Rickers
Counters <i>Budget & Finance</i>	Toni Peska Bev Rossow	Dave Stolper Kathy Ventling	Tara Zehr Bret Doerring	Jonnie Carpenter Tom Weeks
Bread Ministry Baker <i>Barb Taylor</i>	Mickey Van Baale			
Bread Ministry Taker <i>Barb Taylor</i>	Mickey Van Baale			
Communion Set up <i>Worship & Music</i>	Karen Quinn Larry Anderson			

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

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Return Service Requested

Lectionary —

January, 2020

January 5 - 2nd Sunday of Christmas

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

January 6 - Epiphany (Monday)

Isa. 60:1-6; *Ps. 72:1-7, 10-14*;
Eph. 3:1-12; Matt. 2:1-12

January 12 - Baptism of the Lord

Isa. 42:1-9; *Ps. 29*; Acts 10:34-43;
Matt. 3:13-17

January 19 - 2nd Sunday after Epiphany

Isa. 49:1-7; *Ps. 40:1-11*;
1 Cor. 1:1-9; John 1:29-42

January 26 - 3rd Sunday after Epiphany

Isa. 9:1-4; *Ps. 27:1, 4-9*;
1 Cor. 1:10-18; Matt. 4:12-23

February 2020

February 2 - 4th Sunday after Epiphany

Micah 6:1-8; *Ps. 15*; 1 Cor. 1:18-31;
Matt. 5:1-12

February 9 - 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 16 - 6th Sunday after Epiphany

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

February 23 - Transfiguration of the Lord

Exod. 24:12-18; *Ps. 2 or Ps. 99*;
2 Peter 1:16-21; Matt. 17:1-9