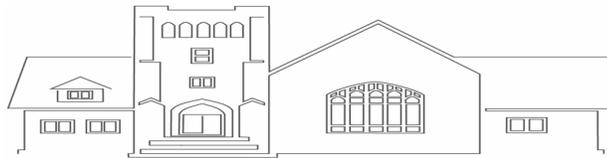


FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
NEWTON, IOWA  
641-792-2790

*“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



July/August  
2022

## Meghan's Musings

### The Shadows and the Sunshine

“We could never learn to be brave and patient, if there were only joy in the world.” ~Helen Keller

On a recent Sunday, Matt Illingworth and Mandy Bower offered, “How Great Thou Art,” for special music with Marlys Grimm accompanying on piano. (Thanks so much to all!) The hymn reflects on God’s glorious works in Creation, in Jesus Christ and the joy of Christ’s return. That same Sunday I was preaching on Psalm 77 and the two fit together as both the psalm and the hymn reflect the importance of worship, praise and the wonders of God’s Creation.

Psalm 77 begins with the expression of deep anguish, insomnia, heartache and concern that God’s very nature has changed, that God no longer loves the writer (and perhaps the community for whom the writer speaks). The psalmist asks, “Has [God’s] steadfast love ceased forever? Are [God’s] promises at an end for all time? Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has [God] in anger shut up [God’s] compassion?” In the complete context of the psalm, the psalmist begins in a pit of fear, doubt and depression, even questioning if the nature of God has changed. But the movement of the psalm is through those depths into remembrance of all God’s marvelous works, praise of God and ultimately becomes a song of hope. But to really appreciate and understand the relief that the remembering and the praise can bring requires understanding and appreciating the pit from which the memories of God’s greatness springs.

I have just returned from a pastor cohort retreat at Glacier National Park. I had never been there before and it was every bit as spectacular as it’s purported to be. Wow! I joked that I was going to write a review complaining that all it was was mountains, lakes and waterfalls. Mountains, lakes, waterfalls. Mountains, lakes, waterfalls... Their weather was about three 3 weeks behind “normal” (as defined by the last 10 or so years, though fairly normal for years before that) so there were a lot of hikes and activities we had planned to do but could not due to snow packs or flooded trails or other causes related to unfavorable weather. Most days were cloudy, the last few days were rainy and cold, with clouds covering the mountains we were right next to (it even snowed at elevations not much higher than where we were). As a refugee from the Pacific Northwest, the weather was quite familiar (and unwelcome).

But I quickly realized in those first few days that were mostly—but not exclusively—cloudy, that the clouds allowed for a glorious lighting effect on the mountains and the plains. And the contrast of the shadows from the clouds and the sun breaking through was truly awesome. Had the weather been 100% sunny like I would have preferred, we would have missed out on those gorgeous contrasts of light. And it occurs to me that our lives are similar. If everything was great all the time, if we had no disappointments, no suffering, no loss or difficulty, could we really appreciate and enjoy the good without the difficult to contrast it?

**Continued on page 3**

## Summer Study on Racial Equity

James Baldwin, the eloquent and powerful Black writer, said “Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.” Following the murder of George Floyd and the subsequent demonstrations for Black lives, there has been a sustained backlash that has sought to close that window of opportunity to listen to voices that have been historically silenced. The New York Times Magazine’s “1619 Project” is now a focal point of attack, as is the supposed threat of Critical Race Theory.

Why should we in the church be concerned about this? Because we are called to seek justice. And because historically the church has often been implicated in racial injustice. It is still true, with perhaps a few exceptions, that the most segregated hour of the week is the hour of worship.

The goal of this study will be to learn how race has permeated our nation’s history and institutions, and how what we tell ourselves as a predominantly white community about who we are limits our ability to see the bigger picture. The sources for our discussions will be primarily podcast interviews with authors, journalists, and others who focus on various aspects of racial equity issues. The focus will be on Black racial equity because of the unique history of Blacks in the US. While there are certainly many other groups that could be part of such a discussion (Native Americans, Asian-Americans, etc.), those will not be the focus.

Each podcast will be about 40 to 50 minutes in length; we’ll listen together and then spend another 45 minutes or so in discussion. So each meeting will last roughly 90 minutes. You don’t have to prepare or read anything in advance! Just come, listen, then we’ll listen to each other. We are meeting on Mondays at 5 PM. Below are the scheduled topics and how to access the podcasts, in case you can’t make it some weeks and want to listen on your own.

Larry Anderson  
641-521-1337  
wilsand95@yahoo.com

- June 13: “On Being White,” interview with John Biewin – On Being with Krista Tippett, 10-29-20
- June 20: Bread for the World Racial Wealth Gap simulation exercise
- June 27: “The Country We Have,” interview with Nikole Hannah-Jones – Throughline, 11-18-21
- July 11: “History Is Long, History is Deep,” interview with Isabel Wilkerson – On Being, 6-18-20
- July 18: “The Remarkable Life of Frederick Douglass,” interview with David Blight – On Point, 2-25-22
- July 25: “Tulsa Burning,” Blindspot, aired on On the Media, 6-2-21
- Aug. 1: “Woke Racism,” interview with John McWhorter – On Point, 12-2-21
- Aug. 8: “Toward a Framework for Repair,” interview with Robin DiAngelo and Resmaa Menakem – On Being, 8-19-21
- Aug. 15: “Finding the Courage for What’s Redemptive,” interview with Bryan Stevens – On Being, 11-4-21

### Podcast addresses:

On Being with Krista Tippett [onbeing.org/series/podcast](https://onbeing.org/series/podcast)  
On Point [npr.org/podcasts/510053/on-point](https://npr.org/podcasts/510053/on-point)  
On the Media [npr.org/podcasts/452538775/on-the-media](https://npr.org/podcasts/452538775/on-the-media)  
Throughline [npr.org/podcasts/510333/throughline](https://npr.org/podcasts/510333/throughline)

## Mission Committee Update

The committee has been active so far this year. Here are some of our church’s mission activities:

- Sent \$380 from the Christmas Joy Offering and \$945 from the One Great Hour of Sharing
- Sent \$250 to the Winterset Presbyterian Church to support its helping the Winterset community recover from storm damage; sent \$500 to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance for Ukraine
- Prepared and served the weekly community supper at First United Methodist Church on March 30; several FPC members participated in serving about 30 meals
- Encouraged congregational support of the Salvation Army Food Pantry; encouraged participation in Take Away Hunger events; participated in the Bread for the World Offering of Letters to urge Congress to support policies aimed at ending hunger
- In coordination with Kid Assist, Inc., built a handicap accessible ramp at a home in Colfax; there are two more projects planned in Newton this summer so far, and the building trades program at DMAACC has offered its help.

In addition, we are represented on the local Mission Coalition, which is raising money to help teachers purchase supplies so they don’t have to spend their own money.

Days for Girls continues to produce sustainable feminine hygiene kits, recently sending a supply to a distribution center for shipment to Ukraine and areas where Ukrainians have fled.

Thank you for supporting these efforts to share the love of God in material ways!

Larry Anderson, committee chair

## Meghan’s Musings

The Shadows and the Sunshine

(Continued from pg. 1)

That’s the beauty of the psalms, why the Benedictines I spend time with in Indiana, why they’ve been singing and reading through the psalms for 15 or so centuries, because the psalms address the whole breadth of human experience. They help us encounter and acknowledge and remember the shadows to encounter and acknowledge and remember the sunshine of God’s goodness to get through the shadows and to fully appreciate the sunshine of God’s goodness.

## Fellowship Committee Update:

Fellowship Committee:

Church Life:

We had an After Church Lunch at Burger King on 5-22-22. Twelve people attended.

We had an After Church Lunch on 6-19-22 (Father's Day) at Culver's. Seven attended.

Worship at Woodland will be on July 10.

I am in the process of turning over the Host Elder/Deacon duties to the other elders and deacons. I am helping them their first time if they are more comfortable with that. Once the procedure is familiar, it is fun to do. BTW-The big old coffee maker that had some problems post pandemic is doing just fine and John and Deb Zieman's donated coffee maker is serving very nicely as a back up. Thanks again John and Deb!

Membership:

The information gathering portion of the photo directory project is completed and is in the hands of the typists. After that is completed it will go to the printer.

We had planned to participate in the July 4th parade but canceled due to stormy weather. We hope to carry out our plans next year.

Pool party. I was unable to reserve Maytag Pool on a Sunday evening in last of July or in August. Will try to have another activity. Will try to reserve a time earlier next year if another pool party is desired.

Gary Parsons, chair

## News from Session

Here are some highlights from the last meeting of Session (June 21)

**Rev. Meghan Davis-Brass** is in planning mode for her three month sabbatical beginning at the end of August. As you might recall, the sabbatical was written into Meghan's original terms of call way back in 2014. It was meant to happen after seven years, but was postponed due to the pandemic. Linda Curtis-Stolper will be covering pulpit supply, pastoral care emergencies and moderating session while Meghan is away. Costs of the sabbatical will be offset by a grant from the denomination. Meghan will be walking the Camino de Santiago across Spain and traveling through Scotland including one week on the Island of Iona, an ancient Christian community. You will be hearing more about both of these adventures before she leaves and especially after she returns.

**Some of the last COVID pandemic restrictions have been lifted:**

- \* It was determined by affirmative consensus that the offering plate may now be passed during the worship service.
- \* Fellowship time with donuts has also returned after worship.

**Summer worship service hours:** In the first two summers of the pandemic era we kept worship at 10:30 a.m. for the sake of simplicity. As we entered this summer we also kept the service at 10:30 a.m., as there didn't seem to be a desire from the congregation to resume earlier worship hours in the summer. Given that we are already well into the summer season that will remain the case for this summer. However, if you would prefer to have earlier worship next summer, please let Meghan or a member of Session know so we can take it into consideration as we approach summer 2023.

**Reformation of the Congregation** is a four part seminar being presented by our Tri-Presbytery collaboration in which Meghan and many members of Session are participating.

- \* In March the topic was "The Church and Its Witness: Why local congregations?" We discussed the nature of the Body of Christ and its vocation. We also explored the marks of a vibrant congregation and its witness.
- \* The July topic is "Biblically Grounded: As Presbyterians we affirm that the scriptures are 'the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the church universal and God's Word to [us],' and we pledge to do all ministry 'under the authority of scripture.' In this session, we will discuss the gift and meaning of biblical authority for the life of the church." The speaker will be Rev. Dr. Karoline Lewis, Professor of Biblical Preaching, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN.
- \* The September topic will be "The Dangerous Act of Worship and Its Implication for Faithful Witness" What impact should encountering God in authentic worship have on our lives as individuals and faith communities? And what can we learn from the faithful generations of Christians who have gone before us as we respond to difficult and contentious issues in our society? Rev. Erica MacCreaigh and Rev. Dr. Annika Lister Stroope will be leading.
- \* Finally, in November "The Cost of Discipleship – The Radical Nature of Following Jesus" What does it mean to follow Jesus, to be disciples of Jesus? What does it mean to be the sent ones to our society? Speakers Rev. Clint Loveall and Rev. Michael Gewecke



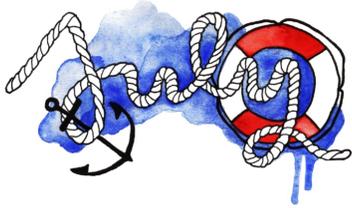
# 2022 *BIRTHDAYS* & EVENTS

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
					<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> <i>Diane Moles</i>
<b>3</b> 10:30 a Worship 11:30 a Fellowship	<b>4</b> Independence Day	<b>5</b> Natalie Camp 11:00 am Gentle Yoga	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> 9:00 am Men's Group 3:00 pm Chair Yoga	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> <i>Carl Zacheis</i>
<b>10</b> 10:30 a Worship 11:30 a Fellowship	<b>11</b> 10:00 am Membership	<b>12</b> 11:00 am Gentle Yoga	<b>13</b> 6:00 p Budget & Finance	<b>14</b> 3:00 pm Chair Yoga	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b> 10:30 a Worship 11:30 a Fellowship	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 11:00 am Gentle Yoga	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> <i>Dana Hashman</i> 9:00 am Men's Group 3:00 pm Chair Yoga	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> 10:30 a Worship 11:30 a Fellowship	<b>25</b> <i>Chris Norvell</i>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> <i>Taylor McGonegle</i> 9:00 am Days for Girls	<b>29</b> Carol Camp	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b> 10:30 a Worship 11:30 a Fellowship						

*August*

# 2022 **BIRTHDAYS & EVENTS**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b> 10:00 am Membership Committee  4:45 pm Personnel	<b>2</b> Linda Gehling  11:00 am Gentle Yoga	<b>3</b> Linda Campbell	<b>4</b>  9:00 am Men's Group  3:00 pm Chair Yoga	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> 10:30 a Worship  11:30 a Fellowship	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> Nancy Shields  11:00 am Gentle Yoga  3:00 pm Mission Committee	<b>10</b> Dixie Zegers  6:00 pm Budget & Finance	<b>11</b>  3:00 pm Chair Yoga	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> 9:00 am Deacons  10:30 a Worship  11:30 a Fellowship	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>  11:00 am Gentle Yoga	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>  9:00 am Men's Group  3:00 pm Chair Yoga	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> 10:30 a Worship  11:30 a Fellowship	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> Gary Haynes Karen Wathen 11:00 am Gentle Yoga	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>  9:00 am Days for Girls  3:00 pm Chair Yoga	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> Jett Jackson
<b>28</b> 10:30 a Worship  11:30 a Fellowship	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>  11:00 am Gentle Yoga	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b>  Melissa Sommar  9:00 am Men's Group  3:00 pm Chair Yoga	<b>2</b> Brandon Jackson	<b>3</b>



3

10

17

24

31

**Worship Leader**

Tara Zehr

Linda Kirchoff

Kevin Peska

Diane Moles

Karen Quinn

**Greeter**

Rachel Skaggs  
&  
Taylor  
McConagle

Gary & Kay  
Parsons

Kevin & Toni  
Peska

Terry Rickers  
&  
Bev Rossow

Randy & Carol  
Camp

**Ushers**

Kevin & Toni  
Peska

Don & Sharon  
Black

Harold &  
Deanna Manley

John & Barb  
Taylor

Terry & Cathy  
Rickers

**Audio**

Terry Rickers

Shirley Stevens

Erick Zehr

Marilyn  
McCallister

Bryce Skaggs

**Counters**

Jen Norvell &  
Tara Zehr

Tom Weeks &  
Bev Rossow

Terry Rickers &  
Peggy/Chris  
Lickiss

Toni Peska &  
Kathy Ventling  
Briggs

Jen Norvell &  
Tara Zehr



First Presbyterian Church  
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Newton, Iowa 50208

## Lectionary —

### July, 2022

#### **July 3- 9 4th Sunday after Pentecost**

2 Kgs. 5:1-14; Ps. 30 Isa. 66:10-14; Ps. 66:1-9;  
Gal. 6:(1-6) 7-16: Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

#### **July 10 – 16 5th Sunday after Pentecost**

Amos 7:7-17: Ps. 82: Deut. 30:9-14; Ps. 25:1-10;  
Col. 1:1-14; Luke 10:25-37

#### **July 17- 23 6th Sunday after Pentecost**

Amos 8:1-12; Ps. 82;  
Gen. 18:1-10; Ps. 15; Col. 1:15-28; Luke 10:38-42

#### **July 24 – 30 7th Sunday after Pentecost**

Hos. 1:2-10; Ps. 85;  
Gen. 18:20-32; Ps. 138; Col 2:6-15 (16-19);  
Luke 11:1-13

#### **July 31- Aug 6 8th Sunday after Pentecost**

Hos. 11:1-11; Ps. 107:1-9, 43;  
Eccl. 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-23 Ps. 49:1-12;  
Col. 3:1-11; Luke 12:13-21

### August, 2022

#### **August 7-13 9th Sunday after Pentecost**

Isa. 1:1, 10-20; Ps. 50:1-8, 22-23;  
Gen. 15:1-6; Ps. 33:12-22; Heb. 11:29-12:2;  
Luke 12:32-40

#### **August 14-20 10th Sunday after Pentecost**

Isa. 5:1-7; Ps. 80:1-2, 8-19;  
Jer. 23:23-29; Ps. 82; Heb.12: 18-29;  
Luke 13:10-17

#### **August 21-27 11th Sunday after Pentecost**

Jer. 1:4-10; Ps. 81:1, 10-16;  
Isa. 58:9b-14; Ps. 103:1-8; Heb. 12:18-29; Luke  
13:10-17

#### **Aug. 28–Sept. 3 12th Sunday after Pentecost**

Jer. 2:4-13; Ps. 81:1, 10-16;  
Prov. 25:6-7; Ps. 112; Heb. 13:1-8, 15-16;  
Luke 14:1, 7-14