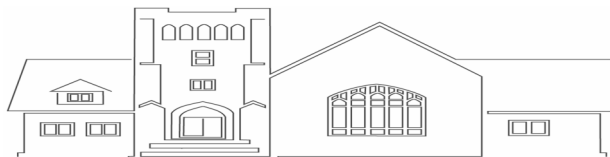


**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
NEWTON, IOWA
641-792-2790**

"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**



**June
2020**

Meghan's Musings
When? How?

Dear Ones,

Each month as we get further into this COVID19 pandemic, as we get further away from when we last worshiped together in person, these messages get more challenging to write. Though we know that each day that passes brings us one day closer to the day we'll be back together, at the same time, we still don't know when that will be.

Here's what I do know:

1. At the May meeting, Session decided to keep the building closed for in person worship and activities for now. Session will reassess at our June 16 meeting. At that time we *might* be able to determine a date to re-open.
2. Whenever we do reopen, things will be different. Sadly, for the foreseeable future, our worship will not be the same as it was on March 8. The exact measures to be taken are yet to be determined, again by Session, but expect to see changes along these lines: social distancing enforced (household units separated by one or more pews), masks encouraged, no hand shaking, no coffee and donuts fellowship time, no congregational singing. It pains me to list these out, but not as much as it would pain us all if someone got sick (or worse) because they came to worship at our church.
3. While some churches have returned to worship, I know that there are others who have already set their re-open dates as far back as Christmas or even into spring 2021. It's hard to know what the best approach for our church is but Session will be as well-informed as possible in our discernment.
4. There are those who assert that as Christians we are not called to live in fear. While that is true, we as Christians *are* called to use the brains God gave us, by listening to the experts who have spent their lives' work studying these matters, to make the best possible choices, not just for each of us as individuals but for the greater good, and for the most vulnerable among us.
5. No matter when we re-open, until then and after then, we will be church together.

Be well. Stay home. Love one another. Wear a mask (if you must go out). And wash your hands. We'll get through this.

In Christ,
Meghan



Deb Zieman, who has had a mastectomy and may be starting treatments.

Pete VanElswyk, who is undergoing chemo treatments for breast cancer. Once his treatments are finished, he will have surgery, followed by radiation and hormone treatments.

Val McKee and her family. Val's brother-in-law passed away from Covid-19.

Dana Hashman, who is nearly done with her radiation treatments, but will still have to deal with her body as it recovers from the treatments.

All those working on the "front-line" to make it possible for us to get the necessities.

Doctors, nurses, CNAs, maintenance staff, food service staff, and all other medical staff who in one way or another are dealing with those stricken with the coronavirus.

People around the world who are suffering from the effects of not only "the virus", but also acts of Mother Nature.

All of us, as we learn what our new "normal" will be as businesses and other entities begin to open with restrictions.

We will continue to worship at 10:30 and have Fellowship at 11:30, as long as we are online. Worship can be viewed on YouTube or Zoom and Fellowship time is on Zoom. Watch for the links to use when Meghan sends out the weekly information and bulletin.

Meghan and the Session



The iris are beautiful at Friendship House. If you haven't seen them, it's worth the drive by.

Larry Anderson

Prayers for Presbytery of Des Moines

For the week of June 7:

- Heartland Presbyterian Church of Clive & Rev. Alex Thornburg
*Rev. Bob Houser, parish associate
- First Presbyterian Church of Corning & Rev. Jessica Paulsen

For the week of June 14:

Rev. Ben Nti & the two churches for which he is the pastor:

- First Presbyterian Church of Brooklyn
- First United Presbyterian Church of Malcom

For the week of June 21:

- United Church of Deep River & Rev. Michelle Williamson
- First Presbyterian Church of Chariton

For the week of June 28:

- First Presbyterian Church of Creston & Rev. Cynthia Ripperger
- Platte Center Presbyterian Church of Creston & Rev. Delores Doench

You are Invited



On-Line Giving

In this unusual time when we cannot meet in person and pass the offering plate, we now have the capability to receive your offerings online. The [link below](#) is on our website and on our Facebook page. We have also been sending out the link with the bulletin and links for worship services. During these difficult times, thank you for helping your church family continue our ministry and meeting our financial commitments using the manner of giving that works best for you.

Link: https://www.eservicepayments.com/cgi-bin/Vanco_ver3.vps?appver3=wWsk24ZWJSTZKsGd1RMKlg0BDvsSG3VIWQCPJN_NxD8upkiY7JIDavDsozUE7KG0nFx2NSo8LdUKGuGuF396vbXFVTqJnOV-bS9Zo1Z9C540iYnTg5dP4O6rpX5QvPEWIBhHDN59kLZFffwKfYERpQIH2I1GPRTaB43F65iO_4Wo=&ver=3

To date we have had 3 members use this way of giving and it has been very successful. Please give it a try or remember to send your monthly tithe.

Has it been all bad...

By Mickey Van Baale

COVID-19, pandemic, social distancing, quarantined, masks -- words that were not a part of our daily conversation prior to mid-March. Now they are part of our everyday dialogue. And on and on it goes with reports of confirmed cases, the need of medical personnel, and deaths. Many find themselves living in fear instead of faith.

...or has there been some good?

But wait, has there been some good that has come of the past nearly three months? Haven't we seen families spending more time together? In the nice weather, couples or families go on walks or bike rides. I don't remember seeing so many people working on puzzles. Put off chores around the house, or the yard, or wherever are getting done.

One of the best of all is acts of "paying it forward". Covering the cost of the meal for the car behind you in the drive-up. Doing something for others with no thought of repayment. A perfect example of "paying it forward" has been done by one of our members for the past 12 weeks-- Linda Campbell.

The Newton Daily News did a front page article about Linda's love of bread baking and giving loaves to others. The following is from the newspaper: "'I like to cook. I like to garden. I like to read. I like to knit. I like people,'" Campbell said.

Since the coronavirus lockdown started, Campbell decided to bake bread for herself, mostly because she needed some. Now, she is moving into the eighth week of baking bread and giving it to people she knows. It usually goes to someone who has done something nice for her or other people she has known for years.

"I kept one loaf for myself and gave the rest away and it felt so good. People were so delighted that I thought, I will do that again tomorrow," she said. To not have close contact with people, Campbell said she bakes the small loaves, about 12 ounces each, puts it in a paper bag and delivers it to the front step letting people know the bread has been delivered so they can retrieve it. "I choose willy nilly. Mostly people I know, people from church, people that I'm friends with," she said.

Campbell said it is important for people to do nice things for others during these hard times. There are many ways to do it, whether it is making videos or baking bread, like Campbell does.

"I do it for something to do and because it makes me feel good to do it and I hope it makes people feel good to get a loaf of bread," she said.

One important distinction Campbell wanted to make was she isn't making the bread and selling it. Although she said some people have said thank you by bringing her baked cookies or given her small gifts like refrigerator magnets or thank you notes. "I'm giving it to people that I want to give a smile to," she said."

I have been fortunate to have been a recipient of the delicious bread. Asking Linda for an update on the number of loaves she has made, it is upwards of 250 and she is still going strong! Kudos, Linda, for making this unknown time a little easier to live through. Kudos!

We Yield to the Love of God

Over the past few months I've been reading from "Meditations of the Heart," a collection of short devotions written by Howard Thurman. Thurman was an African-American pastor, teacher and leader who is considered one of the fathers of the civil rights movement. He was a classmate of Martin Luther King, Sr., and a mentor to Martin Luther King, Jr. and other civil rights leaders. The following meditation, though written probably in the 1950s, struck me as especially apt for today's circumstances.

Larry Anderson

We bare our lives to the scrutiny, to the judgment, to the love of God. There is so much that burdens the mind, that peoples the thoughts, that again and again we are confused even in the great quiet Presence of God.

We yield to him our confusions: the chaos of our minds and spirits; the tensions that tame the glory of the love of God out of our lives.

We yield to him our frailties and our limitations: our quiet physical pains and the long chain of anxieties they inspire; the fatigue of spirit, because with reference to our private burdens often we become so tired.

We yield the desires of our minds and hearts: the private intimate wishes by which again and again the springs of our activities are fed and kept alive.

We yield the desires of which we are ashamed: those desires that buffet our spirits and torture our minds and yet seem to cling to us with such tenacity.

We yield our joys: the joy of being alive; the joy in renewed friendships; the joy in re-established and reconciled lives; the joy in the day's work and the night's rest; the sheer joy of being loved, of caring and being cared for.

We yield our concerns for the world where we are exposed to much that casts down and depresses, to little that uplifts and inspires: war and the threat of war; the long loneliness and the deathwatch which seems to stalk our culture and fill our civilization with deadly dry rot.

We yield our lives, the nerve centers of our consent: lest the mainsprings of all our values collapse and we become like shadows in the night.

All of this – and more than tongue can say and heart can feel and mind can think – all of this we yield to the scrutiny, to the judgment, to the love of God.

THE SQUIRREL INCIDENT

Somewhere around May 10-11, Rev. Davis discovered a squirrel in the church. We still do not know how it got in. The front door lock was broken so she was unable to let it out through that door. She saw it scurry up the stairs leading to the upper floors. George Wilkening later discovered that the door to the large west classroom on the 3rd floor (old high school room) was the only door on the 2nd and 3rd floors that had been open and it had entered the room. A panel in the false ceiling had been missing and the squirrel was able to climb or jump from the table to gain entry to the area above the false ceiling. There it lived for about 2 weeks causing damage to some of the ceiling tiles. Dana Hashman brought a live trap to the church, baited it with corn and placed it on the floor. When not successful in catching it after a day or two, Gary Parsons fashioned a “ramp” to enable it to get to the floor (and trap) more easily and sprinkled a trail of corn leading from the base of the ramp to the trap.



Damage and trash on the floor



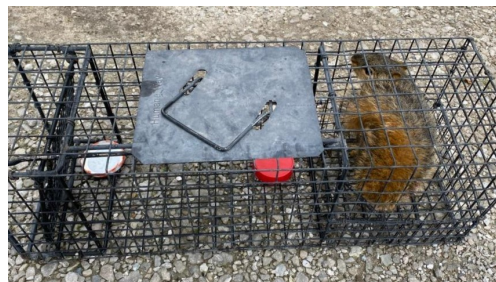
Ramp built by Gary Parsons

When that didn't work after several days, Gary tried several other baits including peanut butter, suet and water placed in various ways to entice it to and into the trap. It would come down into the room and actually all over the room (don't ask how we knew), but would not enter the trap. Frustration was settling in and Rev. Davis was considering it for baptism, confirmation and membership which would probably guarantee it leaving and never returning (her words).

The trap was too heavy to place above the false ceiling so Gary strapped it on top of two ladders just below the opening in the tile with a small “ramp” from the false ceiling to the ladder. Suet, corn and water were placed ONLY in the trap. Success finally came on Graduation Sunday (May 24).



The second ramp Gary designed.



Our “tenant” going to his new home.

A fitting way to end the day after a meaningful YOU TUBE worship and then Zoom fellowship and a time of honoring our wonderful graduate Allie Norvell.

Gary Parsons, when interviewed for this article, credited his perseverance and a superior intellect (compared to the squirrel) for his success at capturing the wily beast. He also thanks Dana Hashman for the use of the trap which worked perfectly once the obstinate creature did what it was supposed to do-enter the trap. Once it was captured, Gary's thoughts immediately returned to his north Missouri upbringing with its unusual culinary delights and visions of fricasseed squirrel crept into his head. However, not wanting to upset the sensibilities of Rev. Davis and Toni Peska, he reluctantly released the obnoxious little red rodent at Woodland Park. He reports that it social distanced in no time.

Proposed schedule to resume when deemed safe to do so.



2020 **BIRTHDAYS & EVENTS**

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thur

Fri

Sat

	1	2 <i>Suzie Funk Marilyn McCallister</i>	3	4	5	6
7 <i>Jeanette Shannon Morgan Jackson</i>	8 4:45p– Personnel	9 <i>Tom Cheney</i> 11a Gentle Yoga 3:30p Mission	10 6p B&F	11 6:30a Early Men's Group 9a Men's Group 3p Chair Yoga	12	13
14 <i>Matt Illingworth</i> 9a Deacons in Parlor	15	16 11a Gentle Yoga 4p Worship & Music 7p Session	17	18 3p Chair Yoga	19	20
21 <i>Terry Rickers Val McKee Dave Stolper Cheryl Ritter</i>	22 <i>Jordan Norvell</i>	23 11a Gentle Yoga	24	25 6:30a Early Men's Group 9a Men's Group 3p Chair Yoga	26	27 <i>Shirley Mielke</i>
28	29 <i>Don Fisher</i>	30 11a Gentle Yoga				

Regular Worship Schedule

10:30a Worship

11:30a Fellowship

We will continue these hours as long we we are on-line.

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

641-792-2790

Return Service Requested

Lectionary —

June, 2020

June 7 - Pentecost

Gen. 1:1-2; 4a; *Ps.* 8;
2 Cor. 13:11-13;
Matt. 28:16-20

June 14 - 2nd Sunday after Pentecost

Gen. 18:1-15 (21:1-7); *Ps.* 116:1-2, 12-19;
Rom. 5:1-8; Matt. 9:35-10:8 (9-23)

June 21 - 3rd Sunday after Pentecost - Father's Day

Gen. 21:8-21; *Ps.* 86:1-10, 16-17;
Rom. 6: 1b-11; Matt. 10:24-39

June 28 - 4th Sunday after Pentecost

Gen. 22:1-14; *Ps.* 13; Rom. 6:12-23;
Matt. 10:40-42

July, 2020

July 5 - 5th Sunday after Pentecost

Gen. 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67; *Ps.* 45:10-17
or *Song of Sol.* 2:8-13; Rom. 7:15-25a;
Matt. 11:16-19, 25-30

July 12 - 6th Sunday after Pentecost

Gen. 25:19-34; *Ps.* 119:105-112;
Rom. 8:1-11; Matt. 13:1-9, 18-23

July 19 - 7th Sunday Pentecost

Gen. 28:10-19a; *Ps.* 139:1-12, 23-24;
Rom. 8:12-25; Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43

July 26 - 8th Sunday after Pentecost

Gen. 29:15-28; *Ps.* 105:1-11, 45b or *Ps.* 128,
Rom. 8:26-39; Matt. 13:31-33, 44-52