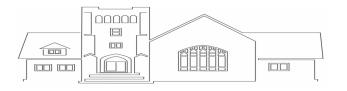
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH NEWTON, IOWA 641-792-2790

"The Mission of First Presbyterian Church of Newton, lowa 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



May 2021

Meghan's Musings

What God Gives

This year I am using *Listening to Your Life*, a daily devotional with readings from the theologian Frederick Buechner. In addition to being a pastor, Buechner is an author of fiction and as a result, his style of writing is both deep and accessible; he is able to convey theological concepts in such a way that one doesn't require a Master of Divinity to understand.

Today's reading spoke to me as I hope it will speak to you. It was originally published in his book *Telling the Truth*. (Please excuse the non-inclusive language.)

It is out of the whirlwind that Job first hears God say, "Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?" (Job 42:3). It is out of the absence of God that God makes himself present, and it is not just the whirlwind that stands for his absence, not just the storm and chaos of the world that knock into a cocked hat all man's attempts to find God in the world, but God is absent also from all Job's words about God and from the words of his comforters, because they are words without knowledge that obscure the issue of God by trying to define him as present in ways and places where he is not present, to define him as moral order, as the best answer man can give to the problem of his life. God is not an answer man can give, God says. God himself does not give answers. He gives himself, and into the midst of the whirlwind of his absence gives himself.

It seems to be in our nature, either as humans or as Americans, to want answers. Clear answers. If at all possible, easy answers. Many people turn to religion for those clear, easy answers. But, as Buechner writes, God does not give answers. What God does give us is God's very self. In the midst of the whirlwind, Buechner assures us, God gives Godself.

Granted, for some people that's not going to suffice. If I'm looking for clear, easy answers or if I'm expecting God to miraculously fix my problems, telling me that God doesn't give answers but that God is with me in the midst of the whirlwind might not satisfy me. Indeed, Buechner is "telling the truth." Life is not black and white, yes and no, ones and zeroes. Life is gray and every color of the rainbow; life is maybe, perhaps, sometimes, it depends; life is an infinity of numbers. If we're looking for and expecting easy answers and painless solutions in life, we're setting ourselves up for a world of disappointment. But if we recognize that God is with us not only in the ups but more importantly in the downs, in our difficulties not only when all is well, then we will know that no matter what life throws at us, we are never alone. May it be so.

New Office Hours

Beginning Monday, May 3, 2021, the office will be open on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons from 1 pm to 6 pm. Please take note of this change.



Bret and Amy Doerring, Kyle, Cole and Mallory and the entire Doerring family as they have dealt with the death of Bret's father, Bob Doerring.

Others that we continue to keep in our prayers:

- *Linda Anderson
- *Don Black
- *Mary Roskilly
- *Dave Shannon
- *Peter Van Elswyk

Those struggling with the loss of a loved one due to COVID-19 and those who remain in the hospital or at home still recovering from the virus.

The unrest in our country which continues to cause violence. For the precious lives that have been taken by gun shots, knives or other weapons and the deep sorrow felt by their family members.

People around the world who have had one type of natural disaster or another hit their homes, states and/or countries.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayers!

Thank you all for the well wishes, cards, monetary gifts and donations toward this cardinal picture (hanging in my hallway by my kitchen) and the gifts of flowers also shown below in recognition of Administrative Professionals Day. It has been my pleasure working with all of you and helping answer any questions you might have. I cherish you all and pray for blessings to continually come your way.









Information from the Foundation

The by-laws of the FPC Foundation state that the Foundation Board will provide some type of an educational seminar for all FPC members to attend. In the past it has been an evening meal, a dessert after church service on Sunday morning or something as simple as a presentation during church service. As was the case in 2020, COVID-19 does not allow a meal or a dessert. Therefore, it was determined a short presentation will take place in church May 23 and this article in the Messenger.

Mission Statement and Goals

The Foundation of the First Presbyterian Church was established to receive gifts/bequests deemed beneficial to the church foundation from any source. These gifts are to be used exclusively for the purpose of the foundation as set forth in the foundation articles.

Goals:

Educate the members of the First Presbyterian Church on the purpose of the Foundation.

Encourage members to donate to the Foundation.

Receive general and special gifts and bequests.

Administer, manage and invest the gifts/bequests donated to the Foundation.

Make funds available to the Building and Grounds Committee of the session of the First Presbyterian Church to make capital improvements.

HISTORY OF THE FOUNDATION

The Foundation was established in 2005, the same year the First Presbyterian Church celebrated its 150th anniversary. The Foundation was created to give members and friends of the church an opportunity to make gifts to the church for capital improvements to the church and its grounds and special projects and programs.

Receiving of Gifts to Foundation:

Gifts may be designated for special projects and programs which the Foundation has decided to administer. Any undesignated gift of over \$1,000.00 to the First Presbyterian Church will be a gift to the Foundation.

Expenditures of Foundation Funds

The Board of Directors of the Foundation may employ a qualified, established investment manager to manage the invested funds of the Foundation. The Board of Directors will periodically monitor the performance of the investment manager to ensure that the investment policies and objectives of the Foundation are being met.

Giving to the Foundation

Making a gift to the Foundation is truly the gift that keeps on giving. We encourage you to remember the Foundation as you do your bookkeeping, giving memorials, estate planning and gift giving.

The current Board consists of:

President – Jane Repp

Vice President – Joan Tyler

Secretary - Dave Stolper

Treasurer - Warren Erickson

Session Representative – Tom Mott

Reverend Meghan Davis-Brass

Reading the Bible in the Year 2021

Below is the schedule for the months of May and June. Each month we'll feature that month's readings and the readings for the following month. If you would like a copy of the schedule for the entire year, please contact Meghan or the church office. We will have a weekly Bible study/discussion at 6 pm (via Zoom for the time being) to discuss what we're reading.

<u>May</u> <u>June</u>

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Chronicles 7-9
    Saturday, May 1
                    1 Chronicles 10-12
     Sunday, May 2
                    1 Chronicles 13-16
    Monday, May 3
                    1 Chronicles 17-19
    Tuesday, May 4
 Wednesday, May 5
                    1 Chronicles 20-23
   Thursday, May 6 1 Chronicles 24-26
      Friday, May 7
                    1 Chronicles 27-29
    Saturday, May 8
                    2 Chronicles 1-4
     Sunday, May 9
                    2 Chronicles 5-7
                    2 Chronicles 8-11
   Monday, May 10
                    2 Chronicles 12-16
   Tuesday, May 11
                    2 Chronicles 17-20
Wednesday, May 12
                    2 Chronicles 21-24
  Thursday, May 13
                    2 Chronicles 25-28
     Friday, May 14
  Saturday, May 15 2 Chronicles 29-31
                    2 Chronicles 32-34
    Sunday, May 16
                    2 Chronicles 35-36
   Monday, May 17
                    Ezra 1-4
   Tuesday, May 18
                    Ezra 5-7
Wednesday, May 19
                    Ezra 8-10
  Thursday, May 20
     Friday, May 21
                    Nehemiah 1-3
                    Nehemiah 4-7
  Saturday, May 22
    Sunday, May 23
                    Nehemiah 8-10
                    Nehemiah 11-13
   Monday, May 24
                    Esther 1-5
   Tuesday, May 25
                    Esther 6-10
Wednesday, May 26
                    Job 1-4
  Thursday, May 27
                    Job 5-8
     Friday, May 28
                    Job 9-12
   Saturday, May 29
                    Job 13-16
    Sunday, May 30
                    Job 17-20
   Monday, May 31
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Job 21-24 Tuesday, June 1 Wednesday, June 2 Job 25-30 Thursday, June 3 Job 31-34 Friday, June 4 Job 35-38 Job 39-42 Saturday, June 5 Sunday, June 6 Psalms 1-8 Psalms 9-17 Monday, June 7 **Psalms 18-21** Tuesday, June 8 **Psalms 22-27** Wednesday, June 9 Thursday, June 10 **Psalms 28-33 Psalms 34-37** Friday, June 11 **Psalms 38-42** Saturday, June 12 Psalms 43-49 Sunday, June 13 Psalms 50-55 Monday, June 14 Psalms 56-61 Tuesday, June 15 **Psalms 62-68** Wednesday, June 16 Thursday, June 17 Psalms 69-72 Friday, June 18 Psalms 73-77 Psalms 78-80 Saturday, June 19 Sunday, June 20 **Psalms 81-88** Psalms 89-94 Monday, June 21 Psalms 95-103 Tuesday, June 22 Wednesday, June 23 Psalms 104-106 Psalms 107-111 Thursday, June 24 Friday, June 25 Psalms 112-118 Saturday, June 26 Psalm 119 Psalms 120-133 Sunday, June 27 Psalms 134-140 Monday, June 28 Psalms 141-150 Tuesday, June 29 Wednesday, June 30 Proverbs 1-3

Building and Grounds Stairway to Heaven

George Wilkening, Chair

You have undoubtly noticed the yellow "stairway to heaven" on the east side of the front entrance of the church. If you are wondering what is going on, in short, we are finally getting the last of the wind damage from last August repaired. In more detail, the parapet wall on the north side of the church tower blew over onto the tower roof during the derecho. We were finally able to find a masonry firm in Des Moines, Forrest and Associates, that was willing to repair that. That repair will be covered by our church insurance. But, while doing that repair, the workmen found places on the North side of the tower where the brick was bulging outward, creating a hazard for the tile roof below. For the past week the masons have been tuck-pointing the north side of the tower and some portions of the East side to prevent large portions of the face brick from falling off. This repair may not be covered by insurance. That decision is pending.

When the parapet wall fell onto the tower roof, it did substantial damage to the roof membrane. Workmen from Hedberg and Son roofing, the same company that repaired the tile roof, have been placing a new membrane over the tower roof, and doing some repair to the underlying structure of the roof. This repair will be coveredd by our insurance company.

Both of these repairs should be completed sometime this week, and the stairway scaffolding removed.

This has been a long process to get the church water-proofed, again. Now we may be able to turn our attention to the sanctuary ceiling. These are all very expensive repairs. If it were not for our church insurance and a decent amount of savings, these repairs would not have been possible. That amount of savings, however, is dwindling as our income is less than our expenditures.





North side—picture taken from the parking lot.

South side—picture taken from UP's parking lot

Easter Sunrise Service



Worship and Music

Jeanette Shannon, Chair

Worship and Music is so happy to see so many of you in church on the second and fourth Sundays of the month. We are doing well with social distancing and masks, picking up your own bulletins before sitting down and leaving your offering in the plate rather than the usual way.

The music provided by small groups will be done without masks as some of the singers have difficulty breathing behind them while singing. The musicians are well distanced from the congregation and each other so we feel this will not present a problem as all have been vaccinated.

Our thanks to Marlys Grimm for her long and busy schedule of recording the services, special music and anything else that needed to be broadcast during the past year plus. She is one of our treasured saints. Please extend your personal thanks when you see her.

Church Life

Gary Parsons, Chair

Our committee, in conjunction with Membership, encourages members to attend the Happy Hour Open House on Wednesday evenings. The last Wednesday night of the month is a "dinner" gathering where you are invited to partake of your evening meal, be that a sandwich from one of the fast food restaurants, or a candlelight meal. If you prefer not to eat, that is perfectly fine also.

We have been having walks at local parks on a Sunday we don't meet in person. The first one was at Maytag park and 18 people attended. The second one was at Agnes Patterson with 26 walkers. The April one was on the 18th at Mariposa County Park. Only 6 were in attendance, but the terrain was unlevel. The picture below is of Tom Weeks, Dave Stolper and Nancy Mott at the lookout tour. Be watching for information on at least one more walk.

With the approval of the Session, Men's Group has begun to meet in person again. We had 6 at our first meeting on April 15th. We wear masks, social distance, and bring our own refreshments.

It is our plan to do "Worship at Woodland" on July 11. We have reserved a spot and by then hope to be able to have a potluck meal following worship.



Blessings with our children



On Sunday, April 25, we had the joy of having the baptism of Claire Shirley Joy Skaggs, daughter of Rachel and Bryce Skaggs. Claire was born on October 27 at MercyOne Newton. She is named for three of her great-grandfathers who are no longer living, Clare "Bud" Peska, Shirley Woodrow "Woody" Kimmel and Joy Lee "Bud" Skaggs. Welcome to the family of God, Claire.





Children's time at our first in-person service on March 14, 2021

Mission Committee

Larry Anderson, Chair

The mission committee continues to conduct business remotely. We are happy to announce that the One Great Hour of Sharing offering collected \$1735 -- not that far off from previous years, and remarkable under our current circumstances. Thank you!

Speaking of offerings, we have for the past three years held the Bread for the World Offering of Letters on Reformation Sunday in October. While it's always good to communicate to our elected officials, BFW encourages congregations to do this in the late winter or spring, closer to the beginning of the legislative session. Therefore we are planning to shift our offering of letters to May 23 this year. More information will be forthcoming, but our plan is to ask that you write your letters and bring them to worship on May 23. If you can't be there, you can bring them before or after that date to the church office.

Barb and John Taylor were on a Mariners in Mission event April 18-25 at Camp Kirkmont in Ohio. They were in a group of 10 people who redesigned the pool lighting, made a T-shirt quilt, reupholstered the furniture in a lodge, and made camp signs. Thank you Barb and John!

Days for Girls has resumed production! Please see the separate article on page 11.

We were notified through Mission Coalition that Meals on Wheels will not be resuming weekend meal deliveries, but is rather delivering weekend meals on Thursdays and Fridays. So our church will not be taking a turn on weekends as in the past. But they do need a few more drivers, and information was published in the Church Happenings for how you can volunteer. See the information below.

For several years, Mission Coalition has scheduled weekend meal delivery, and First Presbyterian has been part of that program. The following letter came from Kelli Van Manen regarding stopping the week-end deliveries, and Mission Committee wanted the congregations to be aware of this.

Linda Curtis-Stolper, representative on Mission Coalition.

Dear Weekend Volunteers,

It has been over a year since Covid. I wanted to check in with all of you and let you know that at this time there are no plans to resume weekend meals. We have been able to provide extra meals on Thursdays and Fridays to help people over the weekend. Currently we have around 50 people that we do this for.

We have so very much appreciated the help over the years on the weekends. If you would like to continue to volunteer and are available during the week from 11-12, we do need some volunteers. Our number of meals that we deliver to has increased by 100 since last year. I would like to get 5 people (or couples) to help deliver meals to a couple of the apartment complexes. You would pick up the meals at our location (2401 1st Ave E) at 11 AM. You would easily be done within an hour.

If you are interested, please let me know.

Again, thank you for your help and support over the years!

Sincerely, Kelli Van Manen



Membership Committee

Marilyn McCallister, Chair

Carroll and Julie Broderson

by Joan Tyler

Do you remember with affection the ice cream at our annual Socials, back in pre-COVID days? Well, the recipe came originally from members Carroll and Julie Brodersen, who brought it from their Methodist Church in Monroe. Thank you for this, Carroll and Julie, and for all the years you spent making this great treat for us and the many visitors who came to enjoy it with us!

Carroll was a farm boy, and lived his earliest years near Attica. Later, his family moved to the Reasnor area. He graduated from Newton High School, where he was one of four boys named Carroll, and three of them shared the middle name of Lee! Julie lived in Monroe, graduated from Monroe High School and attended the Methodist Church there.

Carroll joined the Army and spent a year and a half as a member of the ceremonial Honor Guard in Washington D.C., a "spit and polish" position where everything had to be done "just right"! He remembers, not too fondly, of having to stand virtually motionless for 3½ hours for an arrival of Queen Elizabeth!

Back at home, Carroll met Julie (in Duncan's Café) in Monroe, and they were married in 1963. They both worked at Maytag and in due time, moved to Newton. Carroll's career was in the Service Department, and Julie spent her last fifteen years in the Law Department. They have two children, Jill, who is married to Kent Brown, and Joel, who lives in Monroe and is married to Lee Ann Bettis, plus five grandchildren and three "greats."

In addition to being a chief ice cream maker, Julie schedules our weekly Greeters and she has served on the church's Foundation Board. Carroll is a frequent greeter and has been a member of the Buildings and Grounds Committee. Despite his eighteen-day hospitalization last summer with COVID and some residual effects, Carroll and Julie remain notable for their cheerful dispositions, good humor and ready smiles!

Zoom Happy Hour Open House

More connection opportunities -- our Happy Hour Open House Zoom meeting continues connecting us on Wednesday evenings, 6-8 pm. This is a social gathering with a drop in and out format as it works best for your schedule. AND on the last Wednesday Happy Hour Open House, Church Life sponsors a "dinner meeting." See additional information in the Church Life article on page 7. Join Zoom meeting – https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86377811346 Passcode is 641792 if needed. Hope to see you there!

Stay Connected with Your Church Family!!

Even with the Pandemic of 2020-2021, our church family has changed – such as new address, new phone number, new members, new additions into church families, etc. The Church Office keeps an up-to-date copy of name, address, phone number(s), and email address, if available. If you would like a hard copy of the church family list, contact the Church Office.

If you are unsure if the Church Office has your most up-to-date information, please contact Mickey. (Church Office -- email office1stpresnewton@gmail.com, phone 641-792-2790, mailing address 220 N. 2nd Ave. E., Newton, IA 50208.)

Days for Girls International – Newton IA Team

Days for Girls Workshops began meeting again on the 4th Thursday of the month. Our church COVID precautions are being followed:

- Attend only if you are comfortable doing so. Do not feel obligated to come;
- Please hold off attending if you feel ill in any way;
- Masks and social distancing are required hand sanitizer and masks will be available (if you forget);
- Lunch will be handled by a BYOL (bring your own lunch, snack and/or beverage).

Our next workshop will be Thursday, May 27, 2021, from 9 am to 2 pm in the First Presbyterian Church fellowship hall.

<u>Great news!!</u> Our Newton IA Team was able to answer the call to help with the USA Chad Humanitarian Response Project! Even with limited resources, the Government of Chad, in central Africa, continues to have a positive and welcoming attitude towards refugees. At present, Chad hosts over 470,000 refugees from Sudan, the Central African Republic and Nigeria, as well as 330,000 internally displaced people. The need is great for the women and girls in the refugee camps for sustainable feminine hygiene solutions (DfG kits). Thanks to our DfG Team members who worked on the parts of the sustainable feminine hygiene kits from home, Julie Fisher and I were able to package 67 complete DfG kits to send to the Project along with 100 shields. Julie drove the DfG kits to a drop-off sight in Liberty, Missouri. Thank you, Julie!

Until our next update, take care, be safe and stay connected!

Julie Fisher & Marilyn McCallister, DfG International Newton IA Team

Budget and Finance

Toni Peska, Chair

Several months ago, we began discussions with Dimensions Accounting, P.C., on handling more of the accounting functions of the Church.

This was important because of several happenings:

Our previous Church Treasurer retired. Those duties were then (somewhat) handled by the Budget & Finance Committee.

Our previous office admin. left, and Mickey Van Baale filled in admirably, covering those tasks. We very much appreciate Mickey's handling of these functions.

The B&F committee agreed that it would be in everyone's best interest, Mickey's included, if an accounting firm handled some of the tasks, and Session agreed.

Beginning 4/1, Dimensions Acctg. assumed several additional functions such as: Accounts Payable, payroll, account reconciliation and an end of month financial summary, which will help us all have a good idea of the state of our finances. Our administrative staff will still handle member pledges and donations.

Please let a member of Session, or B&F committee know if you have any questions.

Toni Peska - B&F Committee

Proposed schedule to resume when deemed safe to do so.

2021 BIRTHDAYS & EVENTS

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
2 Warren Erickson 10:30a Zoom Worship 11:30a Zoom Fellowship	3 Gary Parsons 6p - Reading the Bible in a Year Study/ Discussion	4	5 9:30a - WBS 11a Gentle Yoga 6:00p-8:00p Zoom Happy Hour Open House	6 6:30a Early Men's Group 9a Men's Group 3p Chair Yoga	7	8
9 Mother's Day 9a Deacons 10:30a In Person Worship 11:30a - Zoom Fellowship	10	11 3:30p Mission	12 Bryce Skaggs 9:30a - WBS 6:00p-8:00p Zoom Happy Hour	13	14 Nancy Mott Dave Funk	15
16 10:30a Zoom Worship 11:30a Zoom Fellowship	17	18 Mary Jane Tripp	9:30a - WBS 6:00p-8:00p Zoom Happy Hour	20 Kim DeGraff 6:30a Early Men's Group 9a Men's Group	21 Ruby Davis	22
23 10:30a In Person Worship 11:30a Zoom Fellowship	24 6p - Bible Study/ Discussion	25 6:30p - Session		9a-2p DfG 3p Chair Yoga	28	29
30 Sandy Simbro Rick Miller Porter Hamilton	MEMORIAL DAY					
10:30a Zoom Worship 11:30a Zoom Fellowship	Office Closed					

All meetings, fellowship and yoga are via Zoom.

Worship services are posted online and/or available via Zoom at the times indicated. In person worship will be the 2nd and 4th Sundays



May	2	9 In Person Service	16	23 In Person Service	30
Worship Leader	Karen Quinn	Gary Parsons	Linda Kirchhoff	Jane Repp	
Greeters		Kevin & Toni Peska		Terry Rickers Bev Rossow	
Ushers		Dana Hashman Mickey Van Baale			
Audio		Shirley Stevens		Shirley Stevens	

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

Lectionary —

May, 2021

May 2 - 5th Sunday of Easter Acts 8:26-40 *and Ps. 22:25-31;* 1 John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8

May 9 - 6th Sunday of Easter (Mother's Day) Acts 10:44-48 and Ps. 98; 1 John 5:1-6; John 15:9-17

May 16- 7th Sunday of Easter Acts 1:15-17, 21-26 and Ps. 1; 1 John 5:9-13; John 17:6-19

May 23 - Pentecost Acts 2:1-21 or Ezek. 37:1-14 and Ps. 104:24-34, 35b; Rom. 8:22-27 or Acts 2:1-21; John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

May 30—Trinity Sunday Isa. 6:1-8 *and Ps. 29*; Rom. 8:12-17; John 3:1-17

June, 2021

June 6 - 2nd Sunday after Pentecost

1 Sam. 8:4-11 (12-15) 16-20 and Ps. 138; 2 Cor. 4:13-5:1; Mark 3:20-35

June 13—3rd Sunday after Pentecost 1 Sam. 15:34-16:13 and Ps. 20; 2 Cor. 5:6—10 (11-13) 14-17; Mark 4:26-34

June 20 - 4th Sunday after Pentecost - Father's Day

1 Sam. 17:(1a, 4-11, 19-23) 32-49 and Ps. 9:9-20; or 1 Sam. 17:57-18:5, 10-16 and Ps. 133; 2 Cor. 6:1-13; Mark 4: 35-41

June 27 - 5th Sundayt after Pentecost 2 Sam. 1:1, 17-27 and Ps. 130; 2 Cor. 8:7-15; Mark 5:21-43