

FIRST'S FAMILY



February 16—March 15
2015
Volume 58, Issue 2

Stay for Lunch! Sunday, February 22 after the 10:30 Service



Shake off the winter blues and join us for a chili lunch on **Sunday, February 22.**

This lunch is a Junior and Senior High fundraiser to help with summer mission trip expenses.

Call for Annual Congregational Meeting

The agenda for the Sunday, February 22, annual congregational meeting, which will immediately follow the 10:30 a.m. worship service, is below:

- I. Call to order of congregation/corporation
- II. Opening prayer
- III. Finance report and review of the 2015 budget
- IV. Presentation and decision on pastor's terms of call
- V. Motion to approve session to read and approve congregational meeting minutes
- VI. Motion to adjourn with prayer
- VII. Closing prayer

Can you forgive yourself if you miss the 9:15 a.m. LENTEN FORGIVENESS CLASS, beginning Sunday, Feb. 22, in Coover Lounge with Pastor Sam?

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Ash Wednesday is an ancient holy day in the Christian church calendar. It marks the beginning of the season of Lent, in which we renew our baptismal identity. During our Ash Wednesday service on February 18, we are reminded of our mortality, we confess our sins, and we experience our forgiveness in Christ's death and resurrection. The "imposition of ashes" is a symbol of the

inevitability of death. But in following the way of Christ, we always see the resurrection on the horizon as God's promise that life ultimately triumphs over death.

During Lent the Paschal candle remains unlighted as we reflect on the pain and suffering of our Savior and the darkness of the hours before his resurrection. The paschal candle will burn again during the Easter Vigil as we celebrate Christ's resurrection.



Dear sisters and brothers of First Presbyterian Church,

The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

I am writing during the great snow storm of 2015, unless of course a storm comes along that is greater! In a bit I will settle down to watch football and play catch up with several projects that I have planned for some time.

"Planned" is the operative word. First Presbyterian Church is beginning what is estimated to be a four-month planning process. We will be assisted by Tim McCoy, a consultant who will be doing much of our grunt work so I remain free to do the pastoral care that remains my core value. Tim will be working collaboratively with the direction of session's REALM Planning Ministry, made up of Carol Ulch, chairperson; Perry Ross; and Maggie Mowery. You will find a message from Tim in this newsletter. Please excuse the length of what I am sharing below. I believe it to be important to read and keep at hand during the coming months.

Two other bodies, in addition to session and REALM Planning, will be assisting the process. The Executive Committee, made up of currently or prior serving elders John Barr, Ken Fisher, Amy Fletcher, Kevin Keith, Lara Marsh, Connie Richardson, Maeleen Thorius, and Richard Van Rheeden, will be looking over results as they emerge and also overseeing the preparation of recommendations to go to session. At the end of the process, they will be charged to figure out how the resulting plan will be executed. Finally, they will provide leadership in the implementation (execution) of the plan. Hence the name: the Executive Committee.

The Operations Committee (persons yet to be named) plays the critical role of assisting Tim in the gathering of data. The members of this group will primarily be called on to interview leaders in the regional community and the needy. They will do so in order to ascertain the needs of justice and mercy that First Presbyterian can faithfully address over the next three to five years in order to help transform our region. Some of these needs are physical, and others are emotional or related to the human need for transcendence (meaning). Members of this team must be motivated to make contacts quickly in light of our short time frame. They must also be able to bracket their own convictions so as to really hear what members of the community are telling us.

Below is laid out the strategic planning process:

1. **Quantitative Analysis, Stage One** (demographic study analysis of community for emergent regional needs related to justice, mercy, and faith).
2. **Qualitative Analysis** (interviews of community leaders and needy persons by Operations Committee, with some movement back and forth between community leaders and the needy to double-check insights gained from demographic study analysis).
3. **Quantitative Analysis, Stage Two** (if necessary, to check on any disconfirming information that might arise in interviews).



4. **Executive Committee Evaluation, Stage One** (reactions to community findings; creation of a list of possible mission, justice, and outreach priorities and goals to be presented to the session and congregation; and assistance in preparing reports to session and congregation).

5. **Session and Congregation Review, Stage One** (for discernment and reaction/input related to community findings. Opinions on priorities? Data missed? Additional study needed?).

6. **Congregation Self-Study** (study of congregational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to congregational ability to respond to mission, justice, and outreach priorities).

7. **Session and Congregation Review, Stage Two** (return to the session and congregation to get reaction to congregational self-study findings. Is this who we perceive us to be, with these assets and gifts?).

8. **Executive Committee Evaluation, Stage Two** (to assess all input and make a recommendation to session on priorities and goals for the next 3 to 5 years, including a view toward naming emerging connections that must be built and/or fostered between congregation and community entities to make transformative ministry possible).

9. **Session Approval One** (priorities and goals for the next 3 to 5 years).

10. **Executive Committee Strategic Plan development** (money, timeline, property, staff, measures of success for goals, etc., that are needed to honor priorities, including steps to raise needed assets).

11. **Session Approval Two (Strategic Plan)**.

12. **Congregation Information Meeting**

13. through . . .? **IMPLEMENT!**

I hope that I have communicated clearly the reasons and logic of the planning process, including why a consultant to take on much of the planning organization and planning work is necessary.

Let us recognize that many congregations engage in planning processes and obtain consultants, only to see the plans end up in a filing cabinet. In my experience, this happens because 1. The plan is created separately from the needs of the wider community; 2. The plan is based on building from God's gifts (strengths and successes) of the past rather than God's call

(Pastor's letter continued on page 3)



From the Deacon's Bench

The Prayer Chain continues to be used regularly for concerns and joys. There are multiple ways to submit items to it. You may e-mail Jeremy Fletcher, prayer chain coordinator, at fletchej22@gmail.com with your concerns. Requests may also be written on the prayer request card during Sunday morning worship which are then added to the Prayer Chain by Pastor Sam. Please indicate on the prayer card if your prayer request is confidential.

In an effort to improve privacy and prevent spam emails on the Prayer Chain, a new method of submitting requests online has been implemented. To submit a Prayer Chain request, complete the following steps. Please note this process is for individuals who have received Prayer Chain emails in the past. If you are not currently part of the Prayer Chain and would like to be added, please e-mail Jeremy Fletcher with your information.

Go to <http://prayers.firstpresiowacity.org/fpc/>. You will see a listing of "Topics" (the prayer requests) in the main part of the page and a place to login on the right.

Login: Each of you has been given a username and password on the new Prayer Chain forum.

Your username is your email address.

Your password is: FPCPrayers2701

Once you have successfully logged in, you may change your password. Instructions for doing this are on the website.

Read the "topic" called "PLEASE READ BEFORE POSTING" so that you know some ground rules and how to change your password.

Click the link at the top that says "View or Post Prayer Request."

Then scroll down to the bottom of the list, enter a "Topic Title" (the name of your prayer request) and then enter the content. When you click the Submit button, everyone on the prayer chain will be notified.

If you have any questions about the Prayer Chain, please contact Jeremy Fletcher.

(Pastor's letter continued from page 2)

from the future; 3. The congregation, officers, or staff don't own the process or the outcomes, or try to impose their own wishes on it; 4. The congregation doesn't provide the resources for implementation; 5. The members fear change or are committed to their own present comfort and have no vision for the congregation's future (and, as we know, without a vision the people perish); 6. There is too little prayer and commitment to Jesus Christ and his vision at the heart of the congregation.

Clearly, a great deal is being asked of all of us. Number 6 above is where you and I begin our support of the planning process, and I ask you to begin praying now if you haven't already. Then please, let us all make a priority of giving our input at the opportunities provided by this process. Thanks much. To the glory of God!

With love, your pastor,

Sam

<p>Eat Out Group Feb. 19, 6 p.m. Ila Reid & Randy Howe, Hosts 319-359-1420 (Ila)</p>	 <p>MIDTOWN Family Restaurants Hwy 1, near Walmart</p>
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Lenten Retreat with Loretta Ross, Saturday, March 14

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. (lunch provided)
First Presbyterian Church, Coover Lounge

Discovering the Realm of God Within— Living Near to the Heart of God in a Hurting World

Jesus tells his friends that the Realm of the fullness of God is within us.

Really? Many days I feel torn in two by conflicting emotions, assaulted by the news and a culture that finds its worth in possessions and production. Jesus' Realm of all-encompassing justice, mercy, and faith within me is hard to imagine or experience for very long.

Get back in touch with the deep, abiding Presence of God within yourself. Discover that fertile ground of your own relationship with Christ. This primary relationship produces the fruits of the Spirit in you, and releases through you reconciling love wherever you go.

During our time together we will —

Discover the Realm – Do You Not See It?

Noticing and naming the quality of our lives in God.

Tend the Realm – Put on the Mind, which is Yours in Christ Jesus

Practices to nurture awareness, attention, and knowledge of self, God, and others.

Cultivate the Realm of God in the World — Feed my sheep.

How do we as the beloved community spread the gifts and power of the Realm?

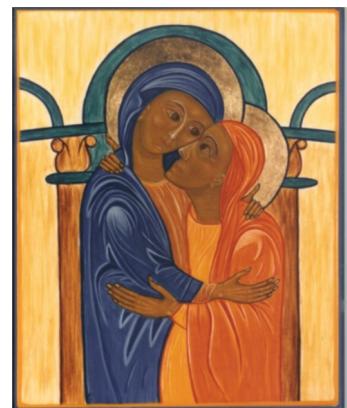
We will worship and pray. We will remember and share our stories of the Realm of God present or absent in our own lives. We will encounter Christ and allow him to do the teaching as much as possible.

Space is limited. Registration deadline is March 1.

Sign-up in Ryerson Fellowship Hall.



Rev. Ross, author, dramatist, spiritual director and Presbyterian minister, will also be with us on Sunday, March 15 to preach and dramatize during worship. Plan to be with us for both the Saturday retreat and Sunday worship at 8:00 a.m. or 10:30 a.m.



From your Endowment/Memorial Committee

by Connie Richardson, Chair

Often in this column I will close by asking you to contact me if you have any questions about the FPC Endowment. Though I am always ready to answer your questions, another very good place to start is by consulting one or more of your professional advisors. Sometimes an advisor will ask you about charitable giving, but often an advisor will take the lead from your questions.

Of course, to take advantage of professional advice about tax-wise ways to give, people must first be interested in making charitable gifts. They must be charitably inclined. Charitable inclination is merely a starting place, though, and all a person's or couple's primary charities, as well as their heirs, must be discussed and woven into the plan. This does not need to be done all at once, and many plans evolve over time.

Once heirs and charities are identified, the plan must consider all the assets available. When meeting with your estate planning attorney, for example, have a written list of everything you own and your estimate of its value. The list should include:

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| ◆ Cash | ◆ Stocks and bonds | ◆ collectibles, jewelry, artwork) |
| ◆ Savings | ◆ Life Insurance owned by you or by | ◆ Promissory Notes |
| ◆ Your home | others on your behalf | ◆ Business interests |
| ◆ Second home | ◆ Commercial Annuities | ◆ Retirement accounts (IRA, Roth-IRA, TIAA |
| ◆ Vacation or other property | ◆ Personal property (Cars, boats, | -CREF, SEP, 403(b), 401(k)) |

With lists of what you have to give and who and what you wish to give it to, good planning can begin. As always, if you have questions about the FPC endowment, please contact me or another committee member.
(connie22richardson@yahoo.com or 319-541-1204)

First's Family

If you have a news item for the First's Family, please submit it for publication by March 1 to tammy.foster@firstpresiowacity.org. Thank you!



February 16-28

02/19 Cullen Schroeder
02/23 Toni DeRyke
02/25 Grace Young
02/28 DeAnn Claypool
02/28 Nancy Ross
03/03 Ben Urick

March 1-15

03/03 Gloria Zajicek
03/04 Margaret Keyes
03/04 Carol Kirsch
03/05 Matt Degner
03/06 Shalom Bigaba
03/11 Joshua Fletcher
03/11 Rebecca Morgan
03/12 Sue Dallam
03/14 Tom Bergman
03/15 Eileen Gieswein



*Known
to have been
Hospitalized:*

Karen Nicklaus, Anita Burnett, and Mary Ann Pedde



*Our
Heartfelt
Sympathy
to:*

Bob Woodburn and family of Mary Ann Woodburn, who died February 10. Pastor Sam Massey officiated

the February 16 service at FPC, and columbarium internment; **Kathy & Steve Smith**, Kathy's mother died Jan. 27 and services were in Doud, IA on Jan. 30; **Jan Walker**, whose uncle died and services were near Chicago on Jan. 31.



**Looking for someone?
Can't find that phone number?
Wondering who that was sitting
in the pew in front of you?**

Your wait is almost over—the
NEW 2015 Photo Directory is
due out in March.

Watch your bulletin for more information.

SAVE THE DATE!

First Presbyterian Church wants to include you in their Vacation Bible School. Come enjoy snacks, games, music, crafts and more at VBS!

Dates: June 22-26

Time: 9:00 am—12:00 noon



Session Highlights

-submitted by Nancy Weber, Clerk of Session

The session met on January 20, 2015 in Coover Lounge at 7:00 p.m. Pastor Sam called the meeting to order and lit the Christ candle. Elder Connie Richardson led us in devotions, reading from "Practicing Our Faith" on hospitality, and gave a prayer about zeal in our lives.

Our guest, Pastor Majid Abel, of the Naulakha Presbyterian Church of Lahore, Pakistan, was introduced, and all elders present introduced themselves in return. Pastor Abel gave his thanks as a board member of PEB for our support, for welcoming him to FPC, and to John and Rhonda Barr for hosting him during his visit. Pastor Abel spoke about his vision of a sister church relationship with FPC, which could involve praying for each other and exploring opportunities to share in person (or on Skype) rather than through print. Ideally, youths from both churches might exchange visits. (Last year he brought two youths from his church to Triennium, and it was a great experience for youth on both sides.) Perhaps sending church members to visit each other's congregations would be a possibility.

In thinking of establishing a sisterhood relationship, the question of what FPC's goals might be arose. Ideas proposed were: 1) Finding out what Pakistan is like other than what we hear/see on the news. 2) Being in prayer for each other, especially since Pakistan's Christian churches and schools are in danger. 3) The ability to invest in their security and their ministry, as an important way for us to practice spirituality.

Tim McCoy, the consultant candidate, was introduced. He has an MDiv., 4 children, and was a minister for 11 years in an evangelical church. He is familiar with REALM, and sees himself as a facilitator of conversations, which are needed as a church is in transition.

Names of members being moved to inactive status were listed on the agenda: Shari Butterfield, Brandon Finn, Craig & Evelyn Frey, Wayne Goode,

Christina Hemsted, Scott & Kim Jeffers, David Johnson, Michelle Kennedy, Bill & Debbie Maher & adult children, Molly & Katie Maher, Rachel Miller, Terry & Vicki Protectox & adult son, Adam Protectox, Molly Schulte, Sarah Schulte, Anne Rizzo, Nancy Stellwagen, Curtis & Nancy Steyers & adult children, Jessica & Curt Steyers, Joan Tephly.

The financial report, prepared by Larry Bruner, was received. A motion by Finance Committee was approved to use the surplus monies at 2014 year-end from the General Fund as follows: \$6,115 goes to technology fund; \$12,000 to strategic planning for a consultant; \$5,000 to building fund capital reserve; and \$2,188 to building fund equipment and furnishing, for a total of \$25,303.

A motion to set the congregational meeting for Sunday, Feb. 22, 2015 following 10:30 a.m. worship to approve pastor's terms of call was approved.

A motion to accept the 2015 budget as presented was approved.

A contract for a consultant was approved as slightly altered, i.e., funds will come from Overage, and whatever is left from endowment income.

Pastor Sam gave a brief reminder to elders that all meetings should begin with prayer, scripture, and "check in" from members on how they are doing. This is part of paying "Attention" to the Bible and our personal stories as an aspect of REALM.

Elder Sue Dallam, reintroduced us to the children's worship bags and activities included. A member of Equipping Ministry suggested perhaps having a monthly get-together for children after "Time with Children" and holding a mini-church service, teaching the children what the components of worship mean and have them plan their own church service, exploring "what do we want to experience in church; and what does it all mean?"

February 15, 2015 is planned as Fellowship Sunday. Parents can meet during Sunday school time to discuss parenting. There will be a family activity that afternoon.

Joys and concerns were shared, and elder John Barr closed the meeting with prayer.

Did you know that you can receive the monthly Newsletter online?

If you would like to stop receiving the paper newsletter and view the newsletter online, please contact Tammy Schroeder at 351-2260 or by email at tammy.schroeder@firstpresiowacity.org, to sign up for this cost-effective way to stay informed.



Do you have baskets to re-purpose for the delight of Johnson County children? We need Easter baskets and all the fillings!

Please begin gathering items to fill Easter baskets for children sheltered at Domestic Violence Intervention Program (DVIP).

Suggested items for donation are:

- ~ small gently used (or new) baskets for use as Easter baskets
- ~ basket grass
- ~ individually wrapped candies / chocolates
- ~ new crayons / washable markers
- ~ new mini coloring books
- ~ new children's socks and underwear
- ~ God Loves You / other appropriate stickers
- ~ handmade bookmarks with Easter-message Bible verses

By Wednesday, March 4, please bring your Easter basket donations to church and leave, in Ryerson Fellowship Hall's marked box.

The happiness of sharing God's love ... then begins!

Join Church Women United (CWU) to celebrate World Day of Prayer Friday, March 6, 10 a.m. at FPC, IC.

Following opening devotions, we'll fill Easter baskets for children sheltered at Domestic Violence Intervention Program (DVIP). Representatives from DVIP will be on hand to answer questions about the service need.

Thank you for helping share the light of Easter with children uprooted by violence.

Oh! Let's not forget to remind ourselves of Easter's light ... join the CWU, for World Day of Prayer Bible Study, Thursday, February 19 at 10 a.m. at New Horizons United Methodist Church, 2251 1st AVE, Coralville.

Contact person is: Ann Grosscup at 319-358-5929, aegandthekits@gmail.com.



What does it mean to embody the Spirit of Christ in today's changing world as persons and as church? Public theologian Brian McLaren will give a talk, "Living Christ on the Edge," Friday, March 6, at 7 p.m. at Zion Lutheran Church. This talk is free and open to the public. McLaren (www.brianmclaren.net) is a former pastor, the author of several books, including *We Make the Road by Walking and Why Did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha and Mohammed Cross the Road?*, and speaks internationally on the emergence of a new kind of Christianity in the 21st century. McLaren works closely with the Convergence Network (www.convergenceus.org) and the Center for Progressive Renewal (www.progressiverenewal.org) on efforts toward church renewal in the U.S.

Position Announcement - Parish Nurse

The Administration and Personnel Committee, with Session approval, is pleased to announce the church's plan to add a Parish Nurse position to support the congregation's health ministry, wellness and pastoral care needs. This part-time role is being advertised through several sources and the hope is to fill it in the next 1–2 months. If you have any questions, please contact Kevin Keith, Pastor Sam or Dan Thedens.

First Presbyterian Church is currently accepting applications for the position of Parish Nurse. First Presbyterian strives to practice and reflect its mission of justice, mercy and faith within the congregation, the Iowa City community and globally. This part-time role has three major components:

- Responsible for working with church staff and volunteers to design, develop and implement a health ministry of caring and education that will equip and empower persons to grow holistically into healthy church and community participants.
- Helps to organize and support the Pastor and other staff persons and volunteers in providing a program of strong pastoral care to the congregations.
- Provides personal health and wellness counsel and input to members of the congregation as well as non-members, including appropriate guidance for navigating the health care system and provider networks.

Salary will be commensurate with the individual's experience and qualifications. Questions may be directed to Kevin Keith. Applicants are asked to send a cover letter, resume, and a list of three work-related references to kevinskeith@gmail.com.

Review of REALM

(The review below, with a few additions, recaps what has already been shared on prior occasions about the REALM paradigm adopted by session.

Through REALM, we claim our commitment to Jesus' vision of the kingdom or realm of God as being God's will for creation. Remember that Jesus – God with us — taught that the realm was an alternative to the kingdoms (political, economic, cultural, etc.) of this world, and it is characterized by right, i.e., righteous, human relationships of social justice, mercy, and faith. We might recall that

- Justice concerns how love is expressed on the level of institutions and the organization of society. It asks the question, “Are people being empowered, equipped, and encouraged for successful, joyful living?”
- Mercy concerns how we individually treat people, including enemies and strangers. It asks the Golden Rule question: “Am I treating this person – loving this person – as I would want to be treated?”
- Faith concerns an open heart toward God and the future that God is trying to bring. It asks the following question: “Do I express trust in God’s gift of the future with hope and commitment to transformative change? Or am I characterized by cynicism, bitterness, despair, complaint, or selfishness?”

Note that Jesus was not proposing a theoretical vision for our assessment; he was not describing an idealized dream to be realized beyond death, or perhaps when the world ends. Jesus – like the prophets before him — bet his life on the tangible expression of the realm of God in the here-and-now relationships of life. No wonder the political, economic, legal and religious authorities of his day realized that he was a threat and had to die.

So the church over the ages and Christians like us (when we have liberated ourselves of the notion that we are mere chaplains to the culture or shopkeepers put here to meet religious consumer needs) have risked their lives for the sake of Jesus’ justice, mercy and faith. You and I

come now to a crossroads, and your commitment is solicited.

In America, the fastest growing religious group (in size it is now second only to the Roman Catholic Church) is the “Nones”: These folks often are not anti-God or anti-Jesus, yet they disclaim any connection to a church or religious organization. Indeed, most don’t even count themselves as “spiritual,” a term that increasingly is used by people who do have some religious affiliation. Even the mega-churches of contemporary worship fame are losing the younger generations.

There is a good reason, in my experience, for many congregations to lose members and finally close their doors. They do not take seriously the realm of God as God’s call to Christians.

Yet, to be clear, REALM and this planning process are not designs for church growth. Rather, the intent is to give our lives, congregationally and individually, in response to Jesus’ vision of the realm of God. If God gives us growth as a consequence – if, in our efforts to heal 10 lepers, at least one returns thanking God and helping us do Jesus’ ministry – we are blessed. Yet the goal is to heal the 10, not capture the one.

The acronym REALM reminds us of the **Right Relationships** of justice, mercy, and faith that are God’s will for the world. REALM also draws our attention to the idea that Christ’s church is called to **Equip** people to live in right relationships. Furthermore, **Attention** is called to how thoroughly the stories we tell ourselves shape our relationships, for good or ill, and how God can use the stories found in the Bible to transform us and our relationships. As the church seeks to equip people, it must honor the fact that people **Learn** in a variety of ways and different approaches must be taken. Finally, REALM invites us to acknowledge that the chief end of the church’s effort is to empower people to glorify God: to realize their **Mission** in life, their purpose, their calling.

Through REALM, session hopes to foster the realm of God in the world through all of us, individually and as a congregation.



New Member Class, Ryerson Fellowship Hall 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., Saturday, March 28

The FaithWorks new member class, which is also open to current members seeking spiritual renewal, is being held on Saturday, March 28, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. in Coover Lounge with refreshments served. New members will be received by our elders into fellowship on Palm Sunday, March 29, at 9:30 a.m. and welcomed into membership at the 7 p.m. Easter Vigil

service on April 4. Led by Pastor Sam, FaithWorks is designed to try to address the questions of individual participants about what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. It also presents some basic information about the faith and our congregation. Please come and be a part of it! If the timing doesn't work out for you, please contact Pastor Sam at sam.massey@firstpresiowacity.org or 319-351-2660 for alternatives for joining. We look forward to your participation!

WORSHIP MATTERS

Organist Karl Magnus Jansson plays for worship on February 22



Karl Magnus Jansson will be joining us for worship on February 22, and will play our prelude and postlude. For 12 years he has lived in Örebro with his family: wife Katarina and three children. Karl is a concert organist and choir conductor from the St. Nicolai Church in Sweden. The church originates from the 13th century and offers a rich musical life, with several choirs and concerts every week. He has conducted many of the major choir works and is an often sought after organ soloist and basso continuo player. Besides music, his main interest is sports and he's a keen golfer. Thank you to David Puderbaugh for coordinating Karl's Iowa City visit.



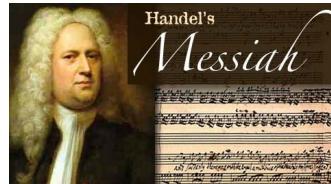
Do you need to be somewhere by noon?

Have you considered worshipping at 8 a.m.?

Each Sunday we offer a meditative worship service including the Lord's Supper.

Come and Join Us at 8:00!

Join Sanctuary Choir and Sing Messiah on May 3



Our Sanctuary Choir, soloists and orchestra will sing the Easter portion of G. F. Handel's *Messiah* during our 10:30 a.m. worship on May 3. If you have always wanted to sing with our choir or have always wanted to sing this wonderful work, please join us for this one-time commitment. If interested, you would be required to come to just 4 rehearsals in April plus the rehearsal with orchestra on May 2 at 10:00 a.m.—12:00. If you're interested, contact Darlene Bergman at darlene.bergman@firstpresiowacity.org.

Ushering and Worship Leadership Opportunities

"I was a stranger and you welcomed me." Matthew 25:35

There are many ways to participate in ministry at FPC. Serving as an usher is one of the easiest roles—it's a one-time 1 1/2 hr. commitment. No matter what your personality (introverted or extroverted, bold or timid), you can make a difference in the way guests and members experience worship. And it's a wonderful way to involve your entire household. So talk with your family about volunteering together. Then call or e-mail Meg Ketterer to sign up at 319-351-2210 or margaret-ketterer@uiowa.edu. You will receive clear written instructions about how to usher and if you still feel nervous about serving for the first time, one of our experienced ushers will gladly be on hand to support you.



... To equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ. Ephesians 4:12



Ushering is one great way to serve at FPC. Another simple one-time commitment is to volunteer as Lay Leader or Lay Reader. Unlike ushering, this role is probably not for the shy person, but if you feel confident standing before the congregation, it's a joyful, meaningful way to practice your faith witness. And again, this is a good way for a family to practice their stewardship. Consider signing up as a couple, or parent/child (expressive readers of all ages are welcome), or commit to leadership with a good friend. For more information, contact Sue Van Duyn-Phipps at 319-4132 or sue.cross@q.com.

Extending hospitality to others is a foundational ministry and practice of Christians and an easy way to practice stewardship. Volunteer today!

Fine Arts at First

—by Darlene Bergman *O Lord, support us all the day long . . .*

Lenten Observance

It is no coincidence that the appointed texts for Ash Wednesday (the service that launches our Lenten journey) remind us:

- “lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, but treasures in heaven” ~ Matthew 6:19-21
- “Pray not in public, but in private” ~ Matthew 6:5-6
- “Have mercy on me, oh God, put a new and right spirit within me” ~ Psalm 51
- “Remember you are but dust and to dust you shall return” ~ Genesis 3:19

Perhaps these texts are simply reminders, just in case we have lapsed during this long stretch of “ordinary days,” that we are called to a life of spiritual discipline (discipleship) and that Christian discipline is a 24/7 vocation. As the word suggests, “discipleship” is related to, and depends on, “discipline.” Our Directory of Worship puts it this way: “daily personal worship is a discipline for attending to God and accepting God’s grace. The daily challenge of discipleship requires the daily nurture of worship.”

Just as our vocations call us to scheduled office hours, time sheets, or clocking in, we are called to a rhythm of “daily office hours” with God. Daily prayer is liturgy, or *leitourgia*. It is the “work of the people” to join daily with God in God’s creative and redeeming work in the world, and to keep time with God, or better yet, be kept in God’s time.

Unlike the work that we do in the world, daily prayer isn’t work that we perform, but a way of drawing nearer, day by day, to the one who is at work in us. It is a “saving” and “savoring” practice and there are many resources for getting started. If you’re new to daily prayer or if you simply want to refresh your prayer life, one wonderful way to begin would be to attend the Lenten retreat with Loretta Ross, and learn more about Contemplative Prayer. Information about the retreat can be found on page 4.

Other ways to get started are:

- *Glory to God* hymnal includes Morning and Evening Prayer liturgies in the front. There are several electronic sites where one can find daily scripture texts: PC(USA) Daily Prayer has an app and e-mail resource. You can look at the church’s website for daily lectionary readings, as well.
- Pray the Psalms (see pcusa.org/companyofpastors) or use the PC(USA) Daily Prayer app. There are many other Daily Prayer apps like the Audio Lectio site from the Upper Room, etc.
- Book of Confessions—find one in our church library
- Mission Yearbook for Prayer and Study
- Meditate on the Beatitudes
- Daily Prayer with Children—resources can be found in the church library
- Begin reading through the Bible—many resources are available in the church library to fit your needs
- If you’re someone who is distracted easily or have struggled with conventional prayer practices, consider art making, poetry writing, journaling, movement, etc. There are many resources to help you get started. Among them are Julie Cameron’s *The Artist’s Way*, Jan Richardson’s paintedprayerbook.com, Sybil MacBeth’s *Praying in Color*, etc.

When we pray daily, we learn anew how to savor God’s here-and-now gifts of generous grace. The key thing is to pray. Pick a time. Choose a style that seems appealing; find a helpful resource. But most important, actually show up for your appointment with God and pray. It can be life-giving and increase our lung capacity for the breath of the Spirit.



Celebrating 175 years

First Presbyterian Church

Septaquintaquinquecentennial or 175th Anniversary Events

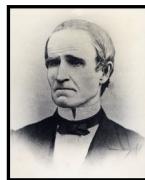
Sunday, March 8

Worship: Tom Boyd preaching



Former pastor Tom Boyd will preach during worship. Tom was pastor here at FPC from 1988-1990 and is the David Ross Boyd Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at the University of Oklahoma. After teaching philosophy of religion and ethics there for 28

years, he retired from full-time teaching in 1997. He also retired from the ordained ministry in the PC(USA) in 1998. We welcome Tom back to Iowa City and look forward to hearing him preach once again.



Program—Special Guests from the 1800s

You won't want to miss Rev. Hummer and other colorful historical characters who will "come back to the future" and share their stories with us.

Fellowship: Food—Old-Fashioned Box Social

All are invited to an old-fashioned box social. Here's how it works:



- Make a lunch for one person (K-adult will participate; parents of younger children should bring a lunch that your child will enjoy)
- Put it in a gift box or bag or decorated container
- Put your name on the box
- Boxes will be exchanged and contents will be eaten with a new friend

~ Mark your calendars for Future 175th Anniversary celebrations ~



May 31

Rev. Ed Morgan preaching



September 11-13

Rev. Tom Brown preaching, Final Celebration weekend with activities throughout the weekend at Old Brick and FPC

Shortly after the declaration of war on Germany, April 6, 1917, Pastor Harry Burton Boyd was granted a year leave of absence to enlist in the US Army Chaplain Corps. Not long afterwards, First Presbyterian Church was on total war footing until the armistice was signed on November 11 the following year. As the result of the overall concentration on war work, the annual Women's Aid Society Bazaar and Supper was not held because of the emphasis on food conservation; refreshments were not served at afternoon meetings; the November — December 1918 meetings were not held because of the flu epidemic and the Women's Aid Society helped furnish a restroom for the Army canteen, contributed to the refreshment fund for Christian Endeavors, took a collection for the Young Women's Christian Industrial Mission at Keokuk, and had three committees working under the Work Camp Community Services. Until the close of the war, Thursday was Presbyterian Day at the Red Cross rooms, where ladies helped assemble surgical dressings and do sewing. The Men's Brotherhood purchased and presented two American flags that were draped around a service flag made by the Young Women's Guild.

The annual Sunday School report for 1918 as reported in 1919 illustrates of the stress and emotional level of the time. It states in part, "The Sunday School has been affected as has the church in general, by the misfortunes of the year. During the month of October and also in December, the school was closed for four weeks each time and we have felt the depressing effect of being without a pastor and are hoping with the church to have a growth in the New Year in numbers and work in all lines." The latter comment referred to the decline in membership from 857 at the beginning of 1918 to 688 at year's end. Those numbers rebounded somewhat to 732 the following year.

Greetings from Tim McCoy, of McCoy & Associates

A church today taking seriously the kingdom of God? A church intuitively understanding the church in the West is dying and understanding it must respond to that dying? A church hearing the ancient announcement, “our God reigns,” embracing the freedom of creation to live its intentioned existence? A church that hears “repent,” that we may have gotten off track, that we need to change directions, to reevaluate? A church remembering who it is and why it exists? A church that needs to hire someone for a few months to help respond fully to its calling? A church even talking about such a project? After falling off my chair, my next words were, “I am in, if you will have me!”

My personal experience of the Kingdom has truly been good news: parents freed from the prison of addiction and healing from migraines, and my mom’s total turnaround from self-absorption to caring for those on the fringe, i.e., the outsiders, the invalids. In my youth I heard stories of the results of the Kingdom’s good news everywhere I went. This propelled me to study church history in college, then go on to study the Bible, ancient languages and culture in seminary. After seminary, I worked in business for five years while continuing studies in education and counseling. Then, I received a call to come to Des Moines, Iowa to be a pastor.



FPC Book Club!

FPC Book Club will meet February 25 in Ryerson Fellowship Hall from 12:00 Noon until 1:00 p.m. Bring a lunch or snack for yourself; a beverage will be provided. If you have any questions, please call Jan Walker (358-6737). New members are more than welcome!

Wednesday Morning Bible Study

Join Sadie May with Pastor Sam in discussion and reflection as we travel through the Bible. All are welcome to Coover Lounge, 9:30—10:30 a.m. on Wednesdays. We hope to see you there!

FPC Men’s Spiritual Formation Group

Led by John Barr and Tom Martin, come to the Ryerson Fellowship Hall on Wednesdays at 7 a.m. No matter your age, these discussions about living as a male Christian in modern society will help you reexamine and strengthen your faith. The men meet almost every Wednesday for breakfast and Bible Study.

After two years, I concluded this is not what I signed up for. There was a disconnect between what I believed Jesus showed us we were to be about versus what I/we were *actually* being about. In my gut I had two questions: What is wrong? What can I/we do about it? I concluded that the church in the West, like ancient Israel, had forgotten it is merely a means to the King’s ends: the Kingdom’s announcement of freedom and release of humanity from any and all that imprisons it. In the church, we had come to believe lies about who we were and why we are here. A long story short, I became disillusioned — burned out — and discovered I had become someone I did not want to be. So I resigned, studied Bowen Theory and its application to Organizational Development, and have worked since then with a number of industries over the last fifteen years.

Why do I want to work with all of you? Because I believe we are at a transitional time in history; as one wise man wrote, we are in-between two stories. All of our social systems are hurting and on the brink of collapse. We cannot solve this crisis by using the very same thinking that produced it.

I still remember and believe in a story that has the power to transform our communities and our world. You remember it, too. It goes like this, “for God so loved the world that he gave his son . . .” May God’s presence with us in this endeavor empower us to accomplish the purpose for which we are here. Tim

Visit the Christian Education Corner in order to Get Involved

If you’re looking for new ways to get involved with the education aspect of First Presbyterian, look no further than the Christian Education Corner in Ryerson Fellowship Hall! There you will find not only information about all the different classes going on, but also volunteer opportunities.

Now is the time to get involved with the Sunday School program! If you’ve wanted to try your hand at teaching, don’t hesitate to sign up on the board! If you are looking for a way to connect with kids, while having fun during the summer, then mark your name down as an interested Vacation Bible School volunteer!

FPC’s Education wing is a great way to get involved, so I hope you feel the call to serve and give back!



Presbyterian Women at FPC is NOT just Circle Membership!

There are opportunities for every woman in the church to be involved in some way. See how our women are making a difference!

PW COORDINATING TEAM:

The officers of the PW at FPC were installed February 1 during the 10:30 worship service. Those installed were: Moderator, Carol Kirsch; Vice-moderator, Nancy Ross; Secretary, Ann Robinson; Treasurer, Rebecca Stockman. These women along with the other members of the Coordinating Team, Jan Wicks, Toni DeRyke, and Laurie Thedens, plan and implement a wide variety of activities in the church throughout the year.

COOKIE WALK AND BAZAAR:

The Cookie Walk and Bazaar just before Christmas was a wonderful success. Many, many people in the church baked cookies ... some for the gourmet cookie table where cookies were not only delicious but beautiful as well. Many, many others donated handmade items and nearly new items to the bazaar area. Some of the proceeds from this event helped to fund the Kids Against Hunger packing event a few weeks later.

KIDS AGAINST HUNGER:

The Kids Against Hunger packing on January 17 was a huge success. 16,000 meals were packed that morning between 8 a.m. and noon. There were 60+ volunteers ranging in age from 3 to 85 who worked together in an assembly line. These folks were amazing teams! They were all smiling and enjoying one another's company while they made a difference in the lives of hungry people around the world. The funds for this came from PW, from Mission Council, and from private donations. Thanks to all who were involved in any way.

BOOK AND BAKE SALE:

Now you will have even more opportunities to browse and buy books! The Annual Book and Bake sale will be held Friday, April 10 in the evening and Saturday, April 11 in the morning in Ryerson Fellowship Hall. **SAVE YOUR BOOKS! DONATE A BAKED ITEM! BE A SHOPPER!**

WOMEN'S SPRING BRUNCH:

A Spring Brunch event is planned for the morning of April 25 in Ryerson Fellowship Hall for every woman and girl in the church along with friends and neighbors. You will not want to miss this event! A very special program is planned following a tasty brunch. Come singly if you prefer or begin to make plans now with a friend, a daughter, a niece, a mother, whoever, but DO plan to come.

CHURCH-WIDE GATHERING:

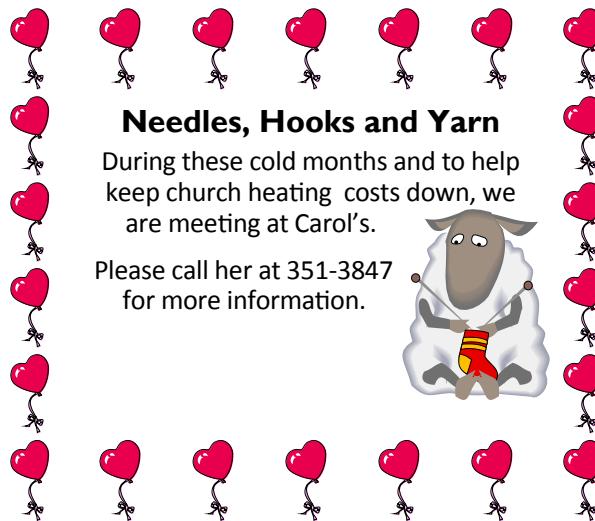
The Church-wide Gathering is close to home this year. It will be in Minneapolis from June 18 – 21. This is an amazing gathering of Presbyterian women from all around the world. The planned programming is superior and the opportunities for learning and fellowship are truly life-changing. Be a part of the group.

RAGS TO STITCHES:

If you haven't seen our group's latest efforts, the small bags for first-time visitors to First Church, take a look at them on the table nearest the offices outside the sanctuary. Rags to Stitches made a large number of them (85+) throughout 2014, and has recently completed another 40 or more ... all with donated fabric! Thanks to all who have made our projects possible with your generous donations of fabric you no longer needed. Currently we have a good supply, but hold onto your stash. We'll put out a call when we are getting low. If you want a compete report of our 2014 activities, check us out in the Annual Report, which is available in the church narthex.

CIRCLES:

- The 2015 PW Yearbook is ready. Be sure you get a copy. It contains a lot of good information.
- Eve Circle will meet March 3 at 7 p.m. in Ryerson Fellowship Hall. Sally Rickey will have the program and devotions, and Toni DeRyke will be our hostess.
- Martha Circle will meet March 18 in Ryerson Fellowship Hall at 9:45 a.m. This will be the beginning of its new program year. Plan to join the group.



Needles, Hooks and Yarn

During these cold months and to help keep church heating costs down, we are meeting at Carol's.

Please call her at 351-3847 for more information.

Equipping Ministry

More Activities for Children, Youth & Families!

The Way (3rd-5th grades)

The Way has been having a great time this year with Halloween parties, cereal-themed celebrations and even a Chocolate Fest on February 12! We want to thank everyone who has attended, especially ones who were able to bring a box of cereal in January in order to help out the Crisis Center. All in all, we collected 17 boxes of cereal: A great way to help fight hunger!



The Way's next meeting will be on March 26; stay tuned for more information!

The Rock (6th-8th grades)

Meets every Thursday night for dinner, fun, and fellowship. Dinner is first at 6:15, followed by programming in The Rock room until 7:30. Friends are welcome. In November games, discussion, and activities highlighted Luke 5:1-11. Discussion focused on leading and following and how these roles play out at school, home, church, etc. In December, discussion shifted to the idea of waiting and explored the holy and secular aspects of Christmas. The prayer wall in The Rock room is expanding, and participants are becoming more confident praying together at the end of each

fellowship time. The summer trip to Appalachia was confirmed, too. The Rock is excited to continue in 2015!

6th-8th Graders and Friends: It's not too late to sign up for the Appalachia Mission Trip to Camp Burnamwood in Irvine, KY July 6-10!

For more information, contact Amanda Edwards at amanda.edwards@firstpresiowacity.org.

The Edge (9-12 grades)

Join us every Thursday night for an evening of dinner, fellowship and conversation! We eat dinner together at 6:15 as a large group and engage in fellowship with one another before breaking into age-divided groups for discussion, games and hangout time until 7:30. Also, don't forget to "Like" us on Facebook!

For more information, contact Jim Cochrane at jim.cochrane@firstpresiowacity.org

Interfaithful Moms Gathering

Interfaithful Moms Gathering resumes on February 5. The gathering connects diverse women of many faith and religious backgrounds the first and third THURSDAYS of the month from 9:30-11 am on the lower level. Gatherings incorporate speakers, stories, discussions, and activities that weave together themes of motherhood and faith. Moms young and old are invited to experience the diverse perspectives, compelling conversations, and transformative relationships that make our world more peaceful. Quality childcare is provided.

For more information, please contact Amanda Edwards at: amanda.edwards@firstpresiowacity.org or visit <http://interfaithfulmoms.com>.

Opportunities for Ongoing Education

NEW Lenten Class on Forgiveness

Lent has always been a time for us as Christians to step back and examine the way we live our lives. For what goals are we working? How did Christ live, and what lessons can we take from that? One central theme of Christianity, visible especially on the road to the Cross, is forgiveness. Through the reading of "Forgiveness" by Marjorie Thompson and discussion led by Pastor Sam, we will dive deep into an idea rooted in one of the very basic tenets of our faith. Class will meet on February 22, March 1 and March 8, then at-will small group meetings on March 15 & 22.

Sunday Morning Bible Study

A new year means that it's time to look at everything a new way, including the Bible. We have switched from the Revised Lectionary to the Narrative Lectionary on Sunday mornings, and as part of this change a new Bible study group will be meeting. George Minot will be leading this new Bible study, which meets in Coover Lounge on Sundays from 9:15-10:15. With the help of Andreas Soemadi and Moses Kasiriba, this class will surely lead to a better understanding of our own Bible.

Weeknight Young Adult Bible Study

As an attempt to reach out to our broader Iowa City community, George Minot will also be leading a Young Adult Bible Study. This group will spend time examining biblical texts through the lens of a young adult, while engaging in fellowship and community building. They continue to meet every Monday night from 7:00-8:00 pm at The Java House in Downtown. Come join us for fruitful discussion and a nice cup of joe!

Equipping Ministry

Children & Youth at FPC!

Children are the lifeblood of every congregation, and that is no different at FPC! For that reason, we encourage children to join us in worship, and invite them to enjoy the worship activity bags found on the coat tree just outside the sanctuary doors. Because of their importance in worship, we even devote a portion of the service to them! Children are encouraged to participate in the Time with Children each week during the service.

For the smallest of us, our **Nursery** is provided for children 5 and under. The nursery is located on the lower level of the building and is available for use for Sunday morning worship, as well as during special worship services and events throughout the year. Childcare for those too young for classes is provided during the Sunday School hour. Our childcare staff, headed by Deb Torrens-Semler is dedicated to making our nursery a safe and comfortable environment for all its guests.

Sunday School for Children and Youth

9:15 a.m.–10:15 a.m.

Preschoolers (ages 2-4+): You may gather at the Creation Station every Sunday morning. Our time together begins with music with Darlene, followed by a Bible story, related art activities and games.

Children (grades K-5): You are invited to gather at the FPSea! each Sunday. Children are divided into groups by age; each group is led by a “lifeguard,” a volunteer who will serve as a guide.

In February we learned all about Mary and Martha: Two sisters who had differing ideas about what is important in life.

In March we are studying the story of The Last Supper. In the rotation curriculum, the children will move between the different modules, each week learning about The Last Supper in a new way.

Middle School (grades 6-8): Middle school students will meet in the “ROCK” room; the *Reform* curriculum that is used empowers youth to explore their faith by asking questions they wonder about. This class is led by Jeremy and Amy Fletcher.

Senior High (grades 9-12): High schoolers gather in the Youth Room. Youth come to discuss their own life experiences and questions raised from their experience in society. Discussion is aimed at bridging those ideas with theological concepts, which they can then apply to their daily lives. Food is provided, and Jim Cochrane leads discussion.

Are you looking for ways to incorporate simple faith practices into your family's busy schedule?



Visit **Vibrant Faith at Home:** www.vibrantfaithathome.org

It's free to subscribe, and you'll find simple, faith-deepening activities for families in every stage of life. Whether a young couple, new kids, elementary children or high schoolers, you will find a treasure trove of faith-strengthening activities and discussions that you can add to your nightly routine. Build some faith-building activities into your school year right from the start!

IT'S MISSION TRIP TIME!

It's time to start thinking about summer mission trips! This year, there will be two trips, one for The Rock, and one for The Edge. Below you will find information regarding both trips. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact either Jim or Amanda.

THE ROCK

Rather than travelling to Chicago during Holy Week, the Rock will be heading to Burnhamwood Appalachia Ministry (BAM) in Irvine, Kentucky. From July 6–10, we will participate in a variety of service projects in the Irvine community which will connect us with people experiencing extreme poverty, while staying in a mountain lodge every night and enjoying the camp setting. The cost of the trip is \$220, to be offset with fundraising and available scholarships. To reserve your spot, talk to Amanda ASAP and submit a \$50 non-refundable deposit.

THE EDGE

This year, The Edge will be following the Mighty Mississippi River all the way to New Orleans, Louisiana! From July 18–26 we will work with Project Homecoming and work on reconstructing houses and creating hope for families following Hurricane Katrina in 2005. While the final cost of the trip is still being negotiated, one can expect to pay \$250 for the week. In order to reserve a spot on this trip, please bring in a \$50, non-refundable deposit ASAP.

First Presbyterian Church
2701 Rochester Ave.
Iowa City, Iowa 52245

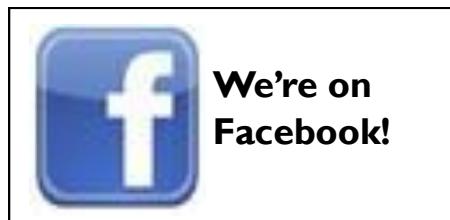


Celebrating 175 years

Public Office Hours:
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Monday - Friday
except holidays or when announced
Ph 319-351-2660
www.firstpresiowacity.org

If you telephone the church office sometime between 12 noon and 1 p.m. and are directed to voicemail, please be patient. Staff takes 30 minutes a day for shared food, fellowship, and team building, so the actual time varies according to the needs of the church. At other times we may be on another line or in another part of the building addressing a ministry need. We will return your call!

And if you can volunteer to help answer the phones, that would be an answer to prayer.



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