

By Special Invitation:

We, the family of First Presbyterian, are always looking at ways we can fellowship together and grow in Spirit. There are times in our lives when our schedules are full of activity and we can't imagine adding one more thing—even if it is fun! For those of you in that boat, just set this aside for a while. For the rest of you, we would so appreciate you helping us make connections. Below is a list of possibilities—if any look interesting to you, please let us know.

Storytime for Adults: This would be a time when we gather around and swap stories—about what? Could be about the people who helped shape your lives. Could be stories of humor, stories of grief. All kinds of possibilities. And, of course, there's no pressure to speak—you can be a listener.

Chatty Cathy: Ok, let's just say it—this might be geared toward women. Not to say a men's group couldn't be formed as well. This could be a group that checks in with each other, sharing our joys and concerns. Perhaps we would add a reading for focus?

Game (not) Over: You enjoy playing games? Cards, Pickle Ball, Chess, Monopoly. Or maybe you're a puzzler? There may be others out there looking for you!

Grant "Would": Where, in a two-hour radius, would Wood travel to see some great art? Or maybe just some great country views—maybe a picnic along the way?

Grandparent's Night Out/aka Dinner & A Movie: Or maybe it's a movie, then conversation and dessert.

I Could Have Danced All Night: Like to dance? There are a number of venue possibilities right here in IC.

Podcast group: This is something I would love to explore with a group of folks. I listen to a number of Podcasts and am currently in a Podcast group. I find the group discussion lends much more to the experience than if I simply listen to something alone. Anyone want to join me?



TED Talks—This is something you can watch and listen to, for those of you unfamiliar with TED Talks. They are brief teaching videos covering more than you can imagine.

RAGBRAI—Maybe not. But biking around the area? Maybe.

Go Take a Hike—Need I say more?

Anything look fun/interesting to you? We want to know! Please contact Judy Whitford (cell: 331-3660), firstpresbiowacity.org or Sherry Lohman, 621-1828.

Blessings!
Judy & Sherry

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Dear sisters and brothers of First Presbyterian Church,



The grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you! I write you as I just complete my stint as a Vacation Bible School Super Hero. With my robe serving as a cape, I aspire to leap over tall pulpits, lift heavy Bibles, and open heavy glass doors with a mere push of a magic button. The children, needless to say, are more amused than awed. It may be a gender thing: They like Wonder Woman better. I pose as a superhero, yet my evident limitations reveal a different persona altogether.

Whatever super gifts I boast, I know also that I can only boast in what **God** has done for me and through me. Furthermore, I have to be content with the gifts God has given me, meaning that I must not only claim the gifts but embrace the limitations against which I have seethed over the years.

For example, it seems that the brain-numbingly simple act of strategically planning my summer is not one of those gifts. I know I need time away for study, prayer, reading and written reflection. Nevertheless, deciding how, when and where to accomplish these ends eludes me. It seems that the recent heat wave has fried my brain.

Or perhaps something else is afoot. This coming September I turn 60 years of age. I will be beginning my 10th year of ministry here in Iowa City, and I will be on the cusp (March 6, 2018) of 35 years in ordained ministry. My second and last child is off to college. Susan and I remarked again how quickly the time has passed, in Iowa City in particular as I have never lived so long in one place.

Furthermore, both Susan and I are in careers situated in institutions that have seen dramatic changes over the last 34 years. This is so true for Susan that she is whipsawed by ideological political battles over public education and state funding of universities. What we once observed to be idiosyncratic foolishness in anti-institutional, mismanaged and practically third-world Florida has become a national phenomenon of apathy coupled with prideful citizen ignorance.

As for me, being a fully trained pastor with multiple degrees serving full-time in ministry makes me practically a dinosaur. I am having a small taste of what those soon to lose their medical insurance, business subsidies and retirement guarantees will be experiencing, i.e. in this new federal world of artificial scarcity. What we could take for granted we no longer can. The large institutions that once supported us and gave our lives meaning are not what they were, and so we cannot be who we were. I once was important but now am less so. I am alien, minimally useful, of

diminished
relativity in a
brand new world of increasing irreligion and cheap
grace. This is discomfiting news.

Yet perhaps this is also a sign of maturity. As I disappear for the summer without a firm conviction as to what I am doing and where I am going for the next few weeks, I am comforted today by the words of the apostle Paul in Galatians 6: 14-16: "As for me, God forbid that I should boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of that cross, my interest in this world died long ago, and the world's interest in me is also long dead. It doesn't make any difference now whether we have been circumcised or not. What counts is whether we really have been changed, into new and different people. May God's mercy and peace be upon all those who live by this principle. They are the new people of God."

Perhaps it is less important that I know what I am about than it is to trust that God does. Perhaps I am not a dinosaur. Maybe I am a new creation. And could it be that the same is true of you?

With love, your pastor,

Sam



Services through Labor Day continue at 10 a.m. September 10 we return to 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. worship hours, with an updated Koinonia time in between of breakfast, worship and learning, with breakout sessions for all ages (beginning at 8:45 a.m.).

First's Family

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

July 15-30

7/15 Erica Dodge	7/25 Dwight Miller
7/15 Jesse Mahinga	7/25 Jordan Kolarik
7/16 Esther Viksten	7/25 Courtney Hurt
7/16 Debbie Beermann	7/27 Kathryn Forsythe
7/21 Valerie Soemadi	7/28 Joseph Dunkle
7/21 John Morgan	7/29 Wayne Patton
7/22 Sarah Swisher	7/29 Chase Burtness
7/22 Kayla McKibben	7/30 Brenda Dodge
7/23 Alisha Baker	7/3 Connie Richardson
7/23 Gloria Kasiriba	7/30 Grant Forsythe
7/23 Glory Kasiriba	
7/24 Angel Kasiriba	
7/24 Mahala Smith	

August 1-15

8/1 Janet Cochran
8/1 Rhonda Barr
8/1 Anne Dengler
8/5 Mischa Olson
8/5 Nicholas Thedens
8/6 Rose Kraus
8/6 Sally Rickey
8/7 Louise Larew
8/7 Margaret Ketterer
8/8 Nancy Powers
8/8 Janet Wicks
8/8 Emilia Thedens
8/12 Estyl Breazeale
8/12 Thomas Boysen
8/12 Nile Franz



Wish These Friends a
"Happy Birthday!"

8/14 Judy Terry
8/14 Shay Raffensperger
8/15 Gary Olson

Congratulations!

Pastor Sam officiated at the weddings of :

Jordan Kolarik and Chase Burtness, who were married at the Iowa Memorial Union on May 20;

Nick McMillian and Ann Hilmo, who were married at FPC on June 10.

Deb and George Minot, who are joyful grandparents to **Louisa Ann Ryan**, born April 18, to **Tanner and Carolyn Ryan** of Baltimore, Maryland. Hallelujah!

Nancy and Scott Gardner, who became grandparents to twins, **Scarlett Marie** and **John David III** (who will be called Jack) born on June 6 to **Christine Walsh and John Sales** and sister Ruby.

Amanda and Sam Van Horne, on the birth of **Nathaniel Paul Van Horne** on June 4.

Richard Van Rheeden, Cytogenetics Laboratory Supervisor at UIHC co-wrote chapter 23 with Peining Li in the AGT Cytogenetics Laboratory Manual, 4th Edition. Li, P. & Van Rheeden, R. (2017). Laboratory information system. In M. Arsham, M. J. Barch, & H. Lawce (Eds.) *The AGT Cytogenetics Laboratory Manual* (pp. 1045 – 1054).



Known to have been Hospitalized:

Jake DeRyke, Brian Kleis, Linda Couch, Jean James, Jack Perkins, MaryAnn Clemons, Jack Newman, Frank McConnell, Twyla McConnell, Gladys Nugent, Sadie Mae and Nancy Powers.

With Sympathy

To:
John Raffensperger, at the death of his brother, Paul Raffensperger;
Ed Cranston, at the death of his brother, Mel Cranston, who died July 9.



Worship & Celebration Ministry

*Make a joyful noise to God, all the earth,
Worship God with gladness;
come into God's presence with singing.*



First Presbyterian Church Welcomes The American Guild of Organists!

On Monday, June 19, FPC hosted the opening hymn festival for the 2017 gathering of The River Valley Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. Hundreds gathered in our sanctuary to hear organist and church musician Aaron David Miller play the newly refurbished Phelps organ. Miller was joined by singers and brass players from FPC, Saint Andrew Presbyterian Church, and members of the community. It was a joyous celebration of our organ's 40th anniversary through song! Thank you to all who participated in and attended this wonderful event.



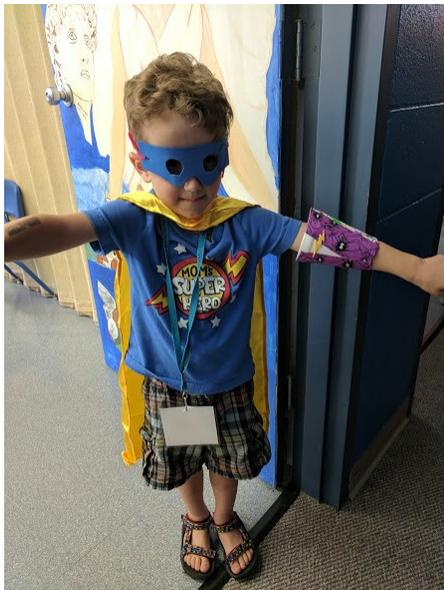
Summer soloists

Thank you to everyone who has signed up to share their musical gifts at the 10 a.m. service during the summer. There are still a few slots open if you are still interested in signing up! You are also welcome to share your gifts and talents during the year if you weren't available this summer. Adults who have musical gifts you'd like to share, whether vocal or instrumental, college students home for the summer, children and youth who have appropriate repertoire for worship—all are welcome to sign up for a Sunday of music leadership. There is a sign-up sheet on the choir room door (down the hall near the bathrooms), or you may contact Leah Bergman at 351-2660 or leah.bergman@firstpresiovacity.org.



Equipping Ministry

“For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.” —Matthew 18:20



Do Good! Seek Peace! And Go After It!

Those were the words we lived by every day at Hero Central Vacation Bible School June 12–16. We were joined by 32 super kids aged 4 through 5th Grade as well as 17 brave and fearless volunteers who helped guide our heroes through the week. Through hearing different Bible stories our superheroes learned that heroes have heart, courage, wisdom, hope, and power. They explored these stories and themes further through arts and crafts, science, music, and recreation. And these heroes collected 184 pounds of food and supplies that were donated to The Crisis Center! Thanks to everyone for their support and prayers for a wonderful week of fun and learning!

Many thanks to our SUPER volunteers and activity leaders!

Deb Torrens-Semler, Ryan Brentner, Lauren Fehr, Lily Chong, Amy Fletcher, Madi Mossman, Elliot Newbold, Anna Sheetz, DJ Massey, Jamie Helmick, Judy Whitford, Hailey Fay, Cyan Vanderhoef, Sarah Bigaba, Brian Morris, Linda Morris, Anita Burnett, Erin Landsee, and Leah Bergman.



Review of FPC 2017 Youth Mission Trip

On Saturday, June 24, 8 high school youth and 3 leaders set off to Asheville Youth Mission, not knowing what to expect. We stopped on the way there and on the way back at Beluah Presbyterian Church in Louisville, Kentucky—and we are very thankful for their hospitality. The youth that attended were DJ Massey, Brent Foster, Logan Schroeder, Lauren Fehr, Andrew Franz, Josh Fletcher, Madilyn Mossman, and Alex Marsh. The leaders were Anna Sheetz, Tammy Schroeder, and Larry Mossman. These fearless 11 took on the “Mission Immersion” experience with such heart and gusto— FPC Iowa City should be proud!



We had many opportunities to serve, learn and grow. On Monday, we participated in *lectio divina* at the Church of the Advocate in downtown Asheville. Then we took lunches to Pritchard Park to pass out to the outdoor folk there. Our last adventure on Monday was picking up “recycled food” and having a free food market, which was received by the hungry with astonishment and disbelief—a truly humbling experience for us!



Tuesday, we went to the rural town of Canton, where we served at the Community Kitchen. We first helped at a similar free food market, getting to know people and carrying groceries to cars. Later, we went to the soup kitchen of the Community Kitchen and sorted thousands of cans! The teamwork our group showed was unlike anything our group leader had seen—a very proud moment for all of our leaders.

Wednesday, we spent all day at Haywood Street Church, where we played games and created community with the outdoor folk who attended their free meal. We were excited to see our friends we met on Monday, along with many new friends of all ages! This day was clinched by a 12:30 worship service. It was a beautiful service, with all sorts of people serving, leading, and worshipping. Thursday, we had a community-building day in the Pisgah National Forest, and then Friday we headed back to Louisville, finally arriving home on Saturday, July 1.

Comments have ranged from, “This was the best trip ever” to “This trip has been the most life-changing trip of my life.” The youth have asked to cancel youth group once a month in the upcoming year so we might get to know the disenfranchised in Iowa City. I encourage us all to engage our youth about their experiences on this trip, where they saw God at work, and where they feel God leading us in the future.





Fall Worship Schedule

KICK-OFF SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

We will kick off the fall schedule at FPC on Sept. 10. Watch and listen for more information about special programming for that day!

- 8:00 a.m. Worship and Communion**
- 8:45 a.m. Breakfast** (Kick-Off Sunday, this will be a breakfast for all with an intro to the new Koinonia format)
- 9:00 a.m. Koinonia**
- 10:30 a.m. Worship**



Join us for our Summer Fun Activities!
All ages are invited! Invite new friends, old friends,
neighbors, and family!

Faith & Film Series

Join us for dinner, a movie,
and discussion!

**Thursday,
July 27, 6–9 p.m.**

Finding Dory

Theme: The Prodigal Son

**Thursday,
August 3, 6–9 p.m.**

Secondhand Lions

Theme: Belief and Doubt

Summer Fun Activities

Saturday, July 29, 10 a.m.–6 p.m.
Family Beach Day at Lake McBride

RSVP by July 23 if you need a ride.

Come when you can, leave when you have to!

Saturday, August 12, 9 a.m.–8 p.m.

Family Trip to Adventureland

RSVP by July 30

*Please check FPC Facebook for RSVP links or
email Anna at Anna.Sheetz@firstpreswiowacity.org



Young Adult Ministry will
meet **Monday, August 7**
from 7–8:30pm. We will be
doing the Wired Word.



**YOUTH GROUP STARTS
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 14,
6–8:30 P.M.**

FAITHWORKS CLASS

(for those interested in joining the church or those desiring to stand up for God's justice, mercy and faith in the world)



Sundays, October 1–November 19, Gathering at 9 a.m. in Coover Lounge.

Questions or need for special accommodations, please contact Pastor Sam at sam.massey@firstpresbiowacity.org or 319-351-2660; or Tammy Schroeder, tammy.schroeder@firstpresbiowacity.org or 319-351-2660.

Know anyone in need of a pastoral call or home communion?

Aging means that regularly our church friends and neighbors transition from weekly participation in church to challenges that keep them away. Nursing ill relatives or taking care of children can have the same result. Sometimes a person has to work on Sunday.

If you know of someone in circumstances keeping them away from church, or someone newly arriving in a nursing home or hospital or jail, please let pastors Sam or Sherry know at 319-351-2660 so they can offer pastoral care. Your service as a brother or sister to others is much appreciated.



Pastor's Wednesday Morning Bible Study on

Romans!

Come with your Head Gear So You Can Butt Heads with the Apostle Paul

**Beginning September 13, 2017
Coover Lounge**

For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, "The one who is righteous will live by faith." Romans 1:16, 17

June Session Highlights

-submitted by Nancy Weber, Clerk of Session

The session met June 20, 2017 in Coover Lounge at 7:00 p.m. Pastor Sam called the meeting to order and lit the Christ candle. We welcomed Lee Tippe, representing the Building and Grounds committee, and John Barr, of the Capital Campaign Implementation Taskforce.

Elder Bob Youngquist read John 10:16 and shared a significant interaction he had with two Jehovah's Witnesses who visited him, then led us in prayer.

The May 20, 2017 wedding of Jordan Kolarik & Chase Burtness at the Iowa Memorial Union, officiated by Pastor Sam, was noted as was the June 10, 2017 wedding of Nick McMillian & Ann Hilmo, at FPC, officiated by Pastor Sam. The June 4, 2017 baptism of Nathaniel Paul Van Horne, son of Amanda & Sam Van Horne, was noted.

The report from Finance was accepted. Session approved the motion from Finance Committee that the 2017 budget for First Presbyterian Church, Iowa City, be \$620,352.

Minutes of the May 16, 2017 stated session meeting were approved. A request to transfer membership by Peggy Bykowsky to Our Savior Lutheran Church, Bettendorf, IA was approved.

Pastor Sam reported that staff member Anna Sheetz was accepted by PEI to become a presbytery inquirer.

The following motions from Endowment were approved:

1. Memorial gifts for a deceased saint that amount to less than \$500 will be pooled with other memorial gifts for use designated by session, and those amounting to \$500 or

more be designated by session after conferral with a person representing the family. No memorial gift is to be used for operating expenses.

2. FPC will pay \$4,000 for translation services for the HJPC/FPC Guiding Board.
3. \$6,000 is approved for Pakistan travel for three members from our congregation to lead a trip of Pasrur donors from other congregations. Endowment Committee requests that the potential fourth position for travel (included in the request) perhaps should be opened to someone from a presbytery congregation that otherwise would not be sending someone on the trip for the sake of expanding the mission.
4. \$1,500 will fund an 8 a.m. worship pianist from September through December 2017 in light of Melissa Moll taking on more duties for 10:30 a.m. worship due to EdnaMae's much missed voluntary service at the organ.

Session approved the motion to receive the Equipping Ministry Koinonia presentation by Elder Andreas Somaedi, which proposes changes to the Koinonia program effective in the fall of 2017 after consultation with several parents.

A motion was approved to call an August 22, 2017, 6 p.m. special session meeting to review the information concerning, and discuss the levels of, sanctuary.

Session approved the motion from B&G to retain Walker, Coen, & Lorenzen as architect and engineering firm for HVAC and optimal location for elevator installation (pending final contract to be approved by Session).

Contract terms and fees will be negotiated based on scope of services, for future approval at a called or stated Session meeting. Lee Tippe spoke about the interviews with the consultants. He encouraged session to approve a contract for a preliminary design plan. The consultant will not do the construction, but will provide a design plan we can present to contractors. This will cost nothing if we do not accept their plan. We would need another session meeting to approve their plan before construction bids could begin. The bids would be for that plan only. The design consultants would also oversee the work. Jim Claypool, moderator of the Presbytery of East Iowa, is tasked to communicate these details to the presbytery.

A motion was approved allowing the 1st phase Mission Tithe funding from Capital Campaign money accrued so far for Habitat for Humanity, that being \$20,000, be distributed by session now to Johnson County Habitat for Humanity.

Elder Carol Ulch presented a follow-up from REALM planning. She and REALM planning member Jeremy Fletcher will help ministries with improving tools and techniques for working together toward goals.

A motion from Finance Committee was approved, with one nay vote cast by Ann Grosscup, stating that Session will delegate to Elder Van Rheeden responsibility and authority to work with Pastor Sam (in consultation with Tammy Foster and CCR) to meet Pastor's Sam's computer needs in his service to the congregation and wider church, with a cap of \$4,000 allowable to be spent from the church's technology

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(Session highlights continued from page 10)

fund, and with the understanding that Pastor Sam may use his own continuing education funds to handle any expenses over and above the \$4,000 amount in order to guarantee his own confidence in the choices made, and to recommend a policy back to session establishing ground rules for Pastor Sam’s intellectual property rights in his service to the church. (Subsequent to the session meeting, Pastor Sam thanked session for session’s generosity, yet felt a more satisfactory and far less expensive approach for the church would be for the church to use an old computer for the pastor’s office needs and he would buy his own laptop from his professional expense line item that is a reduction to his own salary. He has made that purchase).

Elder Richard Van Rheeden reported on the Trunk Sale, which was not as successful as last year’s. Attendance was down. Next year we need to set a definite date farther ahead of time, prepare a banner to put outside the church, advertise ahead of time, post on Facebook and in the garage sale app.

Pastor Sam reminded session about his time away as noted in his report. Elder Ann Grosscup has coordinated the closing of the church building each Sunday after worship over the summer at Pastor Sam’s request. She passed around a sign-up sheet for session members to volunteer for a Sunday.

Pastor Sam expressed his heartfelt appreciation for Elder Sherry Lohman’s pastoral care “sprint” and faithful stewardship of our congregation (with assistance from Paul Akin) over the summer. He gave praise to Maeleen Thorius and fellow deacons for the excellent recruitment results effort for Care Buddies.

Pastor Sam spoke of potential small adjustments for 8 a.m. worship in light of low attendance.

Elder Sharon Raffensperger of the nominating committee requested that session discuss changing the articles of incorporation and bylaws of First Presbyterian Church in regard to possibly reducing the number of ruling elders for the class of 2018 to fifteen and to consider reducing the number to twelve for the class of 2019. It is getting difficult to recruit new session members. Session could work with the REALM committee on this. REALM committee member and Elder Carol Ulch said that there is a need to define roles and responsibilities of committees and ministries. This issue will be addressed at a future session meeting.

Pastor Sam and Elder Jim Claypool reported on the June 13, 2017 Presbytery meeting.

The review and possible approval of the new personnel policy was put on the August meeting session agenda.

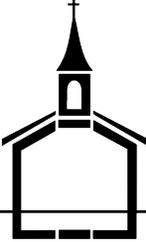
A motion was approved to authorize \$1,000 from the Technology Fund to purchase a computer and streaming device that would enable live streaming.

Elder Ed Cranston passed around a sign-up sheet for the dinner featuring PEB’s Veda Gill dinner on June 26, 2017 at 5:30 pm to which all Presbytery has been invited.

Elder Richard Van Rheeden has looked into electronic funds gathering for the Sunday worship offering. Swipe fees are around 3%. Is there interest in this? He will have a further report for the August session meeting.

Elder Ed Cranston closed the meeting with prayer.

The next session meeting will be held August 15, 2017 at 7 p.m., in Coover Lounge.

MONEY  **MATTERS**

Larry Bruner, Treasurer

	Contributions	Misc. Income Building Use, Walker Trust, Bank interest, etc.	Total Income	Total Expenses	Over/Short
1st Quarter	\$134,280.09	\$32,184.99	\$166,465.08	\$134,637.99	\$31,827.09
2nd Quarter	\$147,354.83	\$1,203.45	\$148,558.28	\$148,696.76	-\$138.48
2017 Totals	\$281,634.92	\$33,388.44	\$315,023.36	\$283,334.75	\$31,688.61

Martha's Free the Girls Mission Project

Martha's Circle is excited to announce its commitment to a new mission project called "Free the Girls." This project came to our attention through "The Sower," a Presbyterian Women publication of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies. The mission is to support survivors of sex trafficking and assist them in their journey toward physical, financial, emotional, mental and spiritual freedom.

The project involves collecting new or gently used bras. Survivors in developing countries such as Mozambique, El Salvador and Uganda can earn a safe income selling bras in the second-hand marketplace.

Why bras? Bras are a unique item that actually have the power to bring freedom and hope to survivors. The second-hand clothing market is a thriving industry in many countries around the world. Bras are a sought-after item in the countries we work in and command top dollar in the marketplace. By receiving starting inventory from Free the Girls, the women are able to begin their business and become entrepreneurs in their own communities. This income allows them a safe economic opportunity and for many of the women provides not only for themselves but for their children as well!

In other parts of the world, bras also tend to be an item that many women have sitting in drawers a long time untouched. Maybe you have one or a few in your drawer you don't wear? We accept new and gently used bras in good condition. If you can do more, we'd love to help get these bras across the globe to women. Just a \$1 donation along with each bra helps us ship them, making even more of an impact.

For more information, see www.freethegirls.org.

We will begin collecting bras in September although many women have already begun to donate. Helen Sheets has tapped donations from her exercise class, Decolletage Boutique in Coralville and nearly every woman she meets! Her example leads us to encourage you to talk to all your friends, neighbors, contacts. We will mail the bras to the collecting point in Indiana, which will then ship them to the women in various countries. Remember that all women at FPC are Presbyterian Women! Get involved with a great project! Start cleaning your drawers now or, if you feel so inclined, consider a financial gift to cover postage. For more information, contact Helen (319-354-5370) or Maeleen Thorius (319-622-3074).



Needles, Hooks and Yarn

Mark your calendar to join us at
Legacy from 9 –11 a.m.
on Saturday, August 5.

We will resume meeting weekly
September 9.

For more info: Tammy Schroeder 351-2660



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We will be holding an additional Life Touch photo session July 18 & 19 from 1–8 p.m.

The photo directory will be reprinted with the additional photos and any corrections from the first printing. Contact Tammy Schroeder for more information and to schedule your appointment time, 319-351-2660.

Reflections on the Worldwide Struggle to Eradicate Modern Day Slavery

The following article, by Dr. George P Belitsos, Chair of the Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking, is reprinted from: <https://iowanah.org/reflections-on-the-worldwide-struggle-to-eradicate-modern-day-slavery/>

Greetings to our Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking blog subscribers. I recently returned from the Rotary International Convention held in Atlanta, Georgia. There were 37,000 convention-goers from nearly 60 countries. This was my first Rotary International Convention. I was motivated to attend due to the rapidly growing interest by Rotarians worldwide in joining the fight to end the atrocious crime of human trafficking and modern day slavery.

I heard one Rotary leader say, "Slavery is a worldwide problem and Rotary has the potential to become the worldwide solution." Rotary is the world's largest service organization with 35,000 clubs in 90 countries, and 1.2 million members. If you are a member of Rotary, please consider proposing that your Club become educated on this growing crime and then partner with a local nonprofit and get your club to fund a local anti-trafficking project. If you are a local provider of prevention or survivor services, I encourage you to identify needs and apply for funding from your local Rotary Club.

The Rotary Club of Ames partnered with and funded YSS, the Network Against Human Trafficking, and several other local groups to undertake a major project entitled *Human Trafficking in Central Iowa; How You can be Part of the Solution*. I encourage you to partner with your local Rotary Club to carry out a similar project. Here is a link to a [summary of the Ames Rotary project](#) which you can access in order to generate ideas as to what you might want to consider. If I can be of any assistance, let me know.

The evening prior to the start of the convention I was invited to the Power of One Candlelight Vigil in

support of trafficking survivors and held in Centennial Olympic Park in Atlanta. This vigil was organised by the Rotary Action Group Against Slavery, RAGAS, of which I am a member. RAGAS hoped for 500 marchers but over 2,000 showed up including John Germ, the Rotary International President. After we marched, I was able to sit with and meet President John Germ. RAGAS called the vigil The Power of One because each one of us has the power to make an impact to end slavery around the world, one life at a time. Below are two photos of the candlelight vigil.



The next morning during the convention plenary session there were four human trafficking speakers including Iowa native Ashton Kutcher, U.S. Senator Bob Corker, and Gary Hagen, CEO, International Justice Mission. IJM is the world's largest survivor service organization with locations in 17 countries. These three speakers were followed by a survivor from the state of Oregon named Rebecca Bender. Rebecca was rescued from forced prostitution at the age of 26, and has since healed her scars and set up her own anti-trafficking foundation. She had been arrested 7 times over the years for prostitution before law enforcement finally recognized that she was a trafficking and rape victim.

The speakers aimed to open the eyes of as many convention delegates as possible to this unseen world where millions languish in

slavery because of poverty, because of corruption, and because of man's greed for profit on the backs of vulnerable people.

I volunteered to help to staff the RAGAS booth at the convention for the next 4 days. The trafficking speakers served as a springboard for interest and concern from delegates worldwide. The booth was always busy and the 2 trafficking convention workshops were oversubscribed with hundreds more in line waiting for an empty seat.

I met some remarkable people from around the world who have been fully engaged in the anti-trafficking fight for many years. The leadership of the Rotary Action Group Against Slavery were primarily from England and their hard work and courage is phenomenal. They formed RAGAS 8 years ago and it took four years for the board of Rotary International to approve the group as a fully-fledged RAG.

One of the first things I learned by interacting with anti-trafficking leaders from other nations is that they do not use the word **trafficking** but rather **slavery**. There were 17,000 delegates from nearly 60 other nations at the convention and most use the word slavery to define this growing worldwide crime. As a result, I was motivated to propose to the NAHT Board of Directors that we change our name to the Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking and Slavery. I learned that while the laws permitting slavery have been repealed everywhere, people around the world continue to be brutalized, broken, exploited and enslaved through violence or merely the threat of violence and in increasing numbers. Forty-six million is the latest estimate of the number of people held in slavery worldwide.

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Of this 46 million number, 21% are sex trafficked or as I heard over and over “rape for profit” and 79% are labor trafficked. There are more slaves in the world today than any other time in human history. This is the fastest-growing illicit trade in the world and currently stands as third largest.

I learned that while Rotarians have raised 1.5 million dollars to free children from the threat of polio, an increasing number of clubs are also working to free children from the bonds of slavery. They plan to achieve this by openly showing their support for the victims of exploitation, condemning known practices of slavery, and encouraging their fellow Rotarians and others to support the work of anti-slavery organizations

The following are some words of wisdom from Mark Little, the founder and leader of RAGAS who is from England. Mark is shown with me on the right side of this photo. He has battled slavery all over the world.

THE REAL IMPACT OF SLAVERY

A FEW REFLECTIONS BY MARK LITTLE

Definition of slavery....I am often asked for a definition of a slave. Quite simply, it is someone who is forced to work without pay, who is unable to leave and who is controlled by violence or the merely threat of violence. For these people their free will is taken away. Their labour, their lives and their minds are being consumed by someone else’s greed. But there is another dimension to slavery which is often forgotten.

It eliminates identity....My visits to Child Slave Rehabilitation Centres in India, Nepal and Thailand these last 16 years have made me realise that one of the great crimes of slavery is that it goes beyond “servitude”. It goes to the point of eliminating the identity of the individual and the younger someone is taken into slavery the less likely they are able to

repossess their own identity. In effect they become like zombies. Let me explain.,

Kesher Nankar was a slave who was born into bonded labour in India but he was eventually freed after 16 years of servitude. Some years after his release, whilst talking to the presenters of a documentary film on slavery, he expressed his feelings thus:

You people who are free, who were born free and who have always lived free, can never understand what it is like to be a slave. When I was a slave, I could never have dreamt that one day I would be standing here talking to you as a free man. My whole world was the farm where I was in bondage, and I simply could not have imagined anything else. Because someone, somewhere felt that I should not be a slave, and then did something about that, I am now a free man. But I could never have freed myself”. He went on to explain, “You must understand that when someone tells you, year after year that you have no rights to think, you stop thinking. If they say you must not cry, you stop crying.

That is what I mean when I say slavery eliminates the identity of the individual. This is the essential ingredient of modern day slavery, ie the total control of one person by another for the purpose of economic exploitation.

Liberation is not enough....For the countless numbers of children and adults who are rescued from their factory prisons, fields, homes, quarries, restaurants etc, liberation is not enough. In Europe or in the United States, a child kidnapped and held in captivity for a number of years would automatically be given counselling. It would be assumed that the child or adult would need help for years to come. The trauma of slavery is just as bad and the need for rehabilitation and reintegration back into the community, is just as important.

The need for rehabilitation....Children (and the same applies for adults) when rescued are usually broken in body, mind and spirit and if taken

directly back to their homes, would undoubtedly remain traumatised and withdrawn for the rest of their lives. They therefore need to go through a physical, mental and spiritual rehabilitation process. For the lucky few, this process is undertaken wherever there is a place available at a Safe House, Rehabilitation Centre or Trafficking Shelter. Sadly, there are not enough of these in the developing countries I have visited.

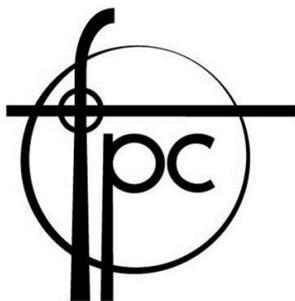
Rehabilitation is not an easy task....For the freed slave, freedom is not the end, only the beginning of the road back to normality. Rehabilitating traumatised minds is not an easy task. There is no body of knowledge and expertise built up by doctors and psychologists about how to help the freed slave. When slavery is the only life you have ever known or can ever remember, when your identity is wrapped up in your subjugation, finding a way through to a new life is very difficult, without the right kind of support

The next morning during the convention plenary session there were four human trafficking speakers including Iowa native Ashton Kutcher, U.S. Senator Bob Corker, and Gary Hagen, CEO, International Justice Mission. IJM is the world’s largest survivor service organization with locations in 17 countries. These three speakers were followed by a survivor from the state of Oregon named Rebecca Bender. Rebecca was rescued from forced prostitution at the age of 26, and has since healed her scars and set up her own anti-trafficking foundation. She had been arrested 7 times over the years for prostitution before law enforcement finally recognized that she was a trafficking and rape victim.

The speakers aimed to open the eyes of as many convention delegates as possible to this unseen world where millions languish in slavery because of poverty, because of corruption, and because of man’s greed for profit on the backs of vulnerable people.

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9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Monday - Thursday
except holidays or when announced
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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!

What's so important about a church name tag?

As we welcome one another to First Presbyterian, we would like everyone to wear their church name tag so they can better get to know us by name. If you need a name tag or have misplaced yours, please let the church office know and one will be made for you. **Thank you!**



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