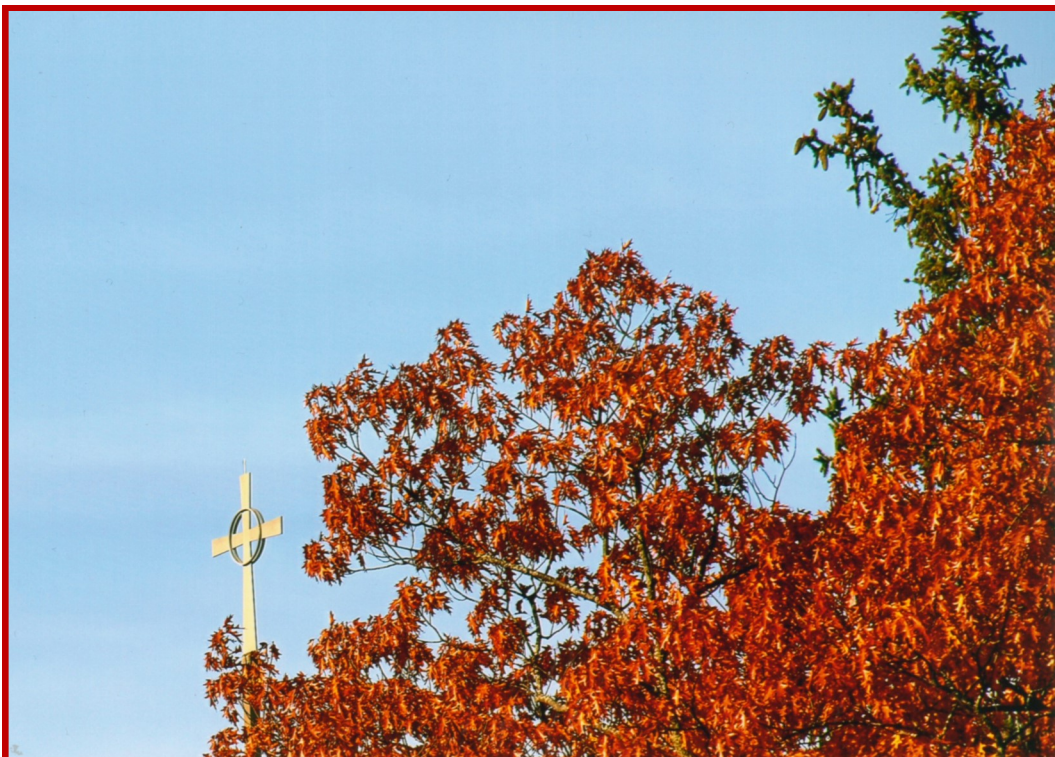


# FIRST'S FAMILY



November 15–December 15  
2018  
Volume 62, Issue 10

Craig Jeffries of West Branch, Iowa took this photo in late October. He was so struck by how the autumn light hit the cross and was offset by the changing leaves. Mr. Jeffries stopped by the pumpkin patch one afternoon to deliver his beautiful photos, chat, and take a pumpkin with him. We can all remember to observe the beauty around us as Mr. Jeffries did with his photos.



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## The Perfect Gift Our Christmas Joy Offering on December 23

This offering distributes gifts 50/50 to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and racial ethnic education and leadership development. The Assistance Program provides integral financial support to church workers and their families. Presbyterian-related schools and colleges, such as the Menaul School in Albuquerque and Stillman College, provide education and spiritual leadership, while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage.

In 2017, \$1.1 million was used to provide financial support and grants for current and retired Presbyterian church workers in their time of need; an additional \$1 million was used to provide education, enabling students to attend Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges to develop leadership skills. Your gifts allow these ministries, which Presbyterians have carried out for decades, to continue.

This year our Christmas Joy Offering will be received on Sunday, December 23. Your prayerful consideration to share this *Perfect Gift* is greatly appreciated.



## ***Dear sisters and brothers of and First Presbyterian Church,***

The grace and the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you! Walk with me down Memory Lane, won't you? I remember a holiday called Thanksgiving. Not the one we have now. I mean this one:

*[New York, 3 October 1789]*

*By the President of the United States of America.  
A Proclamation.*

*Whereas it is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly to implore his protection and favor—and whereas both Houses of Congress have by their joint Committee requested me “to recommend to the People of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of Almighty God especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness.”*

*Now therefore I do recommend and assign Thursday the 26th day of November next to be devoted by the People of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being, who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be—That we may then all unite in rendering unto him our sincere and humble thanks—for his kind care and protection of the People of this Country previous to their becoming a Nation—for the signal and manifold mercies, and the favorable interpositions of his Providence which we experienced in the course and conclusion of the late war—for the great degree of tranquillity, union, and plenty, which we have since enjoyed—for the peaceable and rational manner, in which we have been enabled to establish constitutions of government for our safety and happiness, and particularly the national One now lately instituted—for the civil and religious liberty with which we are blessed; and the means we have of acquiring and diffusing useful knowledge; and in general for all the great and various favors which he hath been pleased to confer upon us.*

*and also that we may then unite in most humbly offering our prayers and supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations and beseech him to pardon our national and other transgressions—to enable us all, whether in public or private stations, to perform our several and relative duties properly and punctually—to render our national government a blessing to all the people, by constantly being a Government of wise, just, and constitutional laws, discreetly and faithfully executed and obeyed—to protect and guide all Sovereigns and Nations (especially such as have shewn kindness unto us) and to bless them with good government, peace, and concord—To promote the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue, and the encrease of science among them and us—and generally to grant unto all Mankind such a degree of temporal prosperity as he alone knows to be best.*

*Given under my hand at the City of New-York the third day of October in the year of our Lord 1789.*

*George Washington*

When I was a child, I would walk to downtown State College, PA and visit the five-and-dime there: G. C. Murphy. On the way to the toy section was the one for decorations. The Fourth of July, St. Patrick's Day, Halloween, Christmas: They all had their moment. Prior to Thanksgiving, Murphy's would roll out decorative turkeys, cornucopias, artificial leaves, Pilgrim and Native American salt and pepper shakers and the like. The next day, the great change over to Christmas would begin.

Yet, there was at least a pause, a moment between the season of candy collection and a splurging jolly old elf, when people paused and thanked God for all the bounty named by Washington. While Washington made it an American holiday, it has a longer history. The Jews still celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles, also called Feast of Ingathering, as a reminder of the sojourn of in the wilderness followed by the fecundity of a regular harvest. For the ancients, this season of celebration also marked the obligation to return to God the first 10%, the tithe, of the harvest.

As a culture, Thanksgiving is lost to us. Fast on the heels of Halloween comes the season of Christmas preparation. Christmas still bears the whiff of religious devotion, of course, yet the advent of Black Friday has tilted Christmas into the column of events that drive people to spend themselves into deep debt.

This makes celebrating Thanksgiving a sort of spiritual discipline that distinguishes us from the culture of excess. The holiday does not have to be about feasting and football primarily. Washington calls us to pray to the God who has blessed us, yet with a reminder that the blessings are God's to be shared widely: They are not ours alone but rather loaned to us as a trust. To carve out the season between Halloween and Christmas, and free it up from consumption, might liberate us. We can breathe deep, take leisurely walks, converse with family, read a good book, watch the sun rise and set, and do all that, gives joy. We can count God's many blessings already afforded us, and we can calculate how much we might share with those who could have more if we strived to possess less, as well as burden our planet less.

Happy Thanksgiving!

Love and blessings, your  
pastor,

Sam



# First's Family

If you have a news item for the First's Family News, please submit it for publication by December 1 to [tammy.foster@firstpresbiowacity.org](mailto:tammy.foster@firstpresbiowacity.org). Thank you!

## November 15-30

11/17 Joel Kasiriba  
11/18 Carol Tippe  
11/19 Tom Martin  
11/19 Craig Gustavson  
11/21 Norvall Clemons  
11/21 Barb Davis  
11/21 Ed Cranston  
11/22 MaryJo Keith  
11/22 Rys Paulsen  
11/23 Richard Van Rheeden  
11/23 Sarah Bigaba  
11/24 Leann Graves  
11/24 Heather Fay  
11/25 Jeff Foster  
11/26 George Rickey



11/26 Grace Kirschling  
11/29 Kathy Smith  
11/29 Anthony McMillan  
11/29 Stephanie Brentner  
11/29 Lily Chong  
11/29 Stephanie Brentner

## December 1-15

12/01 Sharon Oglesby  
12/07 Mig Judiesch  
12/07 Sue Farran  
12/07 Cathe Franz  
12/10 Doris Preucil  
12/10 Cody Hagemeister  
12/10 Mirayah Hagemeister  
12/12 Rick Boland  
12/14 Amy Hackman  
12/14 Stephanie Paulsen  
12/14 Kenneth Noble  
12/14 Elyon Kunangika  
12/15 Greg Smith  
12/15 Jeri Smith  
12/15 Arya Bingham



*Please keep this family in prayer:*

The family of Richard Gier and family on the death of his wife, Ruth Gier, who died November 15.



*Known to have been Hospitalized:*

Herb Wilson, Pauline Miller, Deb Helmick, Earline Moll and Janice Baumbach

*I wish to convey my gratitude to the many members of Frist's family for their expressions of concern after my August 7 auto accident; and publicly thank the members of the Caring Connection for providing rides during my rehab and recuperation continuing until my release from the "choke" collar on Oct. 3.*

*JJ Deryke*

## FPC Book Club Invites You to Join Us

**Nov 28 Exit West by Mohsin Hamid**

**WE MEET the last Wednesday of the month**

from Noon to 1 p.m. at 1095 Silvercrest Circle #223 (Legacy Senior Living)

Bring your lunch and share in the fellowship. For Information, contact Jan Walker at 358-6737.



**Advent calendars will be available starting Nov. 18,** on the narthex table to share. On the back of the Advent calendar are the FPC Advent highlights. **Share an invitation!**

Remember the festive guest bags on the narthex welcome desk to also share at this time of giving! Let's make sure **all** visitors, friends and returning family know they are welcome!



## Parents' Night Out is Coming Up!

Our monthly Parent's Night Out will be held on Friday, November 30, from 5:00-7:30. This is a change in our regular schedule—but a great time to do some holiday shopping! Parents of children ages 0 to 10 are invited to drop off their children for an evening of fun and games and enjoy a little free time. Just register your child by Sunday, November 25 by emailing Nancy Gardner at [nancy.hayes.gardner@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.hayes.gardner@gmail.com).

Thank you to last month's helpers: Nancy Ross, Mary Linn, Jim Linn, Jane Cranston, and Nancy Gardner!



Play-doh is the most fun ever!



Just chillin'!



Jim makes a new friend!

## Deacons Get Training for Advance Care Planning

On August 15, Maeleen Thorius, Sue Van Duyn Phipps and Rhonda Barr attended a training program to become certified facilitators in First Steps Advance Care Planning (ACP). The program "Honoring Your Wishes," is sponsored by Iowa City Hospice and has been available for the past 10 years. With a goal to offer assistance in advance care planning to all adults over the age of 18 years, this program has partnered with Mercy Hospital, University of Iowa Hospital, IC Hospice and IC Senior Center. The Deacons, through our Congregational Health Ministry Team, are responding to FPC members who have requested more information on this topic.

In September, our annual Deacon Retreat focused on beginning conversations about the program, Honoring Your Wishes. The director of HYW, Jane Dohrmann, LISW, ACP, presented an overview of the program. We also practiced facilitating conversations about advance care planning in small groups. Over the next few months, the Health Ministries Team will be planning how we can best serve our congregation by partnering with IC Hospice and Honoring Your Wishes.

Look for more information in the coming months, as we roll out this special gift to our FPC friends and family!

## Deacon's Bench



## Wise Words from Tammy Foster

Tammy Foster is our Minister of Stewardship and Management. As is true of all of our staff members, she is committed to God's purposes and the good of our congregation. She brought the following wisdom to my attention:

As many of us gave to the capital funds campaign over and above our regular giving, we have grown accustomed to this combined level of generosity. As we come to the conclusion of our capital giving in fulfillment of our pledge, we might consider continuing to stretch ourselves to the glory of God and continue giving the extra amount, either to the capital funds campaign or our regular budget. Such continuing generosity will deepen our own spirituality and grow our congregation in its faithful service.

God is good and treats us bountifully. We are invited to continue our praise of God by adding generosity to generosity.



*God's Gifts Equip  
Us for Ministry*



## Salvation Army *Toys for Tots* Drive to begin at FPC on November 18

Last year, the Salvation Army *Toys for Tots* program helped 1,900 area youth who otherwise might not have had toys on Christmas morning.

Beginning on Sunday, November 18, *Toys for Tots* gift donation tags will be hung on our collection box in Ryerson Fellowship Hall. Each tag lists the gender and age of a child (from newborn to 15 years old) who would appreciate a gift. New, unwrapped gifts, **with your tag attached**, should be dropped off at our collection box no later than Sunday, December 9. Toys will be taken to the Salvation Army on December 10.

## Crisis Center *Project Holiday* Food Distribution

Project Holiday is the Crisis Center's annual event that provides holiday food to low-income families. Now in its 31<sup>st</sup> year, this much appreciated tradition allows families in need to enjoy a customizable holiday meal. This year, it is anticipated that more than 4,000 individuals will benefit from this food distribution on December 17–21.

Select a colored donation tag on the Christmas tree in Ryerson Fellowship Hall beginning on November 25, or donate online at [www.jccrisiscenter.org/projectholiday](http://www.jccrisiscenter.org/projectholiday). A donation of as little as \$25 will provide food for one family.



## Our Alternative Gift Market—the Presbyterian Giving Catalog

Give the gift of hope today as you plan for your Christmas giving. Millions around the world are facing daily struggles to access food, clean drinking water, and shelter. Take the first step today to help alleviate their burdens with gifts of wells with clean water, seeds, livestock, school supplies, cleaning tools or pots and pans.

A limited number of the *Presbyterian Giving Catalog* are available on the table to the left of the main entry to our sanctuary. The catalog can also be viewed and orders placed online at <http://presbyteriangifts.org>. Please direct questions or comments about this year's gift market to John Barr at [BarrJohnO@sau.edu](mailto:BarrJohnO@sau.edu) or 319-541-3213. Make sure to note your affiliation with First Presbyterian Church on your order form.

## Updates on Johnson County Interfaith Coalition (JCIC)

FPC's Core Team members continue to be active participants in the work of the Johnson County Interfaith Coalition (JCIC). Since completing one-to-one interviews within our own congregation, team members have recently been building relationships with our sisters and brothers at The Kingdom Center (TKC) located near the Waterfront Hy-Vee. On Sunday, Oct. 28, FPC Core Team members had the privilege of attending TKC's ninth anniversary celebration followed by lunch and conversation between our two teams. Additionally, FPC's Core Team leaders—Barb Stanerson, Bob Goodfellow, and Nancy Gardner—have been invited by other JCIC member congregations to share insights into our process of conducting interviews and gathering insight into issues of social injustice that exist in Johnson County.

During the week of November 11, Nancy Gardner attended Gamaliel National Leadership Training in Carlinville, IL. With an emphasis on leadership in the public arena and effective transformations, this training will help FPC continue to support those who experience social injustice and lead the way for change.

### Core Team Leaders



Barb Stanerson



Bob Goodfellow



Nancy Gardner



## COOKIE WALK & BAZAAR

After all these years this event is still the BEST! Everyone is invited to participate in this festive occasion! The 32nd Annual Cookie Walk and Bazaar will be Saturday, December 8 from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. in Ryerson Fellowship Hall in the upper level of First Presbyterian Church located at 2701 Rochester Avenue in Iowa City.

### HERE IS HOW IT WORKS:

**Cookie Walk:** Each household of FPC is asked to donate 6 dozen of their favorite Christmas or other cookies. The cookies are displayed on tables, and shoppers can choose what cookies they want to purchase. Shoppers are encouraged to bring their own containers in which to put their selection. Plastic gloves are provided, and if shoppers do not bring their own container, one will be provided. Cookies are sold for \$5 per dozen. We also feature a gourmet cookie table for extra fancy decorated cookies that sell for 6 for \$5.

**Bazaar:** Church members are asked to contribute homemade or handmade crafts, decorations, jams or jellies, breads, candies, etc.

**Re-Gifting Holiday Items:** Everyone is asked to bring new or gently used items for “re-gifting,” such as Christmas decorations, crafts, novelties, games and puzzles.

### Please consider helping out with this crucial fundraising event by:

1. Baking 6 dozen Christmas or other cookies
2. Signing up to help set up for the event on Friday (sign-up sheets in Ryerson Fellowship Hall)
3. Volunteering to help on Saturday during and/or after the event
4. Donating your homemade or handmade items
5. Donating new or gently used items for “re-gifting,” such as Christmas decorations, crafts, novelties, games or puzzles.
6. Supporting the event by shopping at the Cookie Walk/Bazaar
7. Telling your friends about the Bazaar — handing out “Save the Date” Cookie Walk/Bazaar Cards, hanging up posters at work and local stores

Questions? Contact Sally Rickey (337-9044) or at [sarah0654@mchsi.com](mailto:sarah0654@mchsi.com) (evening) or [sally.e.rickey@rrd.com](mailto:sally.e.rickey@rrd.com) (days)

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## Hello from the FPC Green Team!

FPC Green Team was formed last year. We filled out a lengthy application to PC (USA) Earth Care Congregations with questions in four categories: Worship, education, facilities and outreach. FPC scored high and achieved the designation of Earth Care Congregation. To keep this title we need to be recertified each year by having more educational programs, worship services, and outreach opportunities and keeping our facilities running efficiently. We are dedicated to taking care of the Realm of God.

Iowa Interfaith Power & Light (IP&L) has been instrumental in outreach opportunities. Last June IP&L presented the first of a series of three programs that were offered in Iowa City. FPC hosted the first one called Cool Congregations, which was about energy consumption and how we can lower ours and save money. We have had members attend the other programs and now are planning to form a Chapter of IIP&L in the Iowa City/Coralville area.

Green Team wants to educate and encourage each member to do a better job of caring for our earth. We plan to start with small steps...Tip #1 was a reminder to keep your tires properly inflated. Hopefully you were able

to participate in the “pressure check” here at church on November 4. This will help with your MPG (save \$), which also means your car will be releasing less carbon into the atmosphere.

In future bulletins and newsletters there will be more Tips and information. Look for our logo and tips. If every one of us tries to do a little better, we can make a difference!

Be on the lookout for other educational programs and easy ways to reduce your carbon footprint. If you would like to be on the Green Team, please let us know.

You can email Becky Ross at [beckyross@aol.com](mailto:beckyross@aol.com).







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



Youth Choir is open to 4<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> graders interested in singing and leading worship through music. We work throughout the year to sing, play, and read the Word of God so that the youth can lead worship several times throughout the year. Rehearsals are on Thursdays, at 7:30 p.m. and will be held twice a month through the fall. Contact Leah Bergman at [leah.bergman@firstpresbiowacity.org](mailto:leah.bergman@firstpresbiowacity.org) or call the church for more information.

#### **Youth Choir Schedule November–December**

*Generally rehearsals will be on the first and third Thursdays of the month.*

##### **Thursdays, November 1 AND 15**

7:30-8:30 p.m.

##### **THURSDAYS, DECEMBER 6, 13, AND 20**

7:30-8:30 p.m.

##### **Sunday, DECEMBER 16**

5:00-9:00 p.m. Worship at Oaknoll with pizza after

##### **Monday, DECEMBER 24**

3:45-5:30 p.m. Youth Choir sings at 4:30 Christmas Eve Worship

*Rehearsals will begin again Thursday, January 10.*

On **Sunday, December 16**, our Youth Choir and alumni of the choir will lead worship at **Oaknoll Retirement Center**. The service, which consists of readings, anthems and carols, is an annual event and one that both the youth and Oaknoll residents look forward to each year. This will mark the **19<sup>th</sup> year** that our Youth have led this service. In fact, it's such a well-loved tradition that in recent years our choir alumni have made it a priority to come back and join the choir.

The choir will meet at the church at 5:00 p.m. for rehearsal before car-pooling to Oaknoll, arriving in time for the 6:30 p.m. service. Afterwards, we'll go to Pizza Ranch for dinner and plan to arrive back at the church by 9 p.m., where parents can pick up members of the choir. Members of the congregation are always welcome to come and worship at the Oaknoll Youth-led service.



#### **JUNIOR CHOIR** Pre-K–4<sup>th</sup> Grade Sunday Mornings 9:30–9:45 a.m.

Junior Choir is made up of all children grades Pre-K–4<sup>th</sup>. This group will sing and play together on Sunday mornings at the beginning of the [SPACE] break-out times. If your child is interested in singing, come on Sunday mornings before church for education time and music! This group will sing occasionally in worship during the year. Contact Leah Bergman for more information!



Junior Choir will sing  
during worship on **Sunday,**  
**December 9!**

Come on Sunday  
mornings to learn the  
songs and have fun!



## Our Vision or God's Vision

by Darlene Bergman

When I began planning for my retirement from full-time music ministry at FPC some 3 years ago, Pastor Sam and I had many conversations about what my lay ministry might look like. One area that I had a passion for was the Suzuki Early Music Education program. With the support of the Lucille Burianek endowment, Leah and I were able to train for, equip and launch a Baby Music class here at FPC. We began our first class in January 2018. The program has been well received and has met the needs of the Iowa City community in ways that we did not anticipate.

Originally, we set out to offer these Baby Music classes as an extension of our Congolese emigrant ministry. Our vision was that the class would offer these Congolese parents an opportunity to be in a stress-free environment interacting with

members of our congregation and community. This weekly time together would offer these parents valuable parenting tools while learning English at a basic level through simple songs and rhymes. We engaged with the Holy Jerusalem congregation as a group and one on one, but to our dismay only a couple of families have participated in this ministry. It seems that our target audience was not necessarily God's target audience.

Instead these are some ways that God has used this ministry:

- A mom whose husband was serving in Iraq was alone with a 2-year-old and no nearby family. Meeting weekly with other parents and caregivers gave her a support network, and the class offered her valuable parenting skills during a challenging time.
- Born a preemie, Noelle came to class with her grandma and great aunt. She wore a protective helmet to her first several classes to protect her still growing brain, and her movement and speech were delayed. This child, who had been poked and prodded beyond her control as an infant, refused for months to actively participate in class. One of the tenets of the Suzuki approach is that by observation children learn. Sure enough, after about 9 months, Noelle actively began participating in class, readily demonstrated that she had been absorbing all that she had witnessed and was ready to participate in every way from that day forward. Suzuki's idea of learning from observation is genius.
- Suzuki philosophy is based on the principles that every child can learn, ability develops early, and environment nurtures growth. Another child, Ellie, came to our class from a very early age with her grandmother, and through the positive classroom environment Ellie acquired verbal skills, musical skills, empathy and valuable social skills. Recently Ellie's mom developed breast cancer and is undergoing treatment. For a few weeks, Ellie was less confident, unsure of herself, and now asked grandma to stay close and offer safe support. During a scary time in this young child's life, music class was a known, safe, calm haven, a place where this little person's world was normal.
- A lesbian couple found an accepting place to parent their little girl and now have a second daughter who has been in the class since birth.
- A new family moved to Iowa from Seattle with a 6-month-old baby. Mom was struggling with the decision to stay at home or go to work, while dad began a new job and they searched for housing, currently living with Mom's parents. They found our class through the Facebook page. This was exactly what this family was searching for: a way to connect with other young families, gain valuable tools for staying at home with their baby, and find a supportive new community.

Ministry can take on many different forms. One of the tenets of the Suzuki approach is "character first, ability second." The relationship that parents build with their child in class creates a strong foundation for years to come. The classroom environment is positive, encouraging each student to develop at his or her own pace and to celebrate every step along the way. Currently our classroom is filled with a diverse group of babies and their caretakers. It is not the diversity we anticipated, but it is a beautiful example of what stewardship can lead to. Being the embodiment of Christ, sharing our unique gifts in order to enrich the lives of those around us, living into God's vision, building a world reflective of the love of God. That's what Baby Music class seeks to provide for anyone who walks through our doors.

If you know of someone who would benefit from this class, contact [leah.bergman@firstpresbiowacity.org](mailto:leah.bergman@firstpresbiowacity.org) or see our Facebook page "Suzuki Baby Music Iowa City."



## Advent Unplugged

(a few moments of peace, prayer, and quiet) Wednesdays during Advent

December 5, 12, and 19, 6:00–6:30 p.m.

Find some peace during this busy season leading up to Christmas. On Wednesdays during Advent, put down your phone, leave the chaos of your life at the door, and come and sit in the calm and quiet of the sanctuary. We will sit with one another, hear scripture, pray, and find stillness. Unplug from the chaos and plug in to your inner peace.



**Sunday, December 16, 10:30 a.m.**  
**Gloria in Excelsis Deo**  
**from Cantata No. 191 by J.S. Bach**



Join us for worship on Sunday, December 16 and hear this beautiful Gloria in Excelsis Deo with choir, organ, and instruments. It will be a joyous celebration of Advent!

Bill and Sharon Oglesby have a spinet piano that needs a new home. This is a 1937 Gulbransen piano with a piano bench. It is in good condition, but will need tuning. Whoever might want it would need only to provide a way to move it to its new destination. Call 319-621-6855.



## Youth Ministry

Join us at FPC Youth Group—Thursday nights! All students in grades 7–12 are invited to this incredible group!

**Thursday, November 22**  
**HAPPY THANKSGIVING!**

**Thursday, November 29, 6–8:30 p.m.**

It's the 5th Thursday of the Month! We'll play a BIG GAME all night long!

**Thursday, December 6, 6–7:30 p.m.**

Join us for our yearly tradition of decorating cookies for the cookie walk!  
Youth Choir meets 7:30–8:30 p.m.

**Thursday, December 13, 6–7:30 p.m.**

We'll pull everything we've learned together—God, Jesus, Religious and Spiritual; How does it all fit together?  
Youth Choir meets 7:30–8:30 p.m.

**Thursday, December 20, 6–8:30 p.m.**

It's a Christmas Party! Bring a \$5 White Elephant Gift (or something re-gifted from home—even better!)  
Youth Choir meets 7:30–8:30 p.m.

## SILENT NIGHT (YEAH RIGHT)

*A New Christmas  
Spectacular Event  
written, acted, and  
inspired by FPC's own  
Youth Group, under the  
direction of Layne  
Sheetz. A [SPACE]  
Event—Sunday,  
December 16, beginning  
at 9 a.m.*

## δώδεκα • (do'-dek-ah) • Twelve

First Presbyterian Church is excited to invite you to a new life-changing discipleship experience. This program is designed for high schoolers (who will complete sophomore year in Spring 2020) and adults.

Each participant will be responsible for a year-long commitment to this program. There will be:

- An in-depth Bible study (June 2019–2020)
- Once a month meetings to learn and grow together in community
- Research into Israel and the Ancient World
- Fundraising Opportunities
- A Capstone 2-week trip to Israel and the Holy Land (June 2020)

This is a **NEW** program. The first informational meeting will be held after worship on Sunday, **November 18**. Signups and deposits due Easter 2019. Please contact Anna for more information.

### Junior High Mission Trip



**DOOR**  
See the face of  
God in the City

### **DOOR: Chicago**

Through DOOR's Discover program, groups spend time serving with a variety of local agencies and ministries and learning through evening speakers and activities. The experience is about more than preparing a meal at a soup kitchen or playing with children at a day camp. It is an opportunity to work alongside local community members, to learn from local leaders, and to listen to the stories of neighbors, clients, and churches.

**Trip Dates: Friday, June 7–Sunday, June 9**  
**Total Cost: \$100**

\*Scholarships are available

## Save the Date!



**PandaMania VBX**  
**August 5–8, 2019**



### **Heifer Ranch, in Perryville, AR Alternative Break**

focuses on the core components of an introduction to Heifer International, service learning, educational activities and

taking action. This is obtained through a variety of experiential activities such as team-building development, educational sessions, overnight village experience and hands-on service projects in our Garden, Maintenance and Livestock Departments. All are designed to increase group's understanding of the global hunger and poverty issues that Heifer International encounters in the field.

Come join us as we travel into Heifer Ranch's Global Village! We'll travel to Zambia, Thailand, Appalachia and more—without even leaving Arkansas. This will surely be a huge learning experience for us all.

**Trip Dates: Saturday, June 15–Saturday, June 22**

**Cost: \$200 per student**

**Deposit (\$100)**

**Second Payment due Sunday, May 12 (\$100)**

\*Scholarships are available

### **Gifts for Parents Event Cancelled for 2018**

After much thought and discussion, the Executive Committee of the Consultation of Religious Communities decided it was necessary to cancel the Gifts for Parents event for this year. There were some unexpected problems that caused delays in getting the project properly underway. We felt it better to cancel than to have a poorly organized event. All of us are very disappointed, as we know many of you will also be. We will begin early in 2019 to put together a great event next year. Your understanding of this decision is greatly appreciated.

## How do you honor 25 years of faithful servanthood?



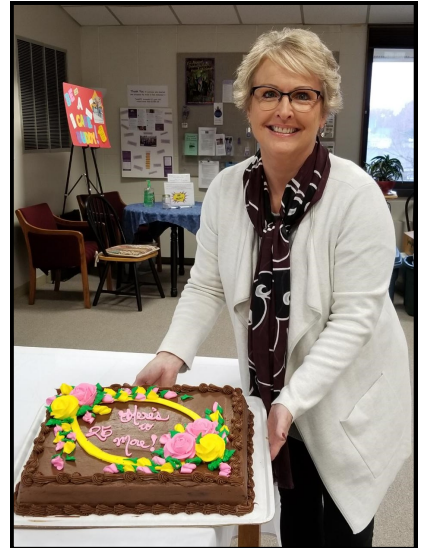
### With a party, of course!

The congregation did just that on November 4 in celebration of Tammy Foster's ministry here at First Pres. Just think of it...When Tammy took on the office duties, Bill Clinton was in his first year as president, the Iowa City area was recovering from a summer of devastating flooding, and we had our first look at Beanie Babies!

Thank you, Tammy, for all that you've done over the years and the work you continue to do!

*In many cultures, the owl is a symbol of wisdom and insight. It can see in dark places, where others cannot. In the Bible, owls were the last guardians over habitations after humans left. They are steadfast, present, even when others are not or cannot be. For 25 years, Tammy Foster has been a wisdom figure for First Presbyterian Church. She has often perceived what others could not from her perch in the front office. She has gone to the dark places of our building where others have feared to tread. Even when others are not as attentive, we all know that Tammy is still guarding First Presbyterian, first as a member and then as a staff person, through her physical presence and through her communications. Tammy, we owe you much and no gift can express our gratitude. Thanks for your faithful service to First Presbyterian Church and to Jesus Christ.*

Dan Thedens



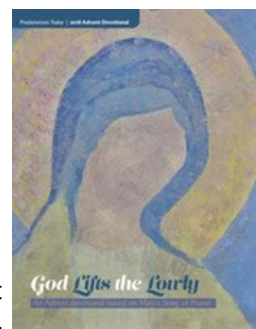
## Presbyterians Today 2018 Advent Devotional

### God Lifts the Lowly

During this holy season of Advent, we are invited to pray and contemplate with Mary in her Song of Praise — the Magnificat — found in Luke 1:46-53.

This year's devotional is very special. The paintings and poems are the work of Andrew Weatherly, a young Presbyterian man born with Down Syndrome, who uses his gifts to raise awareness of the capabilities of those with special needs. The rest of the text — reflections and prayers for each day of Advent — is the joint work of Donna Frischknecht Jackson, pastor and editor of *Presbyterians Today* and sister to a man with special needs, and Krin Van Tatenhove, also a pastor who is father to a special-needs son. With great love and joy, Andrew, Donna and Krin bring God's might and Mary's "yes!" to life in powerful new ways.

This Advent Devotional is perfect for families and individuals. Each day provides a Scripture excerpt, meditation and prayer to deepen the Advent experience. Pick up your copy from the table in the Narthex or stop by Judy Whitford's office for a copy. Copies will be available starting November 18.





## October 2018 Session Highlights

*Clerk of Session, Nancy Weber*

The session met October 16, 2018 in Coover Lounge at 7:00 p.m. Pastor Sam called the meeting to order and lit the Christ candle. Elder Richard Van Rheeden led us in devotions and prayer. Richard read a Robert Burns poem, then spoke about Presbyterian and Jesuit similarities. Both share a strong emphasis on discipline and education. He read from St. Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuit order. St. Ignatius believed there were seven basic attitudes or qualities a person must have as preconditions for entering into an authentic discernment process seeking God's will: openness, generosity, courage, interior freedom, a habit of prayerful reflection on one's experience, having one's priorities straight, and not confusing ends with means.

The baptisms of Braxton Chase Burtness, son of Chase Burtness and Jordan Kolarik, on September 23, 2018, and Oliver Layne Sheetz, son of Anna and Layne Sheetz, on October 7, 2018, both performed by Pastor Sam Massey, were noted, as was the passing of Lee Van Voorhis on October 10, 2018. His funeral will be held at a future date in northwest Iowa.

Presbyterian Education Board of Pakistan's Veda Gill will be here Palm Sunday, April 14, 2019. Lunch after worship will be provided by the Friends of Pasrur.

Session passed a motion approving the following membership actions: Fred and Sarah Harris are transferring their membership to First Presbyterian Church near Ely, Ely, IA; Pat Dustin will be joining St. Andrew Presbyterian, Iowa City (she will be moved to inactivity, with permission given to the office to reactivate and transfer pending receipt of request); and Clyde and Kay Seery's membership will be moved to inactivity, with permission given to the office to reactivate and transfer pending receipt of request.

Finance moderator and Elder Dale Kraus reviewed the recent financial statement. We are \$15,000 short of where we were last year at this time. There is no reason for alarm, but we are hoping people will step up with their pledges.

Minutes of the September 18, 2018 session meeting were approved.

Already approved by email was the motion to pay Layne Sheetz \$833 per month (plus FICA, income tax, worker's comp., etc.) for three months beginning October 1, 2018 using endowment income, to fill the .25 FTE position of Assistant Minister of Equipping Programs for Youth, Young Adults, and Hospitality. Permanent employment through the budget is contingent on the 2019 budget.

Already approved by email was the motion to open our church building, if the necessity arises, to post-ICE raid gatherings for the sake of providing immigrant families access to educational resources that will allow them to return to their homes equipped and empowered to provide for their incarcerated loved ones and themselves.

The Robert Burns Dinner will be held January 25, 2019, at FPC. Session approved the serving of a wee dram (approximately 1 ounce) of single malt whisky and soliciting

donations for a silent auction with proceeds for the FPC 2019 Operating Budget. (Tickets will be \$20–25 each. A bagpiper is secured. The target attendance is 125 people. After inviting FPC members, it will be opened to the community in mid-December 2018.

Session gave approval for the document "Growing Right Relationships" to be sent to the congregation, with elders' individual names attached as contact people, and a cover letter prepared by Pastors Paul and Sam.

The next congregational meeting will be held November 11, 2018.

A motion brought forth by the FPC Green Team was approved. FPC will join the forming Iowa Interfaith Power and Light Chapter. This chapter is a coalition of faith groups in the Iowa City/Coralville area to educate about climate change and what can be done. There is no membership fee.

Session authorized an additional \$7,000 to complete the boiler installation capital campaign project. The extra expense is to install thermostats, sensors, and necessary equipment in those lower-level rooms that lack them, and for sensors and necessary work on the heating system in choir room. (*Explanation: The downstairs rooms are not individually controlled, causing the rooms to become hot compared to other areas of the church, and the choir room is still on pneumatic controls. This would bring all rooms under a digitally controlled uniform system, and allow each room to have its own sensors and control of heating.*) Total cost of boiler installation would now come to \$235,341.97. This figure includes this final change order for the entire project. This is far less than the original projection suggested to the congregation at the beginning of the campaign.

Elder Nancy Gardner reported that the women's retreat was wonderful. Wonder Women of the Bible was the theme.

Elder Gardner will be going to the Johnson County Interfaith Cluster heightened training in Illinois.

Elders Ann Grosscup and Michelle Bessman are working with the Center for Worker Justice on the managing of organizations participating in the post-raid reconciliation. Ann said they are looking for Spanish speakers to serve as interpreters. Michelle passed around the program from the gala held last week, in which FPC placed a relatively large ad. Michelle said the speaker was fantastic, the food was great, and the event was a success.

The pumpkin sales are going well, bringing in \$1,200 in sales so far. There is a cool selection of pumpkins. Neighbors have been stopping in.

Elder Amy Fletcher will send out a Sign Up Genius to session members for providing a meal for youth meetings.

Elder Vern Dengler reported that the boilers have passed inspection.

Pastor Sam closed the meeting with prayer. The next session meeting will be held Tuesday, November 20, 2018 at 7 p.m. in Coover Lounge.

## Want to Get connected and stay Connected?

### Sign up for *MyFirstPres*

Once you have logged into *MyFirstPres* and are comfortable, go to the Attributes and Serving Opportunities and fill out how you can serve and be served, instructions in purple box.

*Stay tuned for upcoming features to be revealed next month!*

*If you need assistance, feel free to contact Tammy Schroeder, 319-351-2660.*

### Spiritual Gifts/Personal Attributes and Serving Opportunities

1. Go to FPC's website ([firstpresniowacity.org](http://firstpresniowacity.org)), sign into *MyFirstPres*
2. Click **Home** > **My Profile**, click the **Serving** sub-tab
3. Fill out **Availability** and enter any special **Notes**

**Attributes** this section shows Spiritual Gifts/Personal Attributes and Opportunities

1. Click **Add Attributes** (make sure to view all 6 tabs), *for more info, hover over item to see description; to edit use pencil to the RIGHT not in front of item*
2. Click **SAVE**

## Burns Dinner, January 25, 2019

Come celebrate our Presbyterian heritage with a traditional Scottish Burns Dinner, Friday, January 25, 2019. Silent auction starts at 4 p.m. with dinner served at 5:30 p.m.

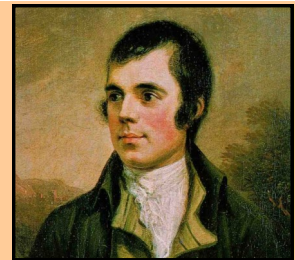
Learn about Scotland's national poet, Robert Burns, and bagpipes!

Enjoy a *traditional* Burns dinner of leek soup, tatties and neeps, sticky toffee pudding and a choice of haggis or vegetarian haggis.

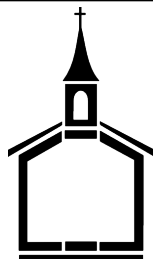
Tickets for \$20 (adult) and \$10 (under 13 years) are on sale in Ryerson Fellowship Hall before and after worship.

This FPC fundraiser is a first for FPC, so plan for a fun and unique experience early in 2019!

For further information or questions, contact the Fundraising Task Force: Richard Van Rheeden, Michelle Bessman and Ann Grosscup.



# MONEY



# MATTERS

Larry Bruner, Treasurer

	Contributions	Misc. Income <small>Building Use, Walker Trust, Bank interest, etc.</small>	Total Income	Total Expenses	Over/Short
1st Quarter	\$121,464.86	\$683.77	\$122,148.63	\$144,112.58	-\$21,963.95
2nd Quarter	\$129,274.76	\$55,938.54	\$185,213.30	\$148,544.11	\$36,669.19
3rd Quarter	\$115,537.46	\$21,361.01	\$136,898.47	\$143,498.85	-\$6,600.38
October	\$53,394.84	\$282.81	\$53,677.65	\$41,193.29	\$12,484.36
<b>2018 Totals</b>	<b>\$419,671.92</b>	<b>\$78,266.13</b>	<b>\$497,938.05</b>	<b>\$477,348.83</b>	<b>\$20,589.22</b>

**The following remarks were delivered by Pastor Sam at the  
Vigil for Louisville and Pittsburgh on October 30, at the U's IMU Building.**

You may wonder what an old, tall, white Anglo-Saxon Protestant straight male might have to say about oppressive terror in America, either the sudden violence witnessed recently or the slow, grinding despair that unfolds in every national corner. What can I offer you?

First, I offer confession: History has long benefited me and my tribe. Indeed, it is accurate to say that because my tribe's future feels threatened, we have been summoned to this moment of painful reckoning. My ancestors sowed the wind; you and I are left to reap the whirlwind. The good news is that we have been observing, over the past few decades, the death throes of white male Christian privilege in America. The bad news is that what is dying can act destructively. Put more hopefully, using a different image, since the last century we have spectated the first laps in the relay race for justice. Yet recent events demand our realistic assessment as we take up the baton: the course is long; our striving is not against humans but against systemic horses of malice; we are not running on even ground but through jungles of manipulation and coercion. Yet here we are, ready to take our place in the race. We neither faint nor falter.

Second, I offer an interpretation of history. This week I was privileged to meet, along with members of my own congregation, with some of my colleagues from The Kingdom Center. This meeting was made possible by our two congregations participating in the Johnson County Interfaith Coalition. One of the saints there, my colleague Jean Burke, spoke of how wonderful it would be if all of us in this region could work toward a common vision: to be known nationally for our active pursuit of racial justice. She reminds us that for many faiths found here today, a journey to the Promised Land has been core to our saga. We Christians, for example, marvel at the faith of Abraham and his people who trusted God with the future and stepped out into the unknown. This same sense of hopeful pilgrimage lies at the heart of our national character. Let us admit that the Puritans behaved badly when they arrived in this land. They oppressed the First Nation peoples found here, then Quakers, Baptists, women; and sometime later, joining others, they forced Africans to labor in servitude, treated Chinese as slaves, refused fleeing Jews our shores, interred Japanese, and now dehumanize immigrants. The list of the oppressed in this country has grown long. Yet the Puritans made one positive contribution to our national character: They envisioned building a society that would serve as a "city set upon a hill," a new society witnessing to God's ultimate intentions.

So, third, I offer hope. The original vision of the Beloved Community, often betrayed and now threatened by privileged power, still shines brightly. It is worth being carried forward by those of us dedicated to running the race. We have not given up on our country or our people or the quest for a Promised Land of justice and mercy. I for one believe that we are reaching the high water mark of hate, the last protracted gasp of those who have abandoned the continuing promise of America. The violent death throes of my tribe's grip on privilege may rightfully cause us concern. Much more should we fear the vacuum that might occur at its collapse. There is an original breach in our national fabric, a primordial gap in our compassion and spirituality. It will be filled either by more hate or a rebirth of love.

So let us love. Let us trust in one another and in whatever Providence we believe guides us. Let us be dedicated to model the community enshrined in sacred memory. Not in some utopia, but at our latitude and our longitude, let us realize the meaning of being one nation, of the people, by the people, for the people, under God, however God is defined or perceived by us, indivisible, no matter how diversely gifted, with responsible liberty and passionate justice for all.

**Check out the newly revamped  
Congregation Health Corner.**

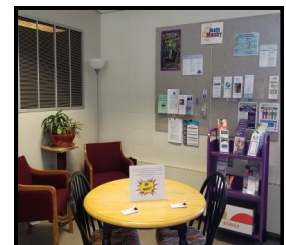
It is full of easy-to-read health and wellness-related information.

New material is added monthly – stop by and see what is new!

For more info, contact Maeleen Thorius.

**P.S. It is that time of year again –**

**Get Your Flu Shot!**





# *Love to Give?*



*Donate to FPC's Endowment Fund and support the ministries you care about now and forever. You will be amazed at what you receive in return.*



Supporting our endowment fund is one of the best ways you can ensure that our church's mission and vision will thrive for years to come.

*For more information, contact Bob and Millie Youngquist at [endowment@firstpresioiwacity.org](mailto:endowment@firstpresioiwacity.org) or 319-653-4673.*

## **Recommendations from a Financial Advisor**

Want to itemize your tax deductions in 2018? Pre-pay your 2019 pledge before 12/31/2018 and you may exceed your standard deduction and receive extra tax benefits for your generosity. The congregation benefits and so do you! The standard deduction in 2018 for Married Filing Jointly is \$24,000; for Head of Household it is \$18,000; and for a single person, it is \$12,000.

Did you know that some persons will be doubling their anticipated pledge this year? By doing so, the contribution that they make helps them exceed the standard deduction. Next year they can take the standard deduction. They will then alternate that pattern in subsequent years. In this way, the taxpayer itemizes in one year and takes the standard deduction in the following year. The congregation benefits and so do you!

Also, If you are 70½ years old, you are required to begin taking a minimum distribution from your IRA, 403b or 401k. You can reduce the tax burden on that income and satisfy the Internal Revenue Code by transferring the required minimum distribution directly to the church. The congregation benefits and so do you!

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



**Public Office Hours:**  
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Monday - Friday  
*except holidays or when announced*  
Ph 319-351-2660  
[www.firstpresidiowacity.org](http://www.firstpresidiowacity.org)

**Give Glory to God, recognize a loved one, and  
beautify our sanctuary this Christmas!**

This is your opportunity to give in memory of or in honor of a loved one towards the poinsettia plants that will glorify God and add to the beauty of our Sanctuary this Christmas.

**Simply fill out and return to the church office with your donation by December 16.**

Please place \_\_\_\_\_ poinsettia plant(s) (\$15 each poinsettia plant) in our church sanctuary.

This gift is made to the Glory of God!

In honor of \_\_\_\_\_

OR

In memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: **First Presbyterian Church**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ or Email \_\_\_\_\_

You may take your plant home after the 7 p.m. Christmas Eve service.

The remaining plants will remain in the Sanctuary after Christmas.

The Deacons wish to recognize your generosity; thank you. All gifts and memorials will be acknowledged in the Christmas Eve bulletins. Questions: contact Sue Van Duyn-Phipps at 338-4132. Thank you!



**First Presbyterian Church Staff**

MINISTER OF WORSHIP AND ARTS

*Leah Bergman*

[leah.bergman@firstpresidiowacity.org](mailto:leah.bergman@firstpresidiowacity.org)

DIRECTOR OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

*Dennis Pedde*

[dennis.pedde@firstpresidiowacity.org](mailto:dennis.pedde@firstpresidiowacity.org)

ORGANIST

*Melissa Moll*

[melissa.moll@firstpresidiowacity.org](mailto:melissa.moll@firstpresidiowacity.org)

MINISTER OF PROGRAMMING AND  
COMMUNICATIONS

*Tammy Schroeder*

[tammy.schroeder@firstpresidiowacity.org](mailto:tammy.schroeder@firstpresidiowacity.org)

MINISTER OF EQUIPPING PROGRAMS

*Anna Sheetz*

[anna.sheetz@firstpresidiowacity.org](mailto:anna.sheetz@firstpresidiowacity.org)

ASSISTANT MINISTER OF EQUIPPING  
PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS

*Judy Whitford*

[judy.whitford@firstpresidiowacity.org](mailto:judy.whitford@firstpresidiowacity.org)

ASSISTANT MINISTER OF EQUIPPING  
PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH, YOUNG ADULT,  
AND HOSPITALITY

*Layne Sheetz*

[layne.sheetz@firstpresidiowacity.org](mailto:layne.sheetz@firstpresidiowacity.org)

NURSERY SUPERVISOR

*Debbie Torrens-Semler*

[deb.torrens-semler@firstpresidiowacity.org](mailto:deb.torrens-semler@firstpresidiowacity.org)

FINANCIAL SECRETARY

*Saira Steen*

[saira.steen@firstpresidiowacity.org](mailto:saira.steen@firstpresidiowacity.org)

MINISTER OF STEWARDSHIP AND  
MANAGEMENT

*Tammy Foster*

[tammy.foster@firstpresidiowacity.org](mailto:tammy.foster@firstpresidiowacity.org)

SEXTON

*Gerald Hill*

[gerald.hill@firstpresidiowacity.org](mailto:gerald.hill@firstpresidiowacity.org)

PASTOR

*Sam Massey*

[sam.massey@firstpresidiowacity.org](mailto:sam.massey@firstpresidiowacity.org)