


We are excited to bring you **Realm**! It is our new church software that helps us get connected and stay connected. It is replacing My First Pres.



Through **Realm** you will be able to:

- ◆ Manage your personal information
- ◆ Oversee your giving
- ◆ Keep in touch with the Newsfeed feature
- ◆ Use the Online Directory

You will receive an email on August 23, saying **Welcome to Realm**, use the link provided in the email to create a new password or set up a new account.

Once you are registered in **Realm**, you will be able to download the mobile app, **Realm Connect** from Apple App Store or Google Play Store. Look for this icon.  **Realm Connect** works the same as the Church Life app did.

You will have all the features of **Realm** in the palm of your hand. You will use the same password for both **Realm** and **Realm Connect**.

Tammy Schroeder will be available to assist you before and after worship on Sunday, August 27; or you may stop by the office during the week with your questions.

## Join Us on September 17: Survey Results and Small-Group Discussions

*by Nancy Gardner*

Thank you to everyone who has filled out the online questionnaire asking for ways the church can utilize large donations in important and meaningful ways. (Please check the church's latest weekly email to see what I'm referring to.) The Stewardship Committee is collecting all ideas and looks forward to sharing them in the near future. Haven't had a chance to share your thoughts? There's still time! Just go to this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HRTLVM8> and answer the two questions.

**Now, here is the important part!** On Sunday, September 17, after worship, the Stewardship and Endowment Committees will be hosting the opportunity for small-group discussions on the survey results and generating additional ideas. Everyone is welcome to participate as we want to hear all suggestions.

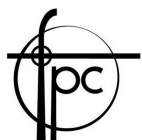
So, mark your calendars and plan to attend this opportunity to have your voice heard!

**Sunday, September 17,  
after worship**



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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH U.S.A.  
2701 Rochester Ave. • Iowa City • Iowa •  
319-351-2660 • [www.firstpresidiowacity.org](http://www.firstpresidiowacity.org)

*Mission*

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, to share  
the Word of God through Jesus Christ  
and to live lives of justice, mercy, and faith.



***Dear Church,***

I'm writing to you freshly back from England, where we spent a lovely time with Beth's family, my brother, and some old friends. It was good to have the opportunity to be away and reflect on life here and the patterns of life that we will continue to form together as our ministry grows into the future.



## Pastor's *Letter*

I arrived back from England just in time to make it to the last two nights of the our Vacation Bible Experience. Even in my jet-lagged state that accompanied jumping 6 time zones and a 4-hour drive from O'Hare, I saw the great fun our youth were having as the team Anna had assembled led them in games (Mark Beerends and Alex Voss), built up crafts reminding us of Jesus's story (Meg Dehner), learned songs about Jesus (Kyle Coleman and Sarah Beerends), and learned to interact with those stories (Nancy Gardner, Leann Graves, Perry Ross, Margaret MacInnis, Jen Adams, Perry Ross, Emmanuel Bonsu, and Layne Sheetz). My family joined Rhonda Barr, Mary Ellen Stamp, the Session, Stephanie Stamp, and Sharon Raffensperger in the kitchen to give both the youth and the leadership team a good meal to kick things off. As we did the dishes and wiped down the tables, it gave us the chance to reflect on all the opportunities interacting with the younger members of our church family give us. Every time I speak with one of our junior high students about God, I come away with a different perspective than my own, and am challenged to think about God in ways different than the ones I grew up with. Every time I sit down to visit with one of our elementary school members, I learn something new about their lives and their family that gives me a new point of connection with them, as I continue my own journey of building a life in this new Iowa City, so different from the one I left in 1996.

I like to think of the Bible as the story of God and God's People; very rarely do we encounter truly individual stories in it. Some of you may immediately respond, "what of Jonah, sitting in the belly of a fish?" Even there, Jonah's great sin was avoiding God's instruction to go and save a city (which he later compounded by being angry at God for saving it). If there is a consistent theme, from the beginning of creation through to Jesus's resurrection and the miracles of the early church, it is that God is found in community. So I was thrilled to be a part of our FPC family as we spent an intensive week immersed in VBX. And I leave it with a challenge: if you weren't able to be a part of it this year, whether in planning, teaching, cooking, cleaning, setting up, or bringing in some of the amazing 370 pounds of gifts of food, diapers, laundry detergent, and menstrual items, find a way to join us next year. Come to learn as so many of us learned, and be inspired to see God with the eyes of a child once more. Or, even better, join us during our program year, beginning September 10. Every week gives us new opportunities to build connections with younger generations.

Grace and Peace,  
Pastor Nathan



## Elders Answer the Question of Why They Give To FPC

*Submitted by Nancy Gardner, Stewardship Committee Moderator*

I've written quite a bit over the last several months about determining your "Why" for pledging to FPC. In the beginning, I covered the importance of knowing the church's mission statement. That part about "living lives of justice, mercy, and faith" along with being "empowered by the Holy Spirit" and "sharing the word of God" can make for some pretty deep thinking.

Along with knowing the mission statement and what we at FPC are all about, I provided a framework called the 5 Whys for you to discover the true reason you give to the church. Essentially, you start with a general statement about why you give and answer the statement with, Why is this important to me? You conduct this response and question of Why? for a total of five times. Once that fifth Why? is answered, the real reason you give becomes apparent. What people usually discover is an event or response that really connected them to the church. If you haven't tried the 5 Whys, give it a go; you may be surprised where this takes you.

Session members will be sharing their Whys with you in this and upcoming newsletters. This month, we're hearing from Elders Jane Cranston and Jen Adams.

*I consider First Presbyterian Church to be my church home and have for over 20 years. This is a community of people who care about each other, and inspire me by their example. We have enjoyed all the classes, retreats, and events over the years. I am especially proud to be part of the Friends of Pasrur, which works hard to get scholarships for impoverished Christian girls in Pakistan every year.*

*~Jane Cranston*

*I give to First Presbyterian Church, because I feel it is a part of my home and family. My church community provides a place of spiritual connectedness for myself and my daughter. I want to be a part of sustaining the love and teaching of Jesus and the FPC community, but also help fulfill our collective mission of outreach and support to those in God's world, in Iowa City, and beyond.*

*~Jen Adams*

**Eat Out Group**  
Aug 24 6 p.m.



Hwy 1, near Walmart  
Gary & Anita Burnett, Hosts  
319-325-7640



**The Cookie Walk is Back!**  
(no bazaar items)

December 9  
9 a.m.—Noon  
Ryerson Hall

More details coming soon.  
Contact Deb Boland with questions:  
Deb.Boland@gmail.com

### **Hello, First Family!**

The peace of The Lord be with you. I hope your summer has gone well, that it was both restful and joyful. While I have missed seeing the weekly hustle and bustle of the sanctuary and handbell choirs these past couple of months, I have been so satisfied with the variety of service music that *you* have provided so faithfully. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your generosity and support.



Over the course of this month, summer scheduling will be coming to a close and we will turn our focus toward the new program year. Ideas are brewing in my head for Advent and Christmas (and even Lent and Easter!), but the ordinary days until then will look a little different too. **I am happy to announce that Youth Choir will be revived, beginning on Sunday, September 17!** The specifics of what that will look like will continue to be worked out by both Anna and me, though we will start by rehearsing only a couple of weeks each month as part of regular youth group meetings—which is to say, it requires no more of a time commitment from parents and their offspring than youth group currently does. I am thrilled to spread the wealth of our music ministry to one of the younger facets of our church family! I thank Anna, personally, for being cooperative with my ideas.

Sanctuary choir will resume weekly rehearsals beginning Wednesday, September 6, and JuBELLation will resume our work on Sunday, September 10. I do love staying busy with a variety of projects, and the fine folks and factions of FPC certainly keep me moving along! I am blessed to have you participate with me.

Best wishes to you all,  
J. Kyle Coleman

*J. Kyle Coleman,*

FPC continues to support the CommUnity Food Bank. During the month of August, let's fill our tubs with non-perishable food, hygiene items, paper products and baby items. Products may be left in Ryerson Hall.



### **Join the FPC Book Club**



August 29, at 11:30 to discuss the book [Homegoing](#) by Yaa Gyasi.

Hybrid option available- meet in person in Coover Lounge or via Zoom.

For more information, contact Mary Linn [jmLnn@aol.com](mailto:jmLnn@aol.com).

### **Unitarian Universalist Society to Open Learning Space**



In late August, the Unitarian Universalist Society will be opening the Learning Space, which will be a place that trans, queer, and other marginalized children and youth who are enrolled in an online or homeschool program will be able to have a safe, supportive community in which to learn. This will be an alternative to virtual learning from home for students in grades 1–12.

We will host an open house for folks who are interested in the Learning Space on Wednesday, August 9. We will do a tour at 6:30 p.m. and a Q & A at 7 p.m.

Visit the Learning Space: <https://www.uusic.org/uus-learning-space/>

Register to attend: <https://forms.gle/6XX8dtP9PLpFFwH39>

Volunteer sign up: <https://forms.gle/GeDHJvUPJYUJYpB18>



# First's Family

Do you have a news item for the First's Family News? Send Tammy Foster an email by September 1 to [tammy.foster@firstpreswiowacity.org](mailto:tammy.foster@firstpreswiowacity.org). Thank you!

## August 15-31

8/16 Ben Faden  
8/16 Charlie Faden  
8/17 Steve Dodge  
8/18 Kyle Coleman  
8/20 David Van Dusseldorp  
8/20 Braden Brentner  
8/21 John Clark  
8/23 Millie Youngquist  
8/24 Becky Ross  
8/25 Mike Youngquist

8/26 Jean Mafirira  
8/27 John Feagins  
8/27 Thomas Morgan  
8/29 Lydia Schroeder  
8/31 Linda Younkin  
8/31 Teddy Willard



## September 1-15

9/5 Nile Fay  
9/9 Doran Pearson  
9/13 Perry Ross  
9/14 Janie Schomberg  
9/15 Steve Semler



*Known*

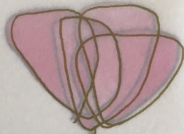
*to have been*

*Hospitalized:* **Mike Sheetz and Jane Cranston**

## Notes of Thanks

*from Amy Nicholson*

Sometimes  
you will never know  
the value of  
a moment  
until it becomes  
a memory.



thank  
you

I want to thank all those who made Mom and Dad (Janice and Herb Wilson) feel so cared for. 50 year members—Wow! It's hard to believe. They loved the people and all that they were involved with. When driving became too difficult they began attend St. Andrew and found that to be a wonderful second "family."

Chitoka Webb sent us greetings from California, and appreciation for her monetary gift from her FPC family.

*Dear Friends,*

*Though I was grateful for the special offering for my graduation gift, it was meaningful to me because it came from you.*

*When it comes to caring for one another and treating people with the love of Christ, at First Presbyterian Church, Iowa City, the wheel doesn't have to be reinvented. Thank you for always believing in me and saving a seat at the table for me.*

*Warm regards,  
Chitoka Webb*



VBX was a TREMENDOUS week and it could not have happened without the families and the adult support. With over 28 youth and 20 adults, this was inspiring, exciting, and exhausting! We can't wait to see what Fall programming brings!



**Ryan Brentner** recently graduated from City High School in Iowa City and will be attending St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota. In high school Ryan was involved in Choir, Show Choir, Orchestra and

Drama. She also served as a member of Session and participated in youth group at First Pres. Ryan plans to study political science over the next four years as well as become a member of the St. Olaf choir and participate in student organizations.



Ben and Charlie Faden worked as counselors at Camp Wyoming this Summer!

Lila MacInnis-Baumert, placed **FIRST** in the **NATION** for **TUMBLING** in her age group!



The Good Giving Challenge at VBX raised **370 POUNDS** of goods for **CommUnity Food Bank of Iowa City!**



**Do you want to know more** about the Dodekah Trip to Scotland in May?

**Do you want to hear about** what God did, how we grew, and what we learned about a different theological root that we never knew?

**All this and more:**

Join the Dodekah group to see the pictures, hear the stories, AND ask your questions.

**After church, Sunday, September 10.**

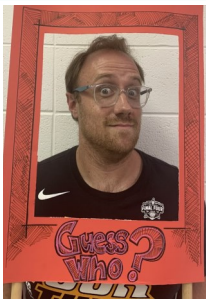




made VBX a most triumphant week for all!

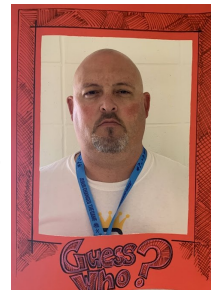
### The Miraculous Middle School Leadership Team!

Fearlessly leading 5th–8th graders through the Twists & Turns of VBX, Layne Sheetz, Emmanuel Bonsu, and Stephanie Stamp succeeded in a fun-filled week for all!



### The Strategic Sports Team!

How do you have kids, exhausted after a sunny summer day, take turns? Only Alex Voss and Mark Beerends know! The games and activities played with them will make memories for youth to treasure forever.



### The Masterful Artist!

When we had more friends attend than expected, Megan Dehner was cool as a cucumber. Using her creative mind and Art Degree, she made sure everyone got the craft of their dreams ... and even made this Guess Who sign for Anna's crazy dream!



### The Angel of Kitchen Miracles

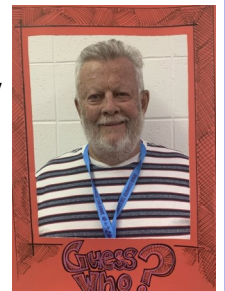
VBX would not have happened without this ANGEL here. Sharon Raffensperger took time, energy, and devotion to keep dishes clean and the kitchen in top shape for our adventures!



### The Stupendous Duo!

These two floated through the week with the grace and poise we have come to know at First

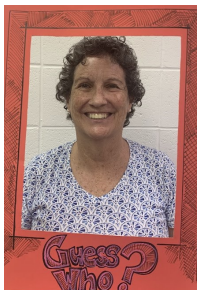
Presbyterian Church! Margaret MacInnis and Perry Ross patiently drew their Elementary students closer to Jesus this week!



### The Spectacular Three!

Have you ever been in a room with a gaggle of 5–6 years olds? These three have! And to teach this rambunctious crew about Jesus, no

less! Surely a miracle that only Nancy Gardner, Leann Graves, and Jen Adams can pull off!



### The Musical Two!

Teaching three different age groups for five nights straight to sing AND dance is surely a feat! No one could have done it as well as Kyle Coleman and Sarah

Beerends!





## Classes offered beginning Sunday, September 10:

K–2nd Grade Sunday School Class: Art Room  
3rd–6th Grade Sunday School Class: Youth Room

Wired Word/ ZOOM: Room 14

Parent's Group: The Pastor's Place

Bible Study\*: Coover Lounge

This Bible Study will be offered for people 7th Grade and older. This class will be a Bible Study devoted to the study and reading of the Scripture.

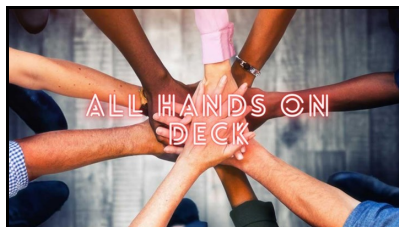
If a student in 7th grade and older is uninterested in the offered classes, there are opportunities to serve and learn more about the church!

## Sunday School for All Ages Starts Sunday, September 10!

9–9:30 a.m. Breakfast & Opening Activity  
9:30–10:15 a.m. Classes Breakout  
10:30 a.m. Worship Together!

We are looking for who is interested in  
Sunday School this Year!

To make these spectacular activities happen come Sunday, September 10, we need ***all hands on deck***.



Adults—please consider volunteering to lead a Sunday School, help Anna out in a youth group, or even hangout with the youngest in the Nursery on a Sunday morning! **Talk to Anna today about where you might fit this fall!**

## The Biggest Game Kickoff Event and Potluck Dinner

Sunday, September 10  
4 p.m.  
Potluck Dinner  
6 p.m.



### The 3 G's

Gather, Grow, and Games

This group is for students **5th–12th Grade**. This larger Group will build relationships with each other and the church—we'll learn theological topics, scripture, and of course, we will play a game!

### The 3 T's

Thinking Thoughts Theologically

This group is for students **7th–12th Grade**. In this group, we will spend intentional time tracking down the "answers" to the many questions youth have!

### A New Sunday PM Schedule:

4–4:45 p.m.	The 3 G's (5th–12th Graders)
4:45–5:45 p.m.	Youth Choir / Game (5–12 <sup>th</sup> Graders)
6–6:45 p.m.	Dinner
6:45–7:30 p.m.	The 3 T's (7th–12th Graders)

**The best part?** Students in 5th Grade will be in the community of the Youth Group! Students in 7th Grade can hang out with their friends AND dig deeper into their faith! It's all for the flexible faith that families and youth need in their lives!

### Each Month\* will have:

- 1 Night of a BIG GAME all together (*Sink the Ship, anyone?*)
- 1 Night of a BIG EVENT & Potluck with our friends at UCC
- 2 Nights of Youth Choir with our favorite groovin' dude, Kyle!

*\*Well, almost every month, some months are weird!*





## Simple Ways to Give

The FPC Endowment and Memorials Committee  
Bob and Millie Youngquist, Coordinators

One of the simplest ways to leave a gift to First Presbyterian Church is to use the beneficiary designation on savings and retirement accounts, as well as life insurance policies. These can be done with no cost, and typically only require one to sign a new beneficiary designation form.

Retirement assets and similar accounts are called Income in Respect of a Decedent (IRD) assets. This is taxable income that's earned during life, but not received before death, so it is never included in an income tax return. These may be assets in Individual Retirement Accounts or 403(b) plans, accrued interest on Certificates of Deposit and savings bonds, nonqualified stock options, deferred payments of capital gains, or other income that is earned, but not acquired.

Naming the church as the beneficiary of these assets gives the estate and heirs the best tax benefits, since it avoids both income and estate taxes.

Life insurance that is no longer needed also can be an excellent gift, too. Naming the church as a primary or contingent beneficiary of an existing or new life insurance policy will result in a federal estate tax deduction for the full amount of the proceeds payable to the church regardless of policy size.

Because individual situations vary, be sure to consult your financial and tax advisors, as well as Bob and Millie Youngquist (319-653-4673) or Pastor Nathan Willard (319-351-2660).

*Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine. -- Proverbs 3:9-10*

### Join TeamFPC to Walk to End Alzheimer's on Saturday, September 23.



Look for the **Sign Up table in Ryerson Hall beginning September 3**. You will be able to sign up to walk and make donations to help us reach our team goal of \$1,500. All money raised will go to the Alzheimer's Association for research and to enhance care and support for all affected by this disease.

Use this link to donate directly: <http://act.alz.org/goto/TeamFPC>

#### Facts About Alzheimer's:

- It is the 6th leading cause of death in the U.S. and the only cause of death in the top 10 that cannot be prevented, cured, or slowed.
- 1 in 3 seniors die with Alzheimer's/dementia.
- More than 6 million people in the U.S. are living with the disease.
- Someone develops Alzheimer's/dementia every 66 seconds and 2/3 of them are women.

For more info contact Tammy Schroeder at 351-2660.



The Presbyterian Education Board (PEB) are celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Denationalization of their schools in Pakistan. I was asked by Veda to write an article about the denationalization from the perspective of First Presbyterian Church, Iowa City.

## **The Denationalization of Presbyterian Education Board Schools and a Partnership with First Presbyterian Church of Iowa City**

*by Jane Cranston*

In 1999, our minister, Rev. Tom Finley Brown, called to ask if Ed and I could host a guest from Pakistan for a week. I said we would be glad to, never realizing it would lead to a lifetime of purposeful adventure. Veda Javaid Gill was traveling as part of an exchange program sponsored by PC USA (Presbyterian Church of the United States of America). The goal was to have Presbyterians from all over the world get to know each other and make meaningful connections. When Veda arrived, we felt an instant rapport. She was a wonderful addition to our family. Veda and I became fast friends and have been close ever since.

In 1972, the private Presbyterian schools in Pakistan had been taken away from the Presbyterian Church there and given to the government to become public schools. The process was called “nationalizing” the schools. Veda carried a stack of pictures showing what had happened to them while under the government’s care. The buildings looked as if they had been bombed. The roofs had collapsed. The windows were gone. Everything was dusty and full of debris. Even the schools’ furniture was missing or destroyed. Through neglect and mismanagement, the buildings were now ruined and unsafe. It was in this state of total disrepair, that the buildings have been returned to the Pakistani Presbyterians. PEB was thrilled to have them back, but also overwhelmed. In Pakistan, Christians are a persecuted minority, and they did not have funds to rebuild the schools.

Veda met with many groups of people at our church and shared the story of Pakistan and the denationalization of the PEB schools. Later that year, Elaine Markuson, a member of FPC, went to Pakistan to help and came back full of enthusiasm. When Rev. Ed Morgan arrived, as our new pastor, he was a true advocate for the PEB schools and for Veda’s mission of goodwill. After Rev. Morgan retired, he became the Executive Director of Friends of PEB. He guided many trips to Pakistan and was instrumental in creating the Friends of PEB as a nonprofit organization. His leadership, vision, and hard work were a godsend to the PEB.

Over the years that followed, First Presbyterian Church of Iowa City, has sponsored a number of buildings at



Jane Cranston and Veda Javaid and her first visit to Iowa 1999.



Rev. Edward Morgan with some of the students from the Pasrur school.

the Pasrur Christian Girls School including the Multipurpose Hall, the Science and Computer Center, the Pasrur Boardinghouse, and a two-story classroom block. FPC was also invested in the construction of the Gill-Nicholson Boys School. In 2007, the FPC Mission Committee established the Friends of Pasrur, dedicated to finding scholarships for impoverished Christian girls to attend the Pasrur Christian Girls Boardinghouse. We have sponsored full scholarships for 100 girls at this boardinghouse each year since then.

Since our first visit from Veda Gill, back in 1999, our church has given millions of dollars for brick-and-

*(Continued on page 11)*



(Continued from page 10)

mortar buildings and scholarships for impoverished Christian girls. We, however, are the real beneficiaries of this partnership. We have had the great satisfaction of helping deserving, young people to get the advantage of an education. We have watched our students grow and flourish with pride. We have grown together as a congregation and experienced the sense of grace that comes from giving to others. The Pasrur mission has been a wonderful asset for our church, and we have been blessed by it.

Veda has been our constant friend, our inspiration, and our trusted partner since we hosted her in 1999. She has visited our church every year (except during the pandemic) and escorted four trips for FPC members to Pasrur, Pakistan. Veda is our guide in terms of supporting the PEB schools, always seeing that all details are managed and agreements maintained. Working across cultures and languages can be a challenge, and we could not have done it without Veda's constant and conscientious support.

Veda has preached many sermons in our church and brought us spiritual inspiration. Her life itself is an inspiration, and her faith is powerful and contagious. When someone has a personal tragedy, Veda provides meaningful support and love to help them through their difficult times. I know that this has been a meaningful experience for me. The force of Veda's spirit, her vision, and her faith have made the denationalization of Presbyterian schools a true story of success and an act of inspiring faith.



FPC's Friends of Pasrur at one of our famous potlucks.



Students at the Pasrur school send us a thank you message.

?? ? Bible Quiz ? ?

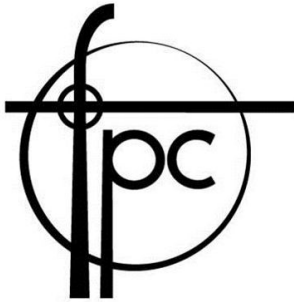
How many times in the Old Testament do people cross a body of water on dry ground?

- A. once
- B. twice
- C. three times
- D. four times

Answer: C (See Exodus 14; Joshua 3; 2 Kings 2.)



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