

FIRST'S FAMILY



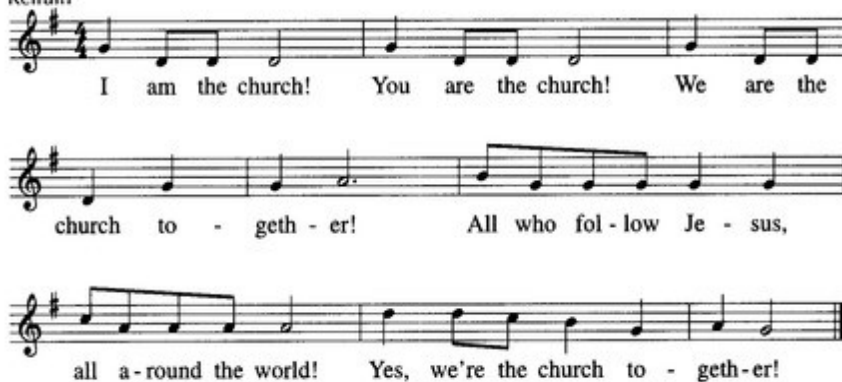
**Aug. 15 — Sept. 15
2020**
Volume 64 Issue 7



Thank you to all who are helping the church run during this time! From organizing and planning, checking on the building, providing masks and puzzles, reaching out with a phone call, giving money, leading worship virtually, praying, leading small groups, teaching children and grandchildren, and so much more! This is what it means to truly be the church. The church is not a building—the church is the people!

We Are the Church

Refrain



Verses



Text: Richard K. Avery and Donald S. Marsh
Tune: PORT JERVIS, 7 7 8 7 with refrain; Richard K. Avery and Donald S. Marsh
© 1972, Hope Publishing Co.

Inside this issue:

Oglesby Scholarship Awards	3
Nominating Committee	4
First's Family	5
Options for Meditation	6
Equipping Ministry	7
Pasrur School Updates	8
Session Highlights,	9
Money Matters	10



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH U.S.A.

2701 Rochester Ave. • Iowa City • Iowa • 319-351-2660 • www.firstpresioiowacity.org

Dear sisters and brothers of First Presbyterian Church,

The grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you!

Some years ago, a Native American colleague of mine taught a course on the spirituality of everyday life. Such spirituality can take a variety of forms:

1. Housecleaning invites each room to be a particular type of prayer: adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication (using the traditional categories), and you can add your own.
2. Gardening invites us to consider the changes we wish to make in life as we weed.
3. The snoring dog reminds us to breathe in God's Spirit and to breathe out all to which we are overly attached.
4. Wiggling fingers and toes bring to mind all the blessings with which we have been showered.
5. The flowers outside of our window affirm that all of creation shouts to the glory of God, and our hearts can shout too.
6. The nightly news calls our attention to all those matters and people in need of our prayers.
7. Trouble falling to sleep invites prayers on our knees to give to God the burdens of the day . . .

I invite you to create your own prayer practices out of the daily tedium of pandemic life. Recall that many of the great monastics did the same while locked in their tiny living quarters. You and I probably have more space and more distractions, giving room to even more creative prayer practices.

Please don't waste all that wasted time, prayer warrior and human interaction mendicant! Use the minutes and hours wisely and turn the wasting into waiting, as in "those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength!" (Isaiah 40:31).

Love, prayers, and blessings,

Your pastor, Sam



Hi from Sewing for a Cause

A small but mighty group of ladies have made heart comfort pillows for mastectomy and heart surgery patients, port pillows to cushion against a seat belt, and fidget squares and books for Alzheimer and dementia patients. We met Thursday mornings from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. **Thanks to Jane Skinner, Judy Terry, Kathy Smith, Pam Kautz, Jeri Smith, May Ellen Stamp, Sally Rickey, and Sue Dallam and friends from Legacy.**

We started making the mastectomy pillows in our Tuesday evening Eve Circle group in April of 2018. Since that time we have donated over 200 pillows to the hospital. We have 30 mastectomy pillows already made for the University Hospital, waiting for them to start accepting donations again. We received a wonderful thank you recently from a mastectomy patient.

Hello there! I just wanted to thank the ladies and or Gentlemen in the Eve Circle for the wonderful pillows after my surgery for a Mastectomy at the University of Iowa. What a wonderful deed that was. And What a relief on the way home! Please thank whomever did this nice gesture, it really really helped me! It was greatly appreciated!

Many of our church members have been using this time at home making cloth face masks for various nursing homes, non-profits, church members, friends, and family members. We have a supply of masks in various sizes available at the church just inside the front door by the picture puzzles. If the masks are all gone, please email Sally Rickey at sarah0654@mchsi.com.

If you have masks to donate please place individually in a plastic bag and mark the size and if for adult or child.



Three FPC Students Awarded Oglesby Scholarships

Three FPC University of Iowa students have been awarded the William B. and Sharon P. Oglesby Scholarship for the 2020-2021 school year. Recipients are: Rebecca Bigaba, Alex Marsh and Logan Schroeder.

Alex is the daughter of Lara and Andrew Marsh and will be a freshman this fall majoring in biology, with interests in human physiology and global health. She's been enjoying riding horses this summer and is looking forward to exploring new interests this fall.



Logan is the son of Darin and Tammy Schroeder. This fall he will be a senior at the University of Iowa majoring in Film Studies with a minor in American Sign Language. In his spare time, he enjoys fishing, playing video games and hanging out with friends. He graduated from Kirkwood with academic honors in May 2019. Future plans may include Grad School at UW-Milwaukee Peck School of the Arts or an internship at a local TV station.

Rebecca is the daughter of Edmond and Aziza Bigaba. She graduated from Iowa City High School in 2017 and is currently a public health major and a social justice minor at the University of Iowa.



Congratulations to these students and their families. God bless you as you start a new school year!



The Community Prayer Box, aka, the Prayer Post, celebrates its first year of serving our neighborhood friends. During that time we have received 26 prayer requests (average of 2 a month), given out 2 Bibles, and too many FPC pens to count.

In these challenging times it is easy to become overwhelmed; maybe it's time to stop by, pick up a scripture card and release a prayer.

Remember, Pray More – Worry Less



Seeks Candidates for Deacon and Elder Positions

The Nominating Committee is beginning to prepare a slate of candidates for the next classes of Deacons and Elders. If you know of someone in the congregation who you believe would serve us well, please contact one of these members of the Nominating Committee: Rhonda Barr, Jeremy Fletcher, Jane Skinner, Mary Ellen Stamp, Carol Ulch or Leann Graves (Moderator). Self-nominations are welcome as well!

Here are the definitions of *Deacon* and *Elder* as found in the **Book of Order 2019-2021**:

“The ministry of deacon...is one of compassion, witness, and service, sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures, or anyone in distress. Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, sincere compassion, and sound judgment should be chosen for this ministry.”

“Ruling elders, together with ministers of the Word and Sacrament, exercise leadership, government, spiritual discernment, and discipline and have responsibilities for the life of a congregation as well as the whole church, including ecumenical relationships. Accordingly, congregations should elect persons of wisdom and maturity of faith, having demonstrated skills in leadership and being compassionate in spirit.”

Leann Graves
Moderator, Nominating Committee
lgraves@mchsi.com
319-621-7020

Let Your Faith Sound Forth!

1 Thessalonians 1:8

Due to the pandemic and the challenges of being “the church gathered” right now, our Session has left to Pastor Sam and our faithful staff persons the responsibility to communicate about our 2021 stewardship campaign. Our theme comes from a congregation in Thessalonica under stress in changing times. The courageous congregation there had a reputation for boldness in adversity and unity in the midst of wider cultural fragmentation. The apostle Paul spoke of this reputation: Like a bell, chime, or horn, the faith of the Thessalonians “sounded forth” throughout the region.

This is who we are too. From our *Parents Night Out* program to *Pasur*, *Pakistan*, and in spite of the pandemic, your faith has been heard and celebrated.

As the logo above shows up in your church communications through October 25, Pledge Sunday, please read them carefully. This season is one that requires the prayerful, reflective engagement of all of us. Thank you!

First's Family

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

August 15-31

8/14 Judy Terry
8/15 Gary Olson
8/16 Tony Warren
8/16 Ben Faden
8/16 Charlie Faden
8/17 Steve Dodge
8/20 Braden Brenter
8/20 David Van Dusseldorp
8/20 Lauren Dengler
8/21 John Clark
8/23 Millie Youngquist
8/24 Becky Ross
8/26 Jean Mafirira
8/27 John Feagins
8/27 Thomas Morgan
8/28 Doug Gwinn
8/31 Linda Younkin



September 1-15

9/1 Nathan Woodburn
9/3 Alicia Andrews
9/8 Marilou Gay
9/8 DJ Massey
9/9 Doran Pearson
9/13 Perry Ross
9/14 Janie Schomberg



***Known
to have been
Hospitalized:***

Judy Brinkmeyer

Zoom Evening Prayer Service Wednesdays in September 7:00 p.m.

Beginning Wednesday, September 2, Leah Bergman will be offering a brief evening prayer service via Zoom from 7:00 p.m.–7:30 p.m. with some time to visit after the service if desired.

The service will consist of prayer, scripture, and simple a capella sung responses. I hope you can join this worship service.





Come visit the labyrinth and meditation garden at the church—located at the bottom of the parking lot.

You might consider making a ritual of visiting and walking the labyrinth this summer. If you live close by, make it your mid-week devotion. Or, come early on a Sunday and ready yourself for worship by walking the labyrinth.

Not sure what to do?

How to Walk a Labyrinth

1. *Enter the space slowly, calming and clearing your mind.*
2. *You may choose to use a repeated prayer, mantra or chant.*
3. *Open your senses and focus on the process of taking slow and deliberate steps.*
4. *Bring to mind a prayer or spiritual question to contemplate during the walk to the center.*
5. *Reaching the center, pause to reflect, pray, listen for an answer or for deeper revelation.*
6. *Now begin the return journey.*
7. *Pray or reflect further.*
8. *Upon exiting, use further reflection, prayer, or journaling to absorb the experience.*

Go on a Prayer Walk

Take a walk around your neighborhood or town. Pray as you walk. Pray for your neighbors, their families, and any situations you know they are facing.

Quick, short sentences are ok! for example: "God, please be with the Smiths as they wait for their new baby to arrive and please help the baby to be healthy and strong." "God, please help Mrs. Thomas while she's sick and let her know how much you care for her."

If you walk through town, stop in front of city buildings to pray, like the police or fire station, city hall, or the courts. Ask God to give wisdom and protection to your city workers as they serve your town.

If you walk through nature, thank God for the way you see God at work through living and growing things.

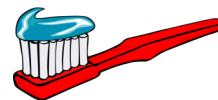


The Five Finger Prayer



Tooth Brushing Prayer Song

(Sung to the tune "Twinkle Twinkle")



Brushing teeth both morn and night helps my teeth stay clean and white.

Thank you God for mouths that chew, help them spread our love for you!

As I brush the gunk away hear this prayer I pray today.

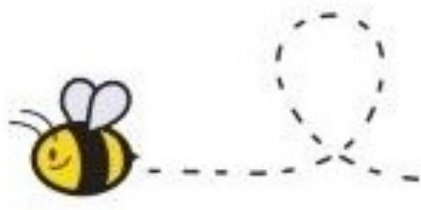
Laundry Prayer

When you empty the lint trap as you are doing your laundry say a quick prayer:

"God, help me remove the junk in my life that is keeping me away from you."

As you throw the lint away remember that God loves you and forgives you!





Equipping Ministry has been as busy as bees trying to see what ministry in Fall 2020 will look like! If we're honest, we're as lost as any of you – knowing that COVID-19 might once more ravage our community! Here's what is in the works:

- A 15-minute Sunday School at home experience, via ZOOM, beginning Sunday, August 16. This will be hosted with the Parent's Class on ZOOM Sunday mornings.
- A "Building Faith at Home" guide, produced by Anna Sheetz, to help parents navigate faithful family life.
- Anna and Layne are in communication with Youth Group participants on best tactics to re-entry.

Equipping Ministry is gauging the wisdom of the school system, the FPC Session, and our FPC Community to see what is best for gathering. We thank you for your patience and we're excited to give you a full 'plan of attack' in the September newsletter!

Thank you!



Over the past year, a group of 10–12 people have been journeying through the discomfort of a number of books and experiences dealing with our own roles in the racial injustice of America. From a "Book Club," the Jeremiah Justice Initiative was born. The name stems from Jeremiah 22:3

Thus says the Lord: Act with justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor anyone who has been robbed. And do no wrong or violence to the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place.

JJI, as it is simpler to say, has read *Waking Up White, So You Want to Talk About Race*, and *An Indigenous People's History of the United States* before arriving at our late summer session that began July 26 with the book *Me and White Supremacy* by Layla F. Saad. This is when our group grew. Over the last two weeks I have had the pleasure of working with between 22 and 24 people as we navigate the conversation of our place in a world of race. What does that mean for us? For me? As a white person in America these are introspective times, to say the least. As a Christian, we see many verses in scripture challenging us not only to act with justice but to deliver from the hand of the oppressor. Jesus commands us to love our neighbor. It is the hope of JJI to further put this into action.

As our group grows, the conversation becomes more personal, more challenging, and more actionable. It is our hope, as a group, that the whole church community will enter the conversation with us so that we can build common language to understand ourselves and our neighbors better. In doing so, we will be the hands and feet of Christ in our community as we learn to advocate, amplify, and ally with those who are oppressed. Let us lean into this conversation not as a group of 10, or of 20, but of our whole church community.

By: Layne Sheetz

Needles, Hooks & Yarn

- If you are in need of yarn but do not wish to go out, let me know; I have yarn at the church that I am happy to deliver with no contact.

Stay safe my friends
• More info: Tammy Schroeder 351-2660



FPC Book Club

Join us as we gather on the **LAST TUESDAY** of the month at **11:30 a.m. on Zoom**

For more info contact Mary Linn at JmLnn@aol.com

Aug. 25 Nothing to See Here by Kevin Wilson

Sept. 29 Before We Were Yours by Lisa Wingate





Pasrur School Updates

A Tree in Memory of Janice

A tree at the Pasrur School will be planted in memory of Janice Baumbach. The tree should last for over 100 years and will be a lovely tribute to our friend Janice's legacy of involvement at the Pasrur School. As many of you know, her relationship with the Presbyterian mission there goes back many years. Janice remembers visiting her grandparents who were Presbyterian missionaries at Forman Christian College in Lahore, Pakistan.

Thank You Notes Delayed

In a normal year, this is the time we are sending out the girls' thank you notes, along with requests for renewal of sponsorships. This year, the girls left school early due to COVID-19 so we did not receive our usual photographs and thank you notes in the spring.

The students will be returning to school August 15. We are hoping to have pictures and thank you notes for all our sponsors sometime early fall. This will put us seriously behind in our scholarship drive. If you would like to help, you can renew (or start) your sponsorship (for any amount). Here's the link:

You can donate online at: [Donate Online | First Presbyterian Church](#) under "Select a fund." Scroll down to "Pasrur Scholarship Fund."

You can also pay by check. Make checks out to *Iowa City First Presbyterian Church with Pasrur Scholarships in the memo line*. Mail to our church: 2701 Rochester Ave., Iowa City, IA 52245.

Your help making scholarship donations is greatly appreciated!

Because we are doing monthly Zoom meetings for our Friends of Pasrur group, we are able to have Veda at our meetings. What a blessing this has been! She tells us of the daily heroism of PEB staff who are helping people during this difficult time. It is so inspiring.

I envision the memorial tree supplying shade and beauty to the Pasrur campus. Like our scholarships, it will benefit students for many generations to come.

Jane Cranston
Friends of Pasrur

MAY 2020

Session

HIGHLIGHTS

Submitted by Ann Grosscup, Clerk of Session

A quorum of attending elders was declared shortly after 7 p.m., July 21, 2020, when Pastor Sam called the ZOOM meeting to order. Jeremy Fletcher opened with a racial reconciliation reflection on *Becoming a Just Church: Cultivating Communities of God's Shalom* by Adam Gustine. The book focuses on God's intention for Shalom – nothing's missing, nothing's broken; the church should be looking to tomorrow through today's work. Highlighted scripture was Isaiah 58: 6-12, which was followed by prayer.

John Barr, Convener, Technology Subcommittee, Capital Campaign Implementation Committee (CCIT) reminded of the Capital Campaign Mission Tithe plus the current status to both Pasrur and Iowa Valley Habitat for Humanity. Nancy Gardner, Co-Chair of Friends of Pasrur, updated session on the reason for directing the remaining \$5,000 due to Pasrur from physical building to supplies. The supplies are now needed for transitioning from solely indoor to safe distancing outdoor classrooms due to COVID-19.

MOTIONS APPROVED:

Friends of Pasrur proposes that \$5,000 from the Capital Campaign's Mission Tithe be sent to Friends of Presbyterian Education Board to address the challenges caused by COVID-19 at the Pasrur Boarding House/Christian School in Pakistan.

June 2020 financials received.

Minutes of stated session meeting June 16, 2020.

First Presbyterian Church will postpone the beginning of Phase 2 activities, as described in the Reentry Policy, from August 1 to September 1. Phase 3 activities will be scheduled to start on

October 1.

Session asks the appropriate ministries to explore options for safely holding an outdoor worship service in September. This would be a one-time event to determine whether this could be a repeatable activity.

First Presbyterian Church affirms that racial reconciliation in our community is a core value in our church's planning and organizational work.

Send out general congregational survey on July 27, 2020 with a 2nd tier more specific survey to be sent out at a later date. The survey's intent is to gauge the congregation's comfort level with returning to in-person worship.

The following motion was deferred for further discussion to Reconciliation Ministry Elder: Michelle Bessman; Reconciliation Member (knowledgeable about community needs): John Barr; Finance Cluster Elders: Dale Kraus, Tony Warren; REALM Planning Ministry: Jeremy Fletcher, moderator:

Session will release an additional \$50,000 from the Burianek Trust Fund for the Burianek Mission Match Challenge.

Status reports were given for the Task Force – Little Creations Academy Advisory Committee.

Pastor Sam and FPC staff members are now preparing the 2021 Stewardship Campaign, rather than Finance Cluster.

Please forward potential elder and deacon names to Leann Graves, Nominating Committee chair, or Jeremy Fletcher, elder member.

Pastor Sam Massey closed with prayer.

Next Scheduled Stated meeting: August 18, 2020, 7 p.m. via ZOOM.

Stated Clerk, Dr. Rebecca Blair, moderator.

Vern Dengler, Opening Devotions; Steve Smith, Closing Prayer



Dale Kraus, Interim Treasurer

	Contributions	Misc. Income <small>Building Use, Walker Trust, Bank interest, etc.</small>	Total Income	Total Expenses	Over/Short
1st Quarter	\$153,565.33	\$758.93	\$154,324.26	\$146,202.53	\$8,121.73
2nd Quarter	\$99,725.72	\$90,912.61	\$190,638.33 *	\$135,409.80	\$55,228.53
July	\$29,510.16	\$28,909.31	\$58,419.47 *	\$42,678.02	\$15,741.45
2020 Totals	\$282,801.21	\$120,580.85	\$403,382.06	\$324,290.35	\$79,091.71

* Does not include SBA Loan income

FPC Public Declaration of Human Rights Support for Pro-Immigrant Policies

First Presbyterian Church, Iowa City (FPC), Session, affirms the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) policy:

- • Live out the Gospel call to love our neighbor and welcome the stranger;
- • Reunite parents and children who have been separated as soon as possible;
- • Advocate ending family detention;
- • Offer visitation programs and ensure attorneys for detained immigrants;
- • Advocate to stop the criminalization of immigrants.

FPC supports restoring the U.S. Government's humanitarian commitment to refugee resettlement.

Approved by Session 11/19/19

FPC chooses Welcome!

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