

## Helping our Community Through the Burianek Mission Match Challenge

As Pastor Sam detailed in the May/June *First's Family* newsletter (Item 2, on pages 2-3, <https://firstpreswacacity.org/wp-content/uploads/May-June2020-Website-Nwsltr.pdf>), Session approved the "Burianek Mission Match Challenge" and has invited the congregation to contribute to it. The COVID-19 task force of Session recognized quickly that human need has been rising exponentially in our community. Social service agencies have been overwhelmed. The Burianek Fund will match – dollar for dollar – up to \$25,000 of contributions. Combined, this will create a fund of \$50,000 to be distributed to meet human need during the pandemic, primarily through nonprofit agencies in our community. Per a charge from Session, our Reconciliation Ministry, chaired by Elder Michelle Bessman, is using information from city and county agencies and organizations, the Consultation of Religious Communities, and the Johnson County Long-term Recovery Committee in decisions on how to best distribute these monies. It is anticipated that these monies will support: 1. key local community needs; 2. identified short-falls in the Deacons Emergency Assistance Fund and; 3. specific, limited individual needs – identified by Pastors Massey and Smith – arising from our covenant with New Creations International Church.

At its May 21 meeting the Reconciliation Ministry, focusing on food and housing insecurities, and sensitive to community agencies that do not receive corporate funds, determined the following distribution for the initial \$10,000 that had been contributed / matched to date:

—\$2,000 each for the Free Lunch Program, Table to Table, and the Catholic Worker House;

—\$1,000 each for the Food Bank at CommUnity (formerly the Crisis Center), Shelter House, Domestic Violence Intervention Program and Center for Worker Justice.

To further support this important ongoing community initiative, please:

Go to the Donate page on the First Presbyterian Church website (<https://firstpreswacacity.org/donate-online/>) and click on Burianek Mission Match, OR

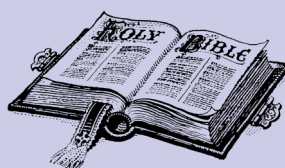
Mail in your check, payable to First Presbyterian Church, with Mission Match in the memo line.

### *Are you interested in contributing to our online worship?*

Contact Leah Bergman at [leah.bergman@firstpreswacacity.org](mailto:leah.bergman@firstpreswacacity.org) and she can help match you with a Sunday and the scripture lessons that go along with it. Then you'll record yourself at home, send her the video and she will incorporate it into the worship service for that Sunday!

Here are some ways you could offer to volunteer during this time:

- Read or act out one or more of the scripture lessons for the day
- Read a prayer or other part of the liturgy for the day
- Play or sing some special music
- Dance, draw, paint, take a picture



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*Dear sisters and brothers of First Presbyterian Church,  
The grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you!*

I write to you, beloved friends, during a really weird and tragic time. First came the pandemic, followed by conflicting advice from the White House and CDC on how to handle it. Then came the economic news, not yet fully unfurled, explaining why the stock market is up while we are beset by bad news. This was followed by announcements of the unemployment rate and the need to provide food. On the heels of all came the execution of people of color and the outpouring of rage in the streets. Finally came the surreal picture of a president going to a church and waving a Bible, as he might have done with a bottle of hydroxychloroquine some weeks ago.

While some aspects of current events feel unique, I found myself walking back to 1970. In April, Richard Nixon announced that the Vietnam War he had been elected to end was expanding into Cambodia. The shooting of four students at Kent State on May 4 led to the following image below on May 9, 1970. This crowd had been organized originally in response to the geographic expansion of the war. It was energized by the Kent State shootings: "tin soldier and Nixon coming; four dead in O-hi-o."



The following image is the one I recall, however. Even as a child it struck me as just plain strange. Everyone's favorite bogeyman, Richard Milhous Nixon, appeared at the Lincoln Memorial in the early pre-dawn hours of May 9 to speak with "hippies" gathered there. While the means for ending the war being advocated by the hippies and Nixon were miles apart, they still wanted the same objective: peace in Vietnam.



In popular mythology, Nixon was a pathological and terrible president. In those days, it did not seem that way to me. Nevertheless, fixed in front of the television watching the Watergate hearings, even in high school I knew there were problems with him. Mistakes were made. I certainly did not know the entire backstory about Nixon. I didn't even realize that, although raised a Quaker, Nixon leaned Presbyterian in his public expressions of faith, although he never became a member.

Due to his dishonesty related to Watergate, Nixon had a falling out with the Presbyterian pastors who tried to guide him. Yet toward the end of his life there was reconciliation between them. Because, at our best, that is what Presbyterians do and, indeed, what Christians do: We engage in a ministry of reconciliation led by the Risen Christ.

Some regarded Nixon's decision — to grab his valet and anxious Secret Service people and go to the Lincoln Memorial — as a sign of eroding mental health. Perhaps this shocking initiative by Nixon, who had been guarded and quarantined in the White House by vehicles and troops, was some mental lapse. Eventually, Nixon had to walk his initiative back in order to conform to the expectations of his staff and party, not to mention honoring the bipartisan consensus that no president in his right mind would do such a thing. This event, Nixon's attempt to create a relationship and share understandings, was eventually forgotten along with many others in the wake of Watergate.

Yet I remember Nixon's action in the same light as his initiative with China: contrary to people's expectation yet as the sign of something too seldom seen on the public stage anymore. I see it as leadership. I see it as courage. I see it as breaking the mold for the sake of a higher calling.

These are mold-breaking times. We need to all own it and prepare ourselves, not to posture but to risk authentic, honest encounter. I tend to think that this may have been what our current president tried to do when he pushed away the crowds to go to St. Mark's. But he is no Richard Nixon and no true Presbyterian, and I say this with compassion, pity, and prayer.

Love and blessings, and many prayers,

Your pastor,

Sam

## **Proposed FPC Re-Entry (not yet adopted by Session—shared for information only)**

This document is intended to define First Presbyterian Church's policies for the phased resumption of in-person activities on church grounds. Staff, officers, and volunteers will use these policies to develop detailed plans. Session has set July 1 as the date to *begin the resumption of in-person activities. It is too difficult to predict with any degree of certainty what the situation will be on July 1, so we will not plan for the full resumption of activities on that date. The phased approach will give us the flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances.*

The policies described below are based on current best practices and recommendations from public health agencies, other churches, and religious organizations. The medical understanding of the virus and best practices will change over time. This is a living document that will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis to incorporate those changes. Even after we have been able to maintain Phase 3 activities for a sustained period of time, policies and practices will evolve as the "new normal" takes shape. We must all be patient and flexible over the coming months.

### **Planning Outcomes**

All planning efforts must work toward the following outcomes.

- Protect the health and safety of activity participants by limiting the spread of infection, particularly to:
  - ◊ High-risk individuals.
  - ◊ Church staff.
- Clearly that communicate policies with members of the FPC community.
- Ensure that members know which activities are resuming and when.
- Ensure that members know best practices to keep themselves, families, and other participants healthy.
- Ensure members know and understand the requirements for individual participation.
- Create an environment that supports the steps needed to limit the spread of infection by providing:
  - ◊ Adequate space for physical distancing.
  - ◊ Appropriate protective equipment.
  - ◊ Processes for health checks of individuals, as appropriate.
  - ◊ Opportunities for individuals to practice good hygiene.
  - ◊ Regular disinfection of common and high-traffic areas.
- Establish a process and schedule for evaluating and revising this policy document as new information becomes available.

### **Requirements for Phased Resumption of Activities**

FPC will follow the federal, state, and local guidelines for a phased resumption of activities, mirroring Johnson County's transition through the phases. **FPC will proceed to the next phase of the guidelines two weeks after the county transitions to that phase.**

- FPC will begin Phase 1 activities on July 1 if the county has been in Phase 1 for at least two weeks.
- FPC will begin Phase 2 activities on August 1 if the county has been in Phase 2 for at least two weeks. Session will evaluate circumstances on July 21 and vote whether to proceed with the move to Phase 2 on August 1.

- FPC will begin Phase 3 activities on September 1, provided:
  - ◊ Staff members are fully able to return to work on church grounds and feel comfortable within reason that they are not at risk. All staff persons, personally or due to significant others, are vulnerable persons.
  - ◊ Johnson County has been in Phase 3 for at least two weeks.

Session will evaluate circumstances on August 18 and vote whether to proceed with the move to Phase 3 on September 1.

- FPC will remain in Phase 3 indefinitely, until the COVID Response Team, Session, and staff define the new normal and the risk of spreading the COVID-19 infection is low.

If the county reverts to an earlier phase for any reason, FPC will immediately revert to that earlier phase as well.



***Looking for fresh flowers  
and plants to brighten the  
sanctuary***

Do you have flowers blooming or plants in your garden that you would like to share?

Drop them by the church on Friday (any time) or Saturday (before 9:30am) to decorate the chancel space for Sunday worship!

Contact Leah ([leah.bergman@firstpreswacivcity.org](mailto:leah.bergman@firstpreswacivcity.org)) if you'd like to help!



**Needles, Hooks and Yarn** reminds everyone to be safe and stay home.

**Stop by and pick berries!**

Last year, the serviceberries (also known as Juneberries or Saskatoon berries) on the trees at church ripened and were ready to pick near the 3rd week of June. These berries are delicious to eat on their own or to make jam or pies out of! Feel free to stop by and pick berries when they ripen.

Be sure to share a picture of what you make with them!



**Community Prayer Box**

In these unprecedented times, it is easy to become overwhelmed and stressed out stop by the Prayer Box and turn these worries over to God.

***Pray More...Worry Less***



# First's Family

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

## June 12-30

6/12 Paul Maxwell  
6/12 Don Ross  
6/13 Randy Howe  
6/15 Emmanuel Kunangika  
6/15 Dale Sheets  
6/16 Lara Marsh  
6/16 Marta Muilenburg  
6/16 Jocelen Hamilton  
6/17 Warren Jensen  
6/19 Kathryn Feagins  
6/20 Nancy Warren  
6/20 Roxanne Gustaveson  
6/20 Amy Dunkle  
6/22 Ruth Westfall  
6/22 Lydia Smith

6/23 Earl Nelson  
6/23 Sue Maccarillo  
6/23 Brent Morgan  
6/23 Jack Degner  
6/25 Pete Van Gerpen  
6/25 Layne Sheetz  
6/25 Israel Mahinga  
6/28 Pauline Miller  
6/29 Laura Dowd  
6/29 Elliott Soemadi  
6/30 Barb Meier



## July 1-15

7/1 Sara Miller  
7/2 Pat Van Gerpen  
7/2 John Phipps  
7/2 Mutula Kasiriba  
7/2 Flint Mahinga  
7/3 William Oglesby  
7/3 Saira Steen  
7/5 Kevin Viksten  
7/6 Paul Schaefer  
7/6 Rebecca Stockman  
7/7 Janice Baumbach  
7/7 Emily Scott  
7/9 Lee Tippe  
7/10 John Barr  
7/10 MaryHelen Kennerly  
7/12 Janice Wilson  
7/14 Bob Youngquist  
7/15 Ames Molsberry  
7/15 Jesse Mahinga



**Known  
to have been  
Hospitalized:**

Tony Warren

**Note of sadness: Rosella Reimer Duerksen** (94) died at home in Tucson, AZ on April 30, 2020. She was the Director of Music for First Presbyterian Church from 1966-1980. She organized the semi-professional choral society, The Iowa City Chamber Singers, and in 1972 she founded the Annual Bach Festival.



**Tammy and Jeff Foster** are thrilled to announce the birth of their first grandchild. **Alyssa and Josh Amelon** of Riverside on the birth of their son, **Clint Douglas Amelon**, on Wednesday, June 3. Clint made his appearance at 12:03 am, weighed 6 lb. 6 oz. and was 21" long.

**Aurelien and Jocelyn Kuunangika** announce the birth of their son, **Uriel**, who was born on March 17.

## Congratulations to members

**Bradley Hamilton**, spouse Jocelen and child Lucy, on receiving his Ph.D. in Molecular and Cellular Biology. Bradley's dissertation topic was Elucidating the factors determining efficient transduction of human airway epithelia by AAV gene therapy vectors."

**Marv Bergman** received the 2019 Frederick Jackson Turner Award from the Midwestern History Association. The award recognizes his work as editor of the *Annals of Iowa* from 1987 to 2020. He worked with imagination and patience to push the *Annals of Iowa* into the ranks of top notch historical journals.

## The Pillars for New Normal

Dr. Atul Gawande, author of *Being Mortal* recently wrote an article for *The New Yorker* magazine explaining how Mass General Brigham, a Boston hospital with seventy-five thousand employees, has been able to stay at work throughout the pandemic and avoid becoming a site of spread. He wondered, if, hospitals do it, what strategies could be applied to other American institutions. Here are his recommendations:



1. "Start with hygiene." Wash or sanitize your hands every time you go into and out of a group environment, and every couple of hours while you're in it. Disinfect high touch surfaces at least daily.
2. Social distancing: We all know this six-foot rule. Under the right conditions of temperature, humidity, and air circulation, forceful coughing and sneezing can propel those droplets twenty feet!
3. Daily screening: Vigilant awareness of personal health: a new fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell or even just nasal congestion or a runny nose. Any of these symptoms require self-quarantine for at least seven days from the start of symptoms and fever-free and improvement of symptoms for seventy-two hours.
4. Masks are used for "source control"—blocking the spread of droplets from a person with active infection. They must be worn properly. Do not pull the mask down to talk. Do not poke a hole in one to sip your drink. Do not throw it in your purse and wear it over and over.
5. The fifth pillar of strategy is culture. "It is one thing to know what we should be doing; it's another to do it, rigorously and thoroughly." People tend to focus on two desires, Dr. Gawande notes, "safety and freedom: keep me safe and leave me alone." But one residential care director noted, "When you have a community that cares about each other, then people

are interested in adhering to the guidelines for other people."

6. All of these must be rigorously followed. Social distancing, hygiene, and screening our symptoms will not work if we don't wear our masks. It is the combination of these strategies that improve our chances of beating this virus.

What has this got to do with church? Everything! We are a loving, caring, generous community of faith. We miss worshiping together, and we miss each other. The pandemic is not over and we do not know when it will be. Do we wait for a vaccine before we gather again? Do we wait for new cases to be low and falling for two weeks and hospitals have capacity to treat and be able to test all people with symptoms? What guidelines should the church and the church's leadership follow? Can we or should we follow Dr. Gawande's suggestions, and how would that look?

We want you to know what may be expected of you. The New Normal for worship may not look like what we had, and we grieve the loss of the close-knit fellowship. We look forward to reuniting, but our culture must change. We all must participate for it to work.

Should you want to read Dr. Gawande's full article, the link is: <https://newyorker.com/science/medical-dispatch/amid-the-coronavirus-crisis-a-regimen-for-reentry>

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## Helping Our Students in Pakistan

"First world problems" is an expression that has become common. It refers to the trivial nature of many of our complaints. The things that many of us are inconvenienced by are not vital to our survival. However, in Pakistan, people who cannot work, don't eat.

When Friends of Pasrur learned of this, they rushed to help. They quickly contributed \$4,100 to help supply food for our friends at Pasrur who are at-risk. This will make in the lives of the Pasrur Christian families an enormous difference. Thank you doesn't seem like a big enough word.

Jane Cranston

Friends of Pasrur



Drawn by a sponsored student at the Pasrur school. Note the Covid-19 germs



# SUMMER PROGRAMS



The Wired Word will continue over the Summer. Join us each Sunday, June 7–August 30 from 9:30–10:25 a.m.

Please email [Judy.Whitford@firstpreswac.org](mailto:Judy.Whitford@firstpreswac.org) if you would be interested in attending.

## Interested in a summer Bible Study on I Corinthians with Pastor Sam starting July 1?

Pastor Sam has created a Bible study that will allow folks to participate in three different ways:

1. **By mail**, receiving Sam's thoughts weekly for your own reflection. You could then write or call your questions to him (Letter making this offer will go out to the 40 parishioners not connected to email).
2. **By email and online**, you would receive an email weekly with material for your reflection, with an option to share your thoughts briefly with other participants.
3. Some folks might wish to participate in a **periodic Zoom discussion**. This would not be weekly as Zoom is too uneven for some folks to participate. Every effort will be made to not leave folks out, yet a few times during the course of the study I would hope for us to "catch up with each other face to face."

If you have an interest, please contact Pastor Sam at [sam.massey@firstpreswac.org](mailto:sam.massey@firstpreswac.org) or text or call him on his cell 319-400-9824.

## Small Group Ministry

The Equipping Ministry is beginning a small group ministry! The first hope is that each small group would meet virtually on Zoom once a week. This would be a time for community, conversation, and prayer. What each small group will need is:

**One or two small group leader(s):** This leader would be sent an email each week with guiding questions on faith, reflections on the sermon, by church leadership, ending in a time of sharing highs and lows. They would simply need to lead the conversation.

**5-9 Participants:** This is the best for dialogue, conversation, and community.

To show that you are interested in participating, simply click on this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BNWQKQV> or email Anna at [Anna.Sheetz@firstpreswac.org](mailto:Anna.Sheetz@firstpreswac.org).

# YOUTH GROUP AT HOME

## We're Breaking Traditions and Having Youth Group at Home during the Summer:

Every other Thursday during the Summer, we'll have both 4th–6th grade youth group and 7th–12th grade youth group. Here are the days:

### Wednesday, **June 10**

4th–6th grade from 5–6 p.m.

7th–12th from 6–7:30 p.m.

### Wednesday, **June 24**

4th–6th grade from 5–6 p.m.

7th–12th from 6–7:30 p.m.

### Wednesday, **July 1**

4th–6th grade from 5–6 p.m.

7th–12th from 6–7:30 p.m.

### Wednesday, **July 15**

4th–6th grade from 5–6 p.m.

7th–12th from 6–7:30 p.m.

### Wednesday, **July 29**

4th–6th grade from 5–6 p.m.

7th–12th from 6–7:30 p.m.

### Wednesday, **August 5**

4th–6th grade from 5–6 p.m.

7th–12th from 6–7:30 p.m.

### Wednesday, **August 19**

4th–6th grade from 5–6 p.m.

7th–12th from 6–7:30 p.m.

Both Youth Groups are recurring meetings on Zoom.com. Use these links and Zoom addresses each of the dates to the left.

Topic: 4th–6th Grade Youth Group

Time: 5:00–6:00 p.m.

Jun 10–August 19, 2020

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://zoom.us/j/97403186884?](https://zoom.us/j/97403186884?pwd=Y2hldFVuY3RDUzRaNC9jNjBUcnJ1UT09)

[pwd=Y2hldFVuY3RDUzRaNC9jNjBUcnJ1UT09](https://zoom.us/j/97403186884?pwd=Y2hldFVuY3RDUzRaNC9jNjBUcnJ1UT09)

Meeting ID: 974 0318 6884

Password: 885275

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Topic: 7th–12th Grade Youth Group

Time: 6:00–7:30 p.m.

Jun 10–August 19, 2020

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://zoom.us/j/97838107950?](https://zoom.us/j/97838107950?pwd=dm5zT0d3TzF0WDRDRIRUbnhhcUxldz09)

[pwd=dm5zT0d3TzF0WDRDRIRUbnhhcUxldz09](https://zoom.us/j/97838107950?pwd=dm5zT0d3TzF0WDRDRIRUbnhhcUxldz09)

Meeting ID: 978 3810 7950

Password: 523797

### Turning this time of self-isolation and social distancing,

take a moment to connect with friends and family by picking up the phone and calling them or dropping a note in the mail.

Have you forgotten the phone number or address? An easy way to find both is to use the Directory on My First Pres or download the Church Life app on your phone.

If you have not yet signed into My First Pres, this is the perfect time; go to the church website, [www.firstpreswac.org](http://www.firstpreswac.org), scroll down to the green boxes until you see the My First Pres Box, click on it and follow the steps. (You must sign into My First Pres before you can access the Church Life app.)

If you have trouble, contact Tammy Schroeder at [tammy.schroeder@firstpreswac.org](mailto:tammy.schroeder@firstpreswac.org) or by phone at 563-889-0016.







## Equipping Ministry Condemns Racism.

### The Jeremiah Justice Initiative



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.

—Jeremiah 22:3

Justice is something that every generation has to strive for.  
—John M. Perkins

The Jeremiah Justice Initiative is a group of people who seek to engage justice as we are called to in the Bible. John M. Perkins is a civil rights activist who works to fill the holes of hatred with love. His words ring in our ears. We can never be done striving for justice. With each passing day the news continues to affirm what we have been studying and exploring — we are a country that is built on the backs of people of color for the sake of white people. It is not a new idea — quite the opposite actually. The United States has been systemically racist since we were a British colony all of those years ago.

What response is appropriate? What response is Biblical? When Jesus flipped the tables in the Temple, was it not in protest? Jesus spoke of loving the poor and the oppressed while actively petitioning against those who were in power who misunderstood the Word of God so profoundly. Martin Luther King Jr took to the streets and preached that *love* would be the only thing that can drive out hate. He was killed for it.

Who are we today? Who are we called to become? We believe that the Bible calls us, as Christians, to not only protect the oppressed but help *deliver them* from the hand of their oppressor — even if the oppressor is us. Jeremiah 22:3 is active not passive in its advocacy for those who are oppressed. We are not called to *save* but to *ally* in activities and functions that support the ending of oppression and injustice.

It is time for this generation, the people of these barely united States of America to strive for justice. We condemn racism. We condemn the ease with which a black life could be taken —the shedding of innocent blood. We believe that Black Lives Matter. We believe that, as Christians, it is our duty to choose people over profit and to choose love in the face of hate. John M. Perkins said it best: **“Love is the final fight.”**

If you'd like to join the conversation, please reach out to Layne Sheetz at [layne.sheetz@firstpresbiowacity.org](mailto:layne.sheetz@firstpresbiowacity.org)

### A Prayer from Anna Sheetz

#### Pray with me ...

When a black man can be handcuffed & on the ground, Lord, we say, Oscar Grant's black life matters.

When a black man walks home from the store, Lord, we say, Trayvon Martin's black life matters.

When a black boy cannot play in the park, Lord, we say, Tamir Rice's black life matters.

When a black man cannot jog, Lord, we say, Ahmaud Arbery's black life matters.

When a black woman cannot sleep in her own bed, Lord, we say, Breonna Taylor's black life matters.

When a black man cannot get out of his car, Lord, we say, Terence Crutcher's black life matters.

When a black man has a brake light out, Lord, we say, Walter Scott's black life matters.

When a black woman cannot change lanes, Lord, we say Sandra Bland's black life matters.

When a black man does not have a front license plate, Lord, we say Samuel Dubose's black life matters.

When a black man drives with his family, Lord, we say, Philando Castile's black life matters.

When a black man cannot sell cigarettes, Lord, we say, Eric Garner's black life matters.

When a black man is kneeled in the neck, Lord, we say, George Floyd's black life matters.

Amen.



## Statement of Justice from an FPC Youth:

The current situation in the US is not something that will pass. Because it shouldn't. Black people have been oppressed since before slavery and after the abolition of it in 1865 — in the US. Back in history, when Europeans were colonizing the world they used a tactic where they believed that they were genetically superior to and better than the Africans and that they were helping them by colonizing and torturing them. Previously, they used that same ideology so when they packed the Africans in ships like animals and tortured them and used them, they could sleep at night and wouldn't feel bad about it because, in their minds, they were helping them. I believe that now, even with the genetic evidence stating that we — meaning Caucasians

and people of color — are 99.9% similar to everyone. Scientists have found that the person sitting next to you on the train, next to you in the protest, giving you your morning coffee, is 99.9% similar to you. And yet, Black people are still beaten in the streets, killed without reason, and not given a fair trial all because of what? The white people behind the counter, behind the computer, behind the gun. Sure, you can say that the police officer that murdered George Floyd was doing self-defense, and it's only his mind that's messed up, but people are killed every day because of police officers and normal people just like him.

Ahmad Aubrey was killed while on a jog by being ambushed by white people. Trayvon Martin, a seventeen-year-old, was killed while carrying Skittles. I can walk down the street with a hoodie over my head and Skittles in my pocket without fear of being killed. A white man and a black man can be in the same bar, on opposite sides, and both break their arm. The white man would get medical attention first, without question. That's what's wrong with it. It's not just the system that is failing these people. It's everyone.

The police officers, the government officials, the medical professionals, the waitresses and waiters, the person reading this right now. Not only is the system designed for white men, because of the people who designed it, it's designed against black men and women. It's also the thought process in peoples mind. If you saw a white man in a hoodie walking towards you compared to a black man in a hoodie, which one would you be scared of? Or walk a little faster because of?

We need to change the perception of people of color in the United States. Because even though the facade of the great US is there and the American Dream, I'm still ashamed to be an American. Because I know that my privilege and my thought process was planted in me by the system. Planted in everyone. That's why America was never great, and will never be again, until we equalize, truly equalize everything.

- Anonymous, 16, girl

"In the last 10 years, racism has really reared its ugly head"

"It is not about skin color — its just that poor neighborhoods have a violence problem."

Phrases like the ones above have been circulating the internet or have been spoken by police. They are all indicators of a deeper racism than what they point to. Racism in our country has haunted us like a ghost since the North American continent was stolen from indigenous people by European colonizers.

From colonization and the targeted take over, assimilation, and genocide of indigenous peoples to the slave trade, the property that we call "our own" and say that we have "the right" to defend is built on the backs of people of color. Our interstates and roads, inspired by native populations infrastructure. Our buildings, our commerce, our housing market, built on the backs of unpaid labor. Our segregated communities, built on the back of policy put in place to refuse

housing in white communities for people of color. Our right to defend our property, our right to bear arms, only for those who fit the description of a registered voter in 1790.

How do we fix what has been so badly broken? We have to admit that we have systematically built system upon system in our country and designed them exclusively for White Male Landowners only to see them tragically fall into the hands of females and people of color momentarily before the system course corrects.

These are big picture issues. George Floyd was not killed because he may have been unfortunate enough to be in possession of a fake \$20 bill. He was murdered because he was black. Every day we avoid these hard conversations, every time that I do, I am complicit. I hope the heart of America, allegedly seeking to match the heart of Jesus, is awoken to the defibrillator being hooked up to its chest. It is up to us to make the

change in small ways first. Plants are watered at the roots, not the leaves. I need to be able to love my neighbors as myself and share the heart of Jesus with them. I need to be able to put the justice of others above the safety and well-being of myself. I need to be willing to give what I have to those who have not had a fair chance at having it.

Until our actions reflect what the gospels teach us, what have we even been doing in church?

"Does forgiveness not require restitution first? Does the cross you say you cling to not scream that justice comes before reconciliation?"

How can we talk about unity if you are not ready to admit you are wrong? Is she not worth justice?

—Propaganda, *20 Years*

Reflection by Layne Sheetz, Assistant to Minister of Equipping Ministry

## May 2020 Session Highlights

*Submitted by Ann Grosscup, Clerk of Session*

There was a quorum of elders attending either via Zoom or in Ryerson Hall at 7:00 p.m. when Pastor Sam called the meeting to order. The opening devotion and prayer was offered by Richard Van Rheeden. An excerpt of Frederick Buechner's book, *Listening to Your Life*, was shared to remind us to lean on our faith during these uncontrollable times. The scripture was Hebrews 11: 1: *Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.*

### Motions Approved:

- Pastor Terry Purvis-Smith, PEI's Ministers and Congregations Commission FPC liaison, sat in on stated session meeting May 19, 2020.
- April 2020 financials were received and approved.
- First Presbyterian Church, Iowa City to receive the distribution of the Burianek Trust net assets in kind and leave at US Bank with Finance Cluster oversight.
- Approve minutes of stated session meeting April 21, 2020.

- First Presbyterian Church will adopt the FPC Re-Entry Policy in planning for the resumption of in-person activities on church grounds. *(The decision to re-open the building on July 1, 2020, will be re-assessed at the next session meeting, June 16, 2020.)*

Status reports were given for the Task Forces Lil Creations Academy Advisory Committee and FPC Fundraising.

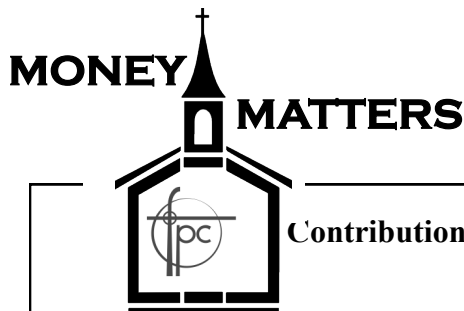
The Equipping Ministry's numerous programming revisions plus targeted focus were verbally highlighted.

A&P Cluster members wrote individual thank you notes to staff members for adapting to meet congregational needs in the current, changing environment. They also produced and shared a humorous staff appreciation video which will be made available on Facebook and YouTube.

Dale Kraus closed with prayer.

**Next meeting:** June 15, 2020, 7 p.m. via ZOOM

Leann Graves, Opening Devotions; Cathe Franz, 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
April	\$34,288.27	\$27.03	\$34,315.30 *	\$45,109.67	-\$10,794.37
May	\$38,723.29	\$16,635.16	\$55,358.45 *	\$43,722.35	\$11,636.10
<b>2020 Totals</b>	<b>\$226,576.89</b>	<b>\$17,421.12</b>	<b>\$243,998.01</b>	<b>\$235,034.55</b>	<b>\$8,963.46</b>

\* Does not include SBA Loan income





## *Plant a Seed - Create a Legacy*

### The FPC Endowment and Memorials Committee

Bob and Millie Youngquist, Coordinators

## First Presbyterian Church

2701 Rochester Ave.  
Iowa City, Iowa 52245



## So Many Ways to Give

In this column, we often talk about the many ways our membership can give to the church endowment in an effort to provide continued financial support to FPC.

We have discussed contributing to our endowment with your estate plan. We have also suggested that our members might consider making an outright gift to one of our permanent fund holdings. Certainly, all of these ideas will be discussed in more depth during future columns.

But one way to contribute to our church that is rarely mentioned is through the contribution of memorial funds. Gifts given in honor or in memory of an individual can be designated for immediate projects or a specific area of interest. These gifts may also be designated to be added to the FPC Endowment Fund.

Many decisions on memorial funds often seem to face families at the sudden death of a loved one. At such a time when there are so many other needs to consider, there is that additional question: What organizations and passions were important to this individual? Where should the memorial funds go?

We are surrounded by gifts to the church that have been given as memorials to congregational members who are no longer with us. To name just a few, the Celtic cross of oak and bronze that prominently graces our sanctuary was designed by Brett Wilson and was given by the Henry Olmsted family in memory of their son James Allen Olmsted. It was dedicated with the church on September 14, 1975. The baptismal font was given in memory of Marjory Alcock (1885-1976). The Advent candelabra was given in memory of Russel "Rusty" Zajicek (1957-1979) by his parents. The church sign was given in memory of Gerald Lee Showman (1924-1981) by his family.

Again, these are but a few of the highly noticeable memorials that have enhanced our church facilities and our worship together.

Additionally, the church has been complemented with beautiful plantings and benches given in memory of various individuals. Some memorial funds have helped to build the present church, some have enhanced the building over the years, even making it more handicapped accessible. One has helped those with a hearing loss to better understand our services. Another has helped to keep the organ in tune and in good repair. Another provided handbells and another provided our new hymnbooks. Another has brought helpful technology to assist with our church programs. The list goes on and on. A specific record of these and many other gifts may be found in the church repository located in the narthex. The repository itself was a memorial gift to our church.

Certainly, physical reminders such as these are memorials which keep beloved members of our congregation frequently in mind. But the same has been true when we have received monetary contributions. All memorials have ensured that special people are remembered in special ways as the church goes on to touch other lives.

It would be a tremendous help if each of us would inform our family, funeral directors, and FPC of our wishes – long before our final time arises. If our church has been an important part of your life, do consider it as a recipient of your memorial funds.

Bob and Millie Youngquist and Sam Massey are glad to help anyone seeking guidance in such gifts. Enclosed in this newsletter is a new brochure, entitled "So Many Ways to Give." If you feel moved to contribute to the church in some special way, please fill out the final page and return it to the church. This will be a way of indicating your interests and can be modified at any time as circumstances change. We'd be very glad to hear from you.

Matthew 10:9: "Freely you have received, freely give."

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