

On the question as to how to best respond to the pandemic ...

Dear sisters and brothers of First Presbyterian Church,

The grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. I wrote this pastor's page primarily in response to the COVID pandemic and our church leadership's response to it.

In our Presbyterian tradition, we embrace core values that help us make moral decisions. Among these are

- the accountability of personal conscience to God alone,
- the separation of Christ's exclusive authority over the church in tension with government's guarantee of religious liberty (among other civil rights),
- the insistence that the voices of those in the minority must be honored,
- the law of love, toward God and neighbor, remaining part of God's providential care that both founds and supersedes all human law, and
- all knowledge, gained through the exercise of God's gifts bestowed on human beings, is God's knowledge.

These core values are based on the Bible. Of course we believe that we hear the Word of God, the Risen Christ, speaking through the Scriptures by the power of the Holy Spirit. Just as buoys guide boats through shallows, these core values guide the church through decision-making in times such as these. The decisions made lie within the authority of ordered church groups.

On the question as to how to best respond to the pandemic, the Session of First Presbyterian Church chooses when our

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Are you interested in contributing to our online worship?

Contact Leah Bergman at leah.bergman@firstpreswacity.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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worship and programs within the building will resume. While honoring the role of government in the providence of God to save citizens from harmful chaos, Session is accountable to Almighty God within Presbyterian order and the Reformed tradition. Session also has responsibility for guiding our efforts to respond to pressing community needs. Accordingly,

1. Session concurs with the wisdom represented by two important sources below and has concluded that the church will not begin opening to normal business until, at the earliest, July 1.

Johnson County Public Health: Guidance for spiritual and religious gatherings during COVID-19

While the Governor eased restrictions across the entire state on spiritual or religious gatherings, including regular worship, weddings and funerals, staying home is still the best way to limit your exposure to and risk to others of contracting COVID-19. If you choose to hold or attend services, you are taking on a higher level of risk and putting others at greater risk. If you proceed with holding or attending spiritual or religious gatherings, it is important for you to take the same precautions you would take when going to the grocery store or doctor for essential needs. Remember to socially/physically distance yourself at least six (6) feet from others, wash your hands, avoid touching your face, and wear a face covering. These are all protective actions that will lessen your risk of spreading or of getting this virus. However, staying home is still the most effective way to avoid this illness.

Please think about continuing to hold or participate in online virtual or outdoor services and meetings. If you decide to meet in-person, think about the size of the meeting space, and how everyone can safely maintain six (6) feet of distance from others. Also, disinfect frequently touched surfaces. If you are an older adult or have underlying health conditions, you are at greater risk of developing severe illness from COVID-19 and should stay home. Anyone experiencing COVID-19 symptoms (cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell) should stay home. Leaders and attendees bear the responsibility of self-screening and staying home, even if mildly ill.

Message from Dr. Rebecca Blair, Stated Clerk, Presbytery of East Iowa

The integrative models developed by the Centers for Disease Control in partnership with the University of Washington provide estimates for when COVID-19 infections will fall below one case per 1 million people. At that point, easing social distancing restrictions may be possible with containment strategies that include testing, contact tracing, isolation, and limiting of sizes of gatherings.

The current projected target date for Iowa to reach this status is June 26. What is unknown in the current models is the effect of the phased reopening of some venues and activities, beginning on April 27. Thus, the Presbytery's best advice is for church sessions to use this projected date as an anchor point to begin thinking about how to structure a phased return to fuller church operations.

For a comprehensive model plan, please consult this helpful document prepared by the Wisconsin Council of Churches: <https://www.wichurches.org/2020/04/23/returning-to-church>.

All of the above information is on our website. For a direct link, please go here: <https://peia.org/wp-content/uploads/Advice-On-Return-To-Fuller-Church-Operations.pdf>

2. Session has approved the Burianek Mission Match Challenge and invites the congregation to contribute to it.

The COVID19 task force of Session recognized quickly that human need has been rising exponentially in our community due to the virus. Social service agencies have been overwhelmed. Under the stewardship of Sadie May, the Burianek fund has offered to 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 non-profit agencies in our community. We are currently in the fundraising phase of this charitable initiative.

Our Reconciliation Ministry of Session chaired by Elder Michelle Bessman is to be informed by city and county agencies and organizations, as well as the Consultation of Religious Communities and the Johnson County Long-term Recovery Taskforce (with Elder John Barr serving as communication liaison to these interfaith and governmental bodies), as to needs to be addressed. The Reconciliation Ministry will use this information to distribute the monies.

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Ultimately and primarily, it is anticipated that the matching funds, under the oversight of the Ministry, will go to 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 this juncture the Reconciliation Ministry has not committed to funding any specific recipient. Defining the needs that the church should support means that we will not “compete” with worthy organizations like the United Way. These larger entities are in the position to access funding from corporate sponsors, charge an administrative fee in exchange for their extensive networking abilities, and often give to established organizations with broad support. They do important work!

Nevertheless, the groups most likely funded by us concern themselves with justice. They also rely primarily on individual donations from people of conscience and religious groups. These organizations respond to desperate persons typically under the radar. The current priorities of these organizations sound similar to the human needs of which we are aware – food security, shelter and immigrants in crisis – yet are focused on providing assistance to the most wounded. These are folks of which you and I don’t always have full awareness.

Reconciliation Ministry members will be contacting a range of local agencies in an effort to determine their “real need,” not only in the present, but also later, when a surge in virus cases may recur and the public’s attention may be focused elsewhere.

Due to changing needs as time passes and the consequent obligation to be nimble in its funding decisions, the Reconciliation Ministry will not be accepting designated gifts to be matched. The ministry asks us to trust that our giving in response to COVID19 will go where it is most needed. If persons wish to give their gifts to designated organizations, however, they are encouraged to do so directly.

As Sadie May was originally solicited to help the Reconciliation Ministry to respond to emergent local needs, for the time being all matching funds will be distributed to local agencies overwhelmed by need. If the pandemic lifts and these agencies aren’t in dire need, and the matching fund has a surfeit of monies, Reconciliation Ministry and Session might reconsider easing these restrictions.

Please go to the donate page on the First Presbyterian Church website and find the Burianek Mission Match in order to make your contribution over and above your regular congregational giving: <https://firstpresbiowacity.org/donate-online/>

3. Session is in the process of overseeing a plan for a phased reintroduction of worship and programming as circumstances change, hopefully beginning July 1. As the plans develop, the congregation will be kept informed. For now, you are urged to call Pastor Sam at (319)400-9824 with pastoral concerns or questions. You are also urged to go to the church’s website and check on ministry offerings on Facebook and YouTube.

We live in extraordinary times. When following generations look back, they will judge whether or not we overreacted or underreacted to the pandemic. For now, we only know that precautions and generosity are needed to protect vulnerable persons in and out of church.

God’s love and blessings, Your pastor,
Sam



Do you miss being at church?

Did you know that:

- * The *Sanctuary* is open for prayer
- * The *Labyrinth* is ready for your self-care needs
- * You can release your worries at the *Prayer Post*
- * The *Columbarium* offers a place to sit and enjoy the fresh air

Always use social distancing guidelines and know that we miss you!

Where do you see resurrection hope and joy?

Here are just a few of the photos received in response to this question. Check out the FPC Facebook page and YouTube channel to see the full slideshow!



First's Family

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

May 12-31

5/12 Darin Schroeder
5/13 Janet Bain
5/13 Cynthia Chou-Liang
5/13 Sully Steen
5/14 Devin Smith
5/14 Jim Claypool
5/23 Nancy Gardner
5-25 Ila Howe
5-25 Aziza Bigaba
5-26 Kathy Follows
5/26 Ann Robinson
5/27 Chris Miller
5/27 Brian Morris
5/30 Brenda Bradley

5/30 Jane Cranston
5/30 Ashlyn Woodburn
5/31 Ann Feddersen
5/31 Guerin Thompson



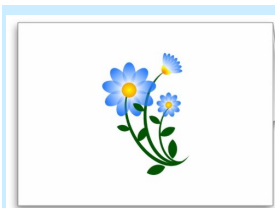
June 1-15

6/3 Dale Kraus
6/3 Karen Hurt
6/3 Amy Fletcher
6/4 Alice Martin
6/6 Rebecca Bigaba
6/7 Susan Massey
6/8 Jennifer Adams
6/9 Arielle Soemadi
6/11 LeeAnn Koch
6/12 Paul Maxwell
6/12 Don Ross
6/13 Randy Howe
6/15 Emmanuel Kunangkia
6/15 Dale Sheets



**Known
to have been
Hospitalized:**

Esther Viksten, Doris
Yoder, Tony Warren and
Del Disselhorst



After more than 30 years at the University of Iowa, **Sarah Harris** was awarded an honorary membership to the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and

Admissions Officers. A native Iowan and longtime Hawkeye, Sarah will retire later this year.

Sarah graduated from the UI in 1982 with a degree in home economics. After a brief stint working in Chicago, she returned to the UI in 1984 to work as an admissions employee at UI Hospitals and Clinics.



Heather and Michael Youngquist of Coralville upon the birth of their daughter, **Lorelei Ruth Youngquist** on Monday, April 27. Lorelei made her appearance at 9:20 am, weighed 6 lb. 9 oz. and was 19" long. She was welcomed home by her sister, Rose, and her grandparents, **Bob and Millie Youngquist**.

Chase, Jordan and Braxton Burtress, who have welcomed a new baby girl to their family. **Blake Christine Burtress** was born on March 23, 2020. Grandmother and FPC member is **Chris Kolarik**.

Zoom Stories

Submitted by Rog and Meg Ketterer

Rob and I have been delighted for the past couple of years to share a Passover Seder with the family of our daughter-in-law Rebecca. Passover is a weeklong event, but the first and second nights are the time when families celebrate with ceremonies and readings woven into a special dinnertime. The meal always features unleavened bread (matzo), 4 glasses of wine, bitter and sweet foods, and the whole tale of the Exodus. Often this holiday coincides with Easter weekend, but this year the second night of Passover and its special dinner and service happened on Thursday, April 9 – our Maundy Thursday.

This year, of course, none of us could gather with Rebecca's family due to the CoVID19 pandemic, so Rebecca arranged that we could all share a Zoom-Seder with her dad and the family in Skokie (distant even from one another). Both our "boys" and the daughters-in-law and our grandson Asher (for his 1st Seder!) were together in Boston, so there was quite a virtual crowd. We had been preparing as best we could for the Seder at our house; Rob even tried his hand at home-made matzo so we could properly participate in the service. Our Zoom-Seder with the family ended just before our real-time Maundy Thursday service, so we used some of the matzo and some of the wine from our Seder for the Communion part of Maundy Thursday. I felt a real awareness somehow that this marked the exact moment of pivot from Judaism to Christianity, truly a Last Supper event. The special feeling has stayed with me, and I wanted to share it with you.



Others are invited to submit personal Zoom Stories to Tammy.Foster@firstpreswiowacity.org.



If you are like most of us, you have concerns about "catching" COVID19, and the consequences. Certainly, we know that the mortality rate is high, especially for vulnerable populations. Many of our FPC family are in that vulnerable population (including myself). It is scary. I am glad I have my advance directive completed and on file at my hospital. I am also confident that my husband and sons know exactly what I would want done if I do become seriously ill. We have talked about it. I have it in writing, and each have a copy to refer to if needed. This has been a good source of comfort to me. I HAVE A PLAN. And I trust that everyone will abide by that plan should the need arise.

I hope and pray that you all have at least thought about this over the past six weeks. If you feel the need to discuss your worries, your wishes, and your plan for how your loved ones and medical team will care for you during a serious illness (like COVID19), then our FPC Honoring Your Wishes facilitators are here for you... We encourage you to contact one of us to

schedule a one-hour conversation (by phone, ZOOM, or Face time/Video chat). We will work with you to find a way to make your plan, and give you some comfort.

We are considering this a gift to you, and from you to those you love.

FPC Honoring Your Wishes Facilitators:

Rhonda Barr, Cell: 319-936-5998, Email: JOBTennis@mchsi.com

Sue Van Duyn-Phipps, Cell: 515-205-3576, Email: susanvduypph@gmail.com

Maeleen Thorius, Cell: 319-541-316,1 Email: mthorius@southslope.net



SMALL GROUP ministry

FPC's Equipping Ministry is hoping to launch a Small Group Zoom Ministry! In this time of disconnection, meet weekly with a small group to discuss life, faith, service, and more. We are in need of **SMALL GROUP LEADERS**. What this means is:

- A person volunteers one night a week to host a Zoom meeting as the leader.
- There will be a script, questions, and about a half hour of prep (excluding watching the Sunday Service).
- This person will lead the discussion and record prayer concerns.
- This person will be supported by the Equipping Ministry staff.

Please email Anna.Sheetz@firstpreswiowacity.org if you are interested in this opportunity to lead or participate.

Due to the coronavirus threat, the **Rebuilding Hope in New Orleans (RHINO) summer mission trip is canceled**. This was a decision made by the Board of Directors of the New Orleans mission.

This affects the 12 people who were excited to attend. Please pray for FPC's youth and leadership as they grieve yet another canceled event.

Check out the
June-July
Newsletter for all
the summer
activities!



Alex Marsh is graduating Summa Cum Laude from Iowa City High School. She will be attending the University of Iowa this fall, majoring in biology or human physiology. She is also interested in pursuing more education in global studies. At City High, Alex ran girls cross-country, played viola in Symphony Orchestra, volunteered at United Action for Youth, played in the pit orchestra for City High's Spring 2019 production of *Les Miserables*, co-organized a 5k run to benefit Table-to-Table, was the co-president of Interact, and was a member of the National Honor Society. Outside of school, Alex spent most of her time training and competing in equestrian competitions called "Eventing" which is kind of like the triathlon of riding (three phases over multiple days that include dressage, stadium jumping, and cross-country jumping). She is certified at the national level in riding and horse management by the United States Pony Club. Alex was an active member of the FPC Youth Group and attended two mission trips and Triennium.





Plant a Seed - Create a Legacy
The FPC Endowment and Memorials Committee

Bob and Millie Youngquist, Coordinators

You Can Make A Connection To The Future!

Have you noticed a change? The world's current health situation, scary though it may be, is causing many people to think differently about humanity and life itself.

Recently, Lee Cowan, a CBS reporter, signed off a CBS Sunday Morning broadcast with these words: "The world is not ending, but our big blue marble still seems more fragile than ever. As we sit here, continents, countries, time zones and zip codes have all blurred into a single global community. What used to worry us now seems almost embarrassingly trivial. We cared more about lives on social media than our social responsibilities. We were concerned about streaming our movies – not the lines of homeless streaming out of shelters. We tended to look at our phones more than one another. In fact, we were social distancing without even knowing what that really was not so long ago. Isn't it strange that we're all craving human connection now that we can't have that connection for a while. The joy of breaking bread with friends or raising a glass in fellowship or kneeling together in worship has been replaced with empty chairs or empty pews...

"But in all this separation, we are still connected by what our better angels are whispering. We truly have to go out of our way to be uncaring in these uncertain times. For once, the road to kindness and compassion is actually the easier one. We can now see the plights of our neighbors, of the bus driver, or the cab driver, anyone who had been forgotten – all views that perhaps used to be obscured by the hustle and bustle of our lives before. For anyone wanting a reset to get back to what matters most – the heart of the human condition, this may be that moment. A test to see if love really does conquer all. So, no, the world is not ending. Instead, we might just be getting a new start."

As Christians, we are already deeply aware of the nurturing love of God. Even though physically isolated, we can't help but remember Matthew 18:20, where Jesus says, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." We are not alone, but in this life together with God. It didn't take a global pandemic to tell us this. This news is central to our faith. Surely our church keeps this promise strongly in our minds as we go through our lives. And

thankfully society is beginning to value the contributions of those around them as well.

So how are you doing? Is this pandemic better sensitizing you to the world you usually see around you every day? In this time of social distancing, have you paused to reflect upon the value and importance of your faith? Have you taken the time to express your thanks for those who are walking life's paths with you? Have you treasured the sermons that life has been bringing your way? Is your faith sustaining you with hope and strength?

Do take the time to reflect upon our church and the faith we all share. Let's never take it for granted. Certainly, it is vitally important that we remember to acknowledge our church as one of our strongest beacons of hope. Others far beyond our fellowship are also deeply in need of the message we have to share. Our faith puts life into perspective and gives purpose and direction to living even in times like this.

Surely, we're all becoming more aware of the blessings that surround us. But then there is that looming question. What will our individual legacy be? Other Christians both today and in past generations have brought the church to us. It's now our responsibility to strengthen our church for a strong future.

There are many ways we can each create a legacy that will bless future lives and will be remembered for generations. The First Presbyterian Church provides opportunities for donations that will make an immediate impact, as well as those that will continue to support our community for years to come. If you feel it in your heart to provide long-term financial support that will automatically continue to grow over time, you might consider a gift to our endowment fund.

An endowment fund is a permanent and self-sustaining source of funding. The funds that comprise the principal within the endowment are invested and the interest earned is used to support the long-term initiatives of our church or can be used as income to support operations.

There are different types of endowments: restricted,
(Endowment continued on page 9)

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unrestricted as well as donor-advised funds. Each fund has different policies regarding it. Several individuals have created self-sustaining funds to support specific aspects of our church far into the future. Others have given to our unrestricted endowment that will provide financial support for presently unknown needs as they appear in future years.

All of our existing funds are discussed in a booklet called "Endowment Overview." You can find that booklet in the church narthex. Two other pamphlets that may be of help to you may be found in the same location. They are "Sample Bequest Language," and "The 1840 Legacy Society." If you would like to discuss how you can add to these funds or perhaps start a fund of your own to benefit our church, please know that Bob and Millie Youngquist would love to visit with you. Pastor Sam would also be glad to help with your questions. Funds given to our endowment will bless the church for years to come.

Many are the thoughts that have surrounded us in these times of physical separation. But if your thoughts have run to the church and its importance in our lives, then perhaps all of these comments might have been of some importance to you. Just know that all of you, dear friends, are in our prayers. Soon, God willing, we'll all see each other again and passing the peace will be even more special than we've known! Meanwhile, may the love of God continue to bless and sustain you each and every day.

Thanks to all of your efforts

The scrap metal collection was a success as 1,680 pounds of material will be recycled and will not end up in the dump!



News from Endowment Memorial Coordinators

Bob and Millie Youngquist

June 1 deadline for the William B. and Sharon P. Oglesby Scholarship at The University of Iowa

In 2002, William and Sharon Oglesby, members of FPC, made a gift to The University of Iowa Foundation to establish a scholarship for deserving UI students who are members of First Presbyterian Church in Iowa City. Bill and Sharon believe in the power of education to live life joyfully and faithfully. The application form is available in the church office.

Eligibility Criteria:

- The applicant must be a member of First Presbyterian Church, Iowa City, Iowa.
- The applicant must be attending The University of Iowa in 2020-21.
- The applicant must have a minimum GPA of 3.0.
- Application must be made using the form available in the church office.
- The scholar(s) will be recommended by the FPC Scholarship Committee to The University of Iowa Foundation. The grant will be awarded by The University of Iowa Financial Aid office.
- The application and all supportive documentation must be post-marked or delivered to the church office (2701 Rochester Ave., Iowa City, Iowa 52245) no later than June 1, 2020.

All applicants, recipients and those not receiving a scholarship award will be notified no later than the last Friday in June. One or more scholarship will be awarded.

April 2020 Session Highlights

Submitted by Ann Grosscup, Clerk of Session

There was a quorum of elders attending via Zoom when Pastor Sam called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. The Christ candle was lit prior to Nancy Gardner's opening prayer and devotions asking, 'How will you live differently after the pandemic? What are the positive changes you have already made?'

MOTIONS APPROVED:

- ♦ March 2020 financials were received and approved.
- ♦ Session informing the congregation about the CARES PPP loan funds via letter.
- ♦ Minutes of stated session meeting March 17, 2020
- ♦ By email consensus March 31, 2020: Extending the building closure through May 1, 2020. *(This closure refers to signage at doors that will let the public know that the sanctuary is open and the rest of the building is closed.*

♦ **Modified:**

Approved by email April 9, 2020: Approve Church Treasurer Dale Kraus and Finance Committee Member Tom Martin to be a Session commission to explore the CARES Act and, if possible funds might be available to us, pursue these funds on our behalf.

To as of April 9, 2020:

Approve: Approve Church Treasurer Dale Kraus and Finance Committee Member Tom Martin to be a Session commission to explore the CARES Act and, if possible funds might be available to us, pursue these funds on our behalf.

AND

The First Presbyterian Church of Iowa City, Iowa hereby approves and authorizes Dale D. Kraus, as a member of the Board of Directors (Session) and the Corporation Treasurer, to sign any and all applications, contracts and documents pertaining to an application, award of receipt of funds through the paycheck protection program (CARES Act).

- ♦ The tentative date to begin re-opening July 1, 2020.
- ♦ First Presbyterian Church will establish an

emergency fund that will be used to provide financial assistance to local service agencies working to help individuals and groups impacted by COVID-19 and solicit contributions to the fund from the congregation.

The Reconciliation Ministry will be charged with overseeing the distribution of resources from the emergency fund.

Session will accept the challenge gift from the Burianek Trust Fund to match the congregation's donations dollar-for-dollar, up to a total of \$25,000.

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

Numerous elders expressed their appreciation to staff and Richard Van Rheeden for keeping the congregation connected online through worship and programming.

The elevator is due to be delivered late April, with work on track.

Friends of Pasrur collected group donations to be forwarded to the Pasrur Christian Girls School to be distributed to help meet basic needs of students and their families. The school is closed during the pandemic.

Discussion was held on the Garden Project 2020. Food insecurity was noted as an upcoming issue with which the garden produce could help. A detailed plan will be developed on how this project can be carried out differently (no gatherings) yet safely (quarantine.)

Vern Dengler closed the meeting with prayer, incorporating shared joys and concerns.

- **Next meeting:** May 19, 2020, 7 p.m., Zoom connection.
- Richard Van Rheeden, Opening Devotions; Dale Kraus, Closing Prayer

This is a follow-up to the April 22, 2020 letter from Session informing FPC members and friends that FPC applied for funds through CARES Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) economic stimulus loan. We have recently received formal approval of a \$87,600 loan, AND the funds have been deposited in our account. The loan may be forgivable in part or in total if we follow the criteria within the PPP. The funds must be used to retain current employees and related eligible costs. It is important that FPC also continues to receive pledges and other sources of income as detailed in our 2020 Budget in order that together we can retain our staff and continue to carry out the important mission of our church.

Dale Kraus
Moderator, Finance Committee & Interim Treasurer





Results from the Post-It Note Activity

Submitted on behalf of REALM Planning by Jeremy Fletcher

After the worship services on March 1 and March 8, many of you participated in the Post-It note activity facilitated by REALM Planning. Through this activity, you shared the areas you are passionate about, either by volunteering or with financial support, by posting those issues or causes on Post-It notes in Ryerson Fellowship Hall. It was great to talk with so many of you about your passions and interests. Thank you for participating in this activity.

During those two Sundays in early March, you submitted 219 areas of interest or passion on 178 Post-It notes. REALM Planning tabulated that information and assigned themes to each Post-It. The results show that all of you are passionate about serving others in need and dedicate much of your time, energy, and resources to worthy causes. Thank you for work in bringing about God's realm in our small corner of Creation. As a congregation, we work to serve our neighbor in a wide variety of causes.

We identified twenty-eight different themes among all of the ideas that were submitted. The themes are listed in the nearby word cloud. Your areas of interest cover a broad spectrum of issues. The five most common themes identified were environment, youth, health, poverty and social justice. Many of the themes are closely related to one another.

REALM Planning's original intent was to continue the conversation with you about your interests and passions throughout the spring. Our goal was to identify larger service projects that would engage large portions of the congregation in faith and service to our neighbors. Like so many things, the pandemic has disrupted those plans. We are continuing our planning work and hope to restart this conversation with all of you in the fall.

Girls Hopefully Return Soon to School in Pasrur

Submitted by Nancy Gardner and Friends of Pasrur

The headline above is a reason for great celebration for our girls at the Pasrur Christian Girls School in Pasrur, Pakistan! For several months, the school has been closed due to COVID-19, which meant the girls returned to their villages where many families found themselves in dire need of food. With assistance from Friends of Pasrur and the Presbyterian Education Board, funds totaling \$4,100 were provided to support nutritional needs until the school could reopen. Care packages consisting of essentials such as rice and flour were greatly appreciated by the families. Now, according to Director Veda Gill, we are hearing the school may open in June. This is something the school staff, girls and all of us look forward to!

It's also worth noting that the Pasrur Christian Girls School is under the leadership of a new principal, Miss Zarafshan Yousaf. Miss Yousaf brings an exceptional level of



Veda Gill watches as a greeting from Principal Zarafshan Yousaf is shared during Veda's January visit to FPC.



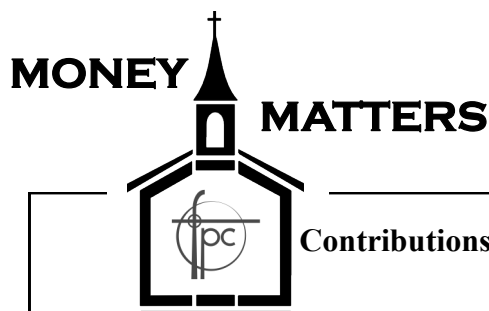
Food items sent to the girls

energy and creativity that will serve her well in addressing the needs of the

students and school. As the girls return

to the school in the next month, we look forward to receiving communication from Miss Yousaf describing the process of preparing for and welcoming the girls back to school.

Friends of Pasrur is always excited to welcome new members to the group! Please contact Leann Graves (lgraves@mchsi.com) or Nancy Gardner (nancy.hayes.gardner@gmail.com) to learn more.



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	\$37.83	\$34,326.10	\$44,908.60	-\$10,582.50
2020 Totals	\$187,853.60	\$796.76	\$188,650.36	\$191,111.13	-\$2,460.77

An Update of the Ecumenical Towers

Submitted by Bonnie Bender, FPC representative

Ecumenical Towers is a low-income senior housing project which was initiated by the Reverend Bob Welch, Pastor of First Christian Church. Rev. Welch invited eleven other churches in Iowa City to join First Christian Church in forming a corporation and building the existing eleven-story building that is attached to the Senior Center: Congregational United Church of Christ, First Mennonite Church, First Presbyterian Church, First United Methodist Church, Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, St. Mark's United Methodist Church, St. Thomas More Catholic Church, Saint Wenceslaus Church and Trinity Episcopal Church. The first residents moved into Ecumenical Towers in November 1981.

Each of the twelve churches have a representative who sits on the Board of Directors. These Directors meet on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:30 a.m. In the early 2000's the Board hired Homz Partners, a management company, to manage the property and they have done so until March 2020, when they sold their business to Cardinal Capital Management. At that point the Board met with Cardinal Capital and after some deliberation entered into a contract with Cardinal to manage Ecumenical Towers. The Board was pleased with the management of Ecumenical Towers by Homz. During Homz's tenure, they assisted the Board in refinancing the mortgage on the property and in so doing they were able to add a much needed second elevator to the building and update all of the apartments. Later they assisted in the installation of new windows, first on the south side and later on the north side. Homz maintained a budget which saw a positive balance over



the years. The Board looks forward to working with Cardinal Capital Management with the same kind of success.

Normally, in March the Board would offer a catered Soup Supper for the residents. However, due to Covid-19 that supper had to be cancelled as well as planning for a Pie Alamode Social in July. Because of these cancellations and because of a concern for the welfare of the residents, at its last meeting the Board decided to purchase a \$25 gift card for each resident. The gift cards have recently been mailed to the residents. I am very happy to report that to date none of the residents have contracted the dreaded virus.

The Ecumenical Housing Corporation holds an annual meeting on the first Monday of May. However, this year's meeting was cancelled due to the Covid-19. If you are interested in this mission project or if you have questions, please contact Bonnie Bender (319)430-8717).



FPC Book Club

Tuesday, May 26 at 11:30 a.m. on Zoom

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

Join us we discuss – The Library Book by Susan Orlean



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

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 app Church Life on your phone.

If you have not yet signed into My First Pres, this is the perfect time; go to the church website www.firstpreswacivcity.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@firstpreswacivcity.org or by phone at 563-889-0016.



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



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

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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