

FIRST'S FAMILY



November 15–December 15
2023
Volume 67 Issue 11

Happy November, Church!

Can you believe we are only a week away from Thanksgiving? With the extended summer we have been experiencing, and many trees still holding on to their leaves, it somehow doesn't feel possible that we are coming up to it. When I lived in Ankeny, I always enjoyed participating in a joint Thanksgiving service held by a number of the congregations, which was a chance to get together, have an ecumenical choir, see how some of my colleagues approached the task of preaching Thanksgiving, and, most importantly, eat pie afterwards.



Most of you know that the first year of the Plymouth colony didn't happen quite like we learned in elementary school, but probably do know that it was Abraham Lincoln (likely influenced by Sarah Josepha Hale) who inaugurated the tradition of setting aside a day in November for national Thanksgiving. If you read Lincoln's first proclamation for a November Thanksgiving or his earlier proclamations for national days of Thanksgiving, you can see that he does not shy away from the ongoing war, or the death and destruction that were its result. While he certainly highlights the people in rebellion as the cause of the war, he also includes them in his story of America, calling for all Americans to set aside time for penitence because of **our** national failures. I have heard it said that it was the Civil War that changed our national identity from "these United States" to "the United States," that this enormous fracture of our sense of what it meant to be American resulted in a new story that we told ourselves and the world. In Lincoln's proclamation, you can see that storytelling at work. To lay the blame solely on the Confederacy would legitimize the Confederacy, and so he could not simply declare them outside the bounds of national identity; it could not be "us" vs. "them", because there was only "us".

In our current national moment, I think about the Civil War, and the run-up to it, a lot. In an atomized world, it becomes ever harder to tell a story of "us" that incorporates large numbers of people, and the challenge often overcomes all our earnest efforts. Which is one reason why I take the Day of Thanksgiving so seriously. I was delighted one year in Massachusetts when a nearby Whole Foods Market declared themselves open on Thanksgiving, only to have the Attorney General visit them and say, "no, you aren't. And neither is anybody else, for it is illegal in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts."

Not only is it a day for giving thanks to God even in the midst of challenge, not only is it a day for national repentance for the suffering we cause in the world, not only is it a time to remember widows and orphans. It is also a day for the future, a day where we are free to ask what makes us who we think we are, to form an identity aside from work and expectation, and to write a new story about what it means to be this thing we call the United States of America.

Read all about Advent elsewhere in the newsletter. For now, join me in giving thanks.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Nathan

Cookie Walk



December 9 from 9 a.m.–Noon

Cookies are \$8/dozen and the proceeds will go to the Iowa City Free Lunch Program.

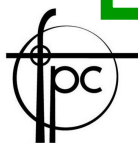
Sign Up to **Bake Cookies**

and/or Help the day of the sale in Ryerson Hall or by contacting Deb at Deb.Boland@gmail.com.

We encourage you to bring your own container, however, containers

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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH U.S.A.

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“Comfort, comfort ye my people; tell of peace!” thus says our God...

Hello, First Family!

As we creep slowly closer to the darkest, coldest season of the year, be comforted by the warmth of God’s love.

“This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger,” (Lk. 2:12b).

The world is ever in a dark state, but as expressed above, we can find the love of God—and indeed the very person of God—in the lowest of places. I hope this truth brings you peace now and always.



“And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,
‘Glory to God in the highest heaven,
And on earth peace to whom God favors!’” (Lk. 2:14)

I do not know if the heavenly host simply spoke or majestically sang, but tradition has made the making of music of great importance during the seasons of Advent and Christmas—and that is what we mean to do! Our music ministry has been working hard and preparing an exciting musical opportunity: a **Christmas Music Exchange** with the First Presbyterian Church of Marion.

What this will look like:

The regular church service on **Sunday, December 3 (10:30 a.m.) at FPC Iowa City** will be full of Advent and Christmas music provided by the combined choirs of our church and that of FPC Marion, eight additional hired singers (estimated 45–50 voices total), a full orchestra, handbells, our very own Melissa Moll, and jointly conducted by yours truly alongside my friend and colleague Katelyn Peterson, Director of Music at FPC Marion. We will then move the circus tent of musicians to FPC Marion on Sunday, December 10 (9 a.m.) and do it all over again for their congregation. (Regular weekly service will still happen at FPC Iowa City on Sunday, December 10, 10:30 a.m.).



This all, of course, creates more stress than necessary for myself, but it is nonetheless exciting! I am hopeful that you all will find seasonal excitement and comfort in all of it. The world is indeed a dark and scary place, but be of good faith! There is a light soon rising, that gracious Light—pure brightness of the ever-living God in heaven: Jesus Christ, holy and blessed.

“...Tell them that their sins I cover, and their warfare now is over.”

The K–2nd Grade Sunday School Class will be presenting their live Nativity again this year!
Come and see them on Sunday, December 10 from 10–10:30 a.m., right before worship!



Do you hear what I hear?

There will be a Christmas Pageant in worship on December 17!

Do you know what I know?

There is a lot to do!

This is an amazing opportunity to help children and youth embody the Christmas Story. It will take a variety of gifts and talents to make this Christmas come alive—right here at FPC!



Grown-ups: Anna is looking for adults with the gifts of imagination, creativity, patience, and music to help organize this pageant. There are costumes (in the youth room), there are props (to color), there is a script to help students be confident with, music to play and teach, and a need for just general corralling of chaos. If this sounds like YOU, please connect with Anna Sheetz today.

Children and Youth: Anna is looking for poets, Mary, Joseph, Gabriel, a host of angels, an innkeeper, shepherds, wise ones, movers/dancers/ and singers. All ages are welcome to participate—do you think I can find these people and roles here at FPC?

Here are the Details:

We will meet after Church three days for one hour (bagged lunches included). This time will be fun and educational for all ages. The dates are: November 26, December 3 and 10. We will meet from 12–1 p.m.

- We will meet on Wednesday, December 13 from 5:30–7 p.m. for a dress rehearsal.
- We will meet on Sunday, December 17 at 9:30 a.m. to have our final run through before worship!

If you or someone you know are interested, please contact Anna, Pastor Nathan, or Kyle Coleman. You can email Anna at Anna.Sheetz@firstpreswac.org for more information.



Breakfast Fundraiser for Summer Trips

You're Invited to a Breakfast Fundraiser for Summer Trips 2024!

Sunday, December 17, 9–10:15 a.m.

Come eat and watch the CE Ministry Year 2023 slide show, stay for Worship and be blessed by the Christmas Pageant!

This Summer, the Christian Education Ministry is looking forward to a week at Camp Stronghold for our youth, our first Intergenerational mission trip to Denver, AND scholarships for the newly renamed Bear Creek Camp (formerly known as Camp Wyoming). Please consider joining The Christian Education Ministry and families as we raise funds to defer these costs!

What a spectacular morning!



Each Christmas, **Toys for Tots** helps local children from less fortunate families experience the joy of Christmas.

In 2022, their efforts gifted over 3,500 children with toys and books in Johnson and Washington counties.

If you would like to donate toys and books, a donation box is located in Ryerson Hall.

Not sure what to purchase? A toy suggestion list is located on the donation box.

We are collecting items until December 10.

The Christmas Joy Offering to be received December 3–December 24

By giving to the Christmas Joy Offering of the Presbyterian Church (USA), you honor God's gift of Jesus Christ by providing assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and developing our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges that equip communities of color.

The Christmas Joy Offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s. The Offering distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. The Assistance Program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families. Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage. Recent outcomes from the Christmas Joy Offering include:

- **\$1.1 million in gifts from 2021** are being used to provide critical financial support and grants for current and retired Presbyterian church workers in their times of need.
- **26 countries** have been represented in the last 25 years at Presbyterian Pan American School.
- **98% of graduates** from the Menaul School, a PC (USA)-related, grades 6–12, college preparatory school in Albuquerque, New Mexico, go on to college.
- **84% of faculty** at Stillman, an historically Black College/University hold terminal degrees.



Please prayerfully consider providing a Christmas Joy Offering. From December 3 through December 24, go to <https://specialofferings.pcusa.org/offering/christmas-joy/> or donate by check or cash during Sunday worship, using a Christmas Joy Offering envelope found in the pew rack display / seat in front of you.

Advent

Is a time of preparation; here at FPC we are excited to offer several opportunities to be in community with each other this season.

New this year - *Wednesday Evening Intergenerational Activities* at 5:30 p.m. on November 29, December 6 and 13. Christmas lights, cookie decorating and pageant practice holds something for everyone. See page 6 for more details.

Pastor Nathan begins an *Advent Bible Study* on Thursday, November 30 at 10 a.m. in Coover Lounge. Thursdays in December will start at 1 p.m.

Sundays during Advent hold something special each week.

First Sunday of Advent: **December 3** begins at 9 a.m. with classic Advent crafts in Ryerson Hall. Followed by FPC Marion choir joining us for a musical exchange during worship. See page 2 for additional information.

Second Sunday of Advent: **December 10**, come see the K–2nd grade as they present a live Nativity at 10 a.m. Page 2 gives a hint at what is to come.

Third Sunday of Advent: **December 17** starts with a Big Breakfast Fundraiser at 9 a.m. along with the Christmas Pageant not to be missed in worship.

Fourth Sunday of Advent: **December 24**, join us for worship at 10:30 a.m. and for a Candlelight Service at 6 p.m.

Church offices will be closed December 25–January 1. Christian Education classes will resume on January 7.

First's Family

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



November 15-30

11/16	David Stochl	11/24	Leann Graves
11/18	Carol Tippe	11/24	Heather Fay
11/19	Tom Martin	11/25	Jeff Foster
11/19	Rose Youngquist	11/26	George Rickey
11/19	Craig Gustaveson	11/26	Grace Kirschling
11/21	Norvall Clemons	11/26	Lila Macinnis-Baumert
11/21	Ed Cranston	11/26	Palmer Scott
11/21	Barb Davis	11/29	Kathy Smith
11/22	MaryJo Keith	11/29	Stephanie Stamp
11/22	Rhys Paulsen		

December 1-15

12/1	Sharon Oglesby	12/14	Linda Clark
12/4	Carter Hand	12/14	Amy Hackman
12/5	Ella Everhart	12/14	Stephanie Paulsen
12/7	Sue Farran	12/15	Greg Smith
12/7	Cathe Franz	12/15	Jeri Smith
12/10	Doris Preucil		
12/11	Liz Degner		
12/12	Rick Boland		
12/13	Mary Kay Thompson		

I Look for Ways to Volunteer, and Here are My Reasons Why

~Stephanie Stamp

There are a wide variety of activities and programs that are offered at FPC. These programs require many volunteers to keep them going.

Without the support of volunteers, we would not have music for our church services, there would be no communion or worship leadership. Volunteers help feed and educate youth and adults in our community and abroad. Adult mentors show up for our children and youth to share meals, show them the love of God, and build a community that supports one another.

When I was young, I was blessed to receive gifts of leadership from many adults in the church. My children also received love and support from within the walls of this place. I believe that it is because of the gifts of time and talent from so many that our church community will continue to thrive. It is not a burden for me to give my time to this congregation. It is my commitment to the growth of our young people, support for our young families, service on a variety of committees, and connections through shared learning and music. These are gifts that I receive even as I give of myself.



Stephannie Stamp (front row on left) participating in one of her many activities.

10,000 FOOT VIEW

Sunday, November 19

Sunday AM; Breakfast and Sunday School Classes
Sunday PM: 3Gs, Big Game, Dinner, 3Ts

Sunday, November 26

Sunday AM; Breakfast and Sunday School Classes
Christmas Pageant Practice (12-1 p.m.)
BIG EVENT (4p.m.), Potluck Dinner

Sunday, December 3

Sunday AM; Breakfast and Sunday School Classes
Christmas Pageant Practice (12-1 p.m.)
Sunday PM: 3Gs, Big Game, Dinner, 3Ts

Sunday, December 10

Sunday AM; Breakfast and Sunday School Classes
Christmas Pageant Practice (12-1 p.m.)
Sunday PM: 3Gs, Big Game, Dinner, 3Ts

Sunday, December 17

Sunday AM: FUNDRAISER for Summer Transportation
Christmas Pageant during Worship Service
Sunday PM: Christmas Party and Pizza Party

Winter Break: December 24–December 31

Christian Education Classes will resume Sunday, Jan. 7

New Intergenerational Opportunities Upcoming!

I, Anna, am becoming more and more convinced that the Church is an unique organization in our world—a place where multiple generations can connect. No other place can my children get so loved by various other adults—the village that we all seek to find. This village is a place where everyone plays a role, and this Advent, we are hoping to create memories that will stretch across generations in this Church Village of ours! You are invited to these Wednesdays:

Wednesday, November 29, Lights on the Lake as we Walk Towards Advent!

Put on your layers and walking shoes- let's go for a walk and support a great cause! Holiday Lights at the Lake is hosted at the West Overlook Campground and all profits go to the Bird House- where our youth and adults have done work over the years. This event goes from 5:30-6:30 p.m. and it is \$5 per person (free for 2yo and younger).

Wednesday, December 6, Cookie Decorating at FPC

Let's get together and decorate cookies that will be donated to the Cookie Walk (and maybe some to our bellies, too)! We'll meet at 5:30-6:30 p.m. and there will be some snacks, but no full dinner. Come and get creative! We'll listen to the Christmas tunes and play together!

Wednesday, December 13, Christmas Play Practice

We'll have our final practice for the Christmas pageant! This event will go from 5:30–7 p.m. with dinner provided! Details will be filled in on exactly what the play will be, so no worries! Just put this on your calendar and we'll see you then!

INTERGENERATIONAL ACTIVITIES *for the Family*

WEDNESDAYS IN
ADVENT





It's Almost Time to RSVP

But never fear— there's still TIME!

Summer Trips 2024 potential participants must RSVP and have a \$100 deposit to



Camp Stronghold; Best Week Ever

Current 5th–8th Graders

June 9–June 14

What we learned last summer is that when St. Andrew says, “The best week ever,” they mean *the best week ever*. We’ll learn together with our siblings from St. Andrew, learn about God, play NIGHT GAMES, and eat some delicious food—all in a castle—for a whole week!

What we’re excited about: A whole week of playing and learning? What else could you want?

The Christian Education Team met in October and discussed the cost and funding of these trips. The Team graciously decided that the Church would split the costs with participants. The trip costs per participant is below:

Camp Stronghold for 5th-8th Graders: \$265

Creation Care in Colorado: \$350

Students in 5th-8th Grade who attend BOTH trips: \$500 (a \$115 savings!)

The Team also wanted to make explicitly clear that there is scholarship funding available. No one will be turned away from these amazing opportunities due to funding. All you need to do is confidentially tell Anna your need.

For any questions or concerns, please contact Anna Sheetz, Director of Christian Education, at Anna.Sheetz@firstpresbiowacity.org

Creation Care in Colorado

Current 5th Graders–105 Years Old!

June 29–July 7

“In the middle of the soaring mountains and the beautiful nature of Denver, your group will learn how to be good caretakers of creations and how to be leaders for eco-justice in your own community! Your group will learn how our faith calls us to care for creation, how environmental justice directly affects us and our neighbors, and what we can do about it.”

What we’re excited about: This is FPC’s very first Intergenerational trip to learn about the climate no less! Plus **we’ll take a train to and from Colorado**—no exhausted adults on a long haul!





Students in the K-2 Sunday School class look for ways to show God's love to others. Here Oliver, Ryan, and Kelsey create cards to send to senior members of FPC.

The days are shorter, the nights are longer, the temps are colder, and the holidays are around the corner.

It's enough to make anyone feel overwhelmed! Do you wish you could jot down what's on your mind or heavy on your heart without having to explain it to anyone?

You can! Stop by the Prayer Post and jot away ... and you can be completely anonymous or ask to be contacted for a confidential personal prayer.



Located along the sidewalk on Rochester Ave., this Post offers you a place to lay those concerns aside, pick up an inspirational reminder, or grab a Bible for yourself or to share.

Pray More...Worry Less



FPC offers Notary services.

Contact Tammy Schroeder to schedule an appointment at 319-351-2660 or tammy.schroeder@firstpresioiwacity.org

Join the FPC Book Club on November 28 for a discussion on The Great Escape by Saket Soni. The group meets in Room 14 on the lower level or via Zoom.

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



Where Do Time and Talents Enter Into Stewardship?

~Nancy Gardner (Moderator, Stewardship Committee)

I've been writing a lot about stewardship as it pertains to financial gifts, but let's consider those other truly critical gifts that don't cost a dime- sharing of our time and talents. We all have them. No one gets any more hours in their day than the next person. And, you may think you don't have talent, but let me assure you that we all do.

Let's first dig a little deeper into this concept of time because it all comes down to choice. Well, maybe not just choice, let's add in priorities and motivation. So, what do you do with your 24 hours? We're all busy people, but is there a little time you might be able to contribute...say, signing up to cook one (yes, just one) meal for the youth group, rotating in a few Sundays when a teacher is going to be absent, setting up for the Cookie Walk? It doesn't have to be a year-long commitment, but anything you can do is going to help,

and you'll actually feel good doing it.

Now, about those talents. Can we all play the piano like Melissa and sing a solo in the choir? That's a big no from me! Just ask anyone who sits in front of me during the hymns in worship. But, do you have a knack with photography, technology, socializing with people, writing, organizing, baking, gardening? The list goes on and on, and yes, you have a talent for something.

These two *other* critical gifts to the church, that don't cost a thing, but only require as much time as you want to give in whatever area you have a skill, are just as important as your monthly pledge. So when you're ready to give, go ahead and ask around. Ask Anna, or Nathan, or Tammy S., or Tammy F., or even me. I've got ideas for you!

Check Out the New Photo Wall Display!

Have you seen it? The new photo wall in the hallway? Come see firsthand how we at FPC live out our mission of justice, mercy, and faith. Special thanks to Deb Boland, Jerry Stamp, Sue Van Duyn, Steve Smith, and Nancy Gardner for creating this inspiring display!



2023 Warm Winter Wear Distribution

~John Barr, Reconciliation Ministry Member

Activities for Consultation of Religious Communities (CRC) annual distribution of warm winter wear were held October 8–14, at 340 Southgate Avenue (the alternative winter shelter), in Iowa City.

Communications with the public about the distribution were emailed to local social service agencies, KCRG, Iowa City and Clear Creek Amana Public Schools, Community Food Pantries and Neighborhood Centers. Families were required to have one adult member register for a 30-minute shopping session via SignUp Genius.

Faith communities with membership in CRC, and others in Iowa City and Coralville, received information requesting donations and volunteers. Donations were received from 21 faith communities and six organizations (including KCRG, which provided 120 new coats via its “Coats for Kids” program). First Presbyterian Church (FPC) received an amazing number of clothing donations, including 60 new hooded winter coats (in children’s sizes 10–12, 14/16, 18 and adult XL / XXL sizes) funded by our Reconciliation Ministry, Health Ministry and Outreach.

Volunteers from 24 faith communities and agencies/organizations signed up on SignUp Genius. They served as one-on-one assistants for each family representative, helped find desired items, kept track of the number of items selected, put items into bags, and helped participants out to their cars. Our FPC volunteers were: Ann Argall, John & Rhonda Barr, Liz Bolin, John Clark, Nancy Gardner, Mary Jo Keith, Rob Ketterer, Jim & Mary Linn, Alex Marsh, Tom Martin, Barb Meier, Chris Miller, Nancy Ross, Janie Schomberg, and Mary Ellen Stamp.

Households served: 377 from:

Iowa City 300 / Coralville 60 / North Liberty 8 / Tiffin 6 / Other 3

Coats Distributed: 1561

873 Children, sizes 0–8 and 688 Adults: Sizes S–XXXXL

(Comparison: 2022–342 households, 1867 coats)

We were unable to meet the needs of at least 100 children needing sizes 1–18; many high school youth needed coats that are adult sizes.

Our plans for the future include recruiting younger individuals for our Leadership Team, securing permission to use the 340 Southgate facility from the Johnson County Board of Supervisors by early Spring, having faith communities and community organizations start earlier to collect coats of all sizes, and increasing numbers of gloves/mittens, scarves, boots and snow pants for all ages.

Sincere thanks to FPC members and friends for their many lovely donations of warm winter wear and for volunteering for the many activities that made up the Warm Winter Wear Distribution.



FPC donations in Ryerson Hall



John Clark (right) assist a family representative.



Donations ready for distribution at 340 Southgate



Make this the Year of Your Legacy

The FPC Endowment and Memorials Committee

Bob and Millie Youngquist, Coordinators

What better goal for this year than to create your own personal legacy to continue your ministry beyond your own lifetime? We support our congregation and other ministries with our gifts during our lifetime, but creating a legacy through a permanent fund means our ministry will continue for all perpetuity.

Create a list of the ministries you love and support now. Consider your own dreams for those ministries for the future. Next consider all the goals you have (support your family, provide for your own retirement, provide an education for grandchildren).

Meet with your professional advisor or Bob and Millie Youngquist, our endowment coordinators, to learn how informed estate planning can increase the overall value of your estate with a gift of tax-burdened assets (like IRAs, 401(k), or savings bonds) to the church.

Permanent funds, such as those held in trust by the Endowment and Memorials Committee, support the ministries of the donor's choosing. We hope you will consider a legacy gift to support the First Presbyterian Church in your plans.

There will always be the poor, the sick and the disenfranchised in our world. We will always need to help provide for ministerial education. Long after our lifetimes, there will be people teaching other people about Jesus Christ. Create your legacy now to support these ministries now and beyond your lifetime.

To learn more, contact Pastor Nathan Willard (319-351-2660) or Bob and Millie Youngquist, 319-653-4673. They are glad to help our church members with planned gifts and permanent funds.

Donors should seek the counsel of professional advisors for legal, accounting, investment, and other professional advice.

"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

2 Corinthians 9:7

Honoring Your Wishes at FPC

There is often a wide gap between what we hope will happen surrounding the end of our lives and what actually happens.

STATISTICS ILLUSTRATE THE GAP: 92% of Americans say it is important to discuss their wishes for end-of-life care, yet only 32% have had that conversation (The Conversation Project National Survey, 2018).

Why does FPC have a program to have conversations with you about end of life decisions?

Faith communities are existing groups of people of all ages that are committed to living according to shared values. Faith communities encourage living with more compassion and less fear — things we all need if we are going to engage in these kinds of tender conversations. Faith communities are story-telling communities — and much of this work is about sharing our stories: what happened when someone died; what works and what doesn't; what we hope and what we fear. The seeds of cultural change are often planted in faith communities, and we need culture change to normalize these conversations. Faith communities are positioned to support people with serious illnesses and their families, as well as clinicians who care for the seriously ill.

How do you want the last chapter of your story to go? Let's talk about it!

Rhonda Barr,
HYW Facilitator
Congregational Health Ministries



FPC Welcomed Veda Gill and Cheryl Burke in October

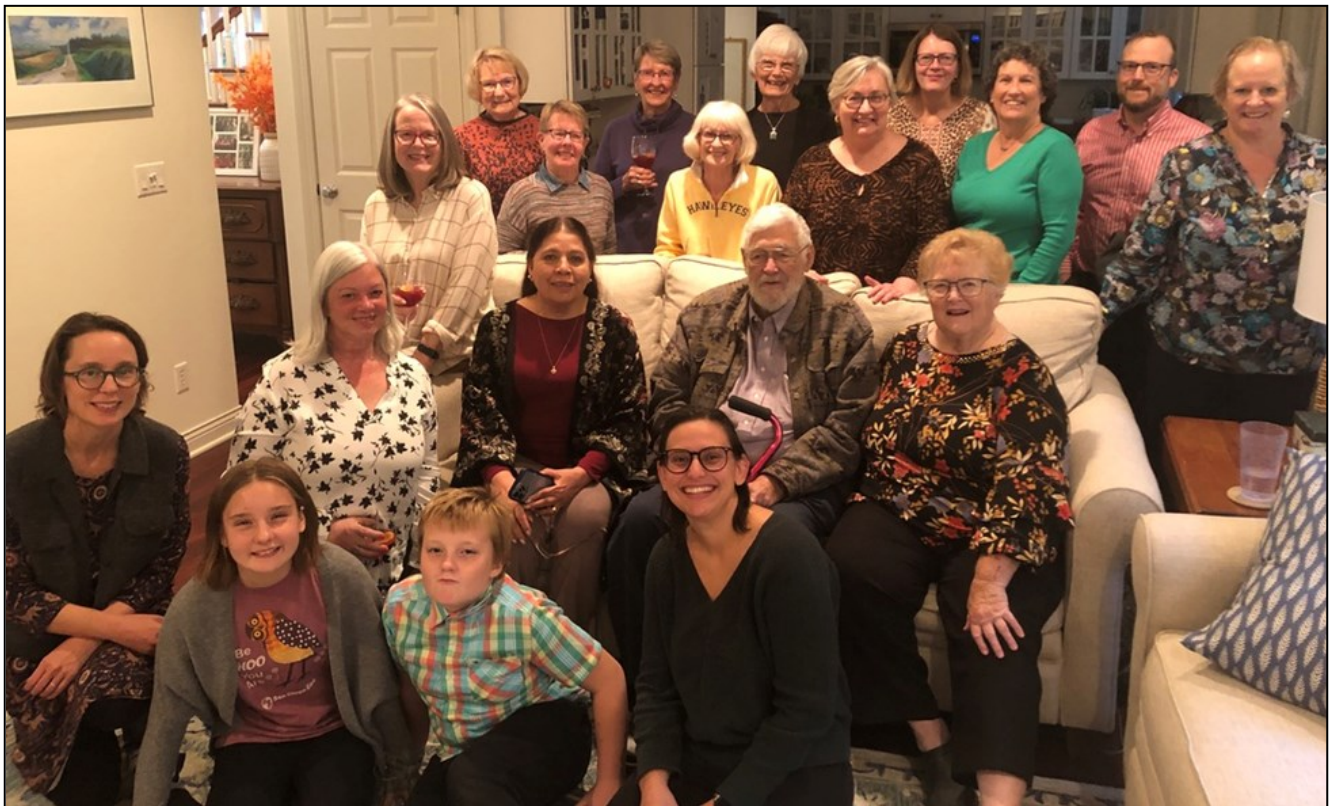
~Submitted by Leann Graves, Friends of Pasrur

FPC kept Veda Gill, the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Education Board (PEB) in Pakistan, and Cheryl Burke, the newly-appointed Executive Director of Friends of PEB, busy when they visited us October 6-9.

From a Blackstone lunch with donors and friends (which included a visit from our former pastor Ed Morgan) on Friday to a meeting with Pastor Nathan on Monday, their schedule was full. Saturday included a potluck with Friends of Pasrur and the Reconciliation Ministry at the Cranston home. Sunday brought Veda to our sanctuary to preach, followed by a well-attended presentation in

Ryerson Hall. Attendees enjoyed a cake in honor of 25 years since the denationalization of PEB schools in Pakistan.

In her presentation, Veda shared information about Pakistan and the Christian Girls School in Pasrur that FPC holds dear to its heart. Amidst lovely facilities built there by FPC members and friends, the primary area and administration offices remain in deplorable condition. A plan is being developed to make these areas conducive to quality learning as well! Looking ahead, we're excited about celebrating the 25th anniversary of Friends of



Friends of Pasrur enjoying an evening with Veda and Cheryl.



Cheryl Burke visits with Amy Nicholson at Blackstone in Iowa city.



Veda provided additional information about our girls in Pasrur after worship..



One of our many sponsored girls.

What a Bargain!

Jeanie Wade-Nagel, Friends of Pasrur

Three years ago I was out for a walk when I received a call from Nancy Gardner asking if it was a good time to talk so of course I said yes. Nancy wanted to share with me the work that FPC does with providing education in Pasrur, Pakistan. Nancy and I are both retired educators so I am sure she knew this would pique my interest. She explained to me the history FPC has with Pasrur and that we provide education for girls in Pasrur who are too poor to afford to go on their own. I learned that for \$500 (now \$550) a person can provide a full year of school for a girl, living in poverty. But that is not all, the money pays for the girls books, uniforms and dormitory housing in addition to the actual instruction. Wow, all of that for \$550!

As I have learned more by working with Friends of Pasrur, I learned that the girls stay in a dormitory because it is not safe for them to walk back and forth to school. I also learned that many girls go on to higher education and careers. This gift is not a way to improve education opportunities for these girls, it is their only opportunity for an education. I went home and talked with my husband, Gary, sharing what I had learned and we agreed this was a great way to give a young girl an education. For more information, go to the church website or contact any of the friends of Pasrur members.



Students are truly grateful for the opportunity to attend classes.

I feel better about this gift than most any gift I have ever given. Seeing the pictures of the girls in the school environment studying, singing, ironing their uniforms, and enjoying this chance to improve their lives through an education, my heart is warmed. Please think about joining in this amazing gift opportunity and realize the joy you feel in changing a life.

Highlights from the Fall Women's Retreat: When Life Gives You Lemons...



Making gifts of lemon and lavender body scrub for the Domestic Violence Intervention Program.



Mary Jane Knight joined in to lead the group in breathing, prayers, and singing exercises.



Kitty selects the final touches to top off her body scrub jar.



Becky is all in for a lemon tattoo to go along with the retreat's theme.



Wilbur was our special guest and quickly made friends with everyone.

Q3 Financial Update

As the third quarter of 2023 draws to a close, we would like to update you on the financial aspect of the work we have been doing to share the Word of God through Jesus Christ and to live lives of Justice, Mercy, and Faith. In January, we passed a budget that projected the cost of living into this vision at \$550,145.75. Based on pledging commitments and historical income from other sources, we projected income of \$468,224, with the balance of \$81,921.75 to come from our annual endowment disbursement and our cash reserves.

As of the end of the third quarter, we have spent \$393,976.23, which is roughly on target for our budget. At the same time, your generosity has given us income of \$388,235.61! This is a little bit above our budget expectations, due in large part to some windfall income that we don't expect to see next year. At the current rate of spending and giving, we anticipate needing to fund around \$53,000 from our annual endowment disbursement and our cash reserves. While this number is lower than the \$82,000 we had budgeted in January, it still represents a significant opportunity to grow into the vision laid out in our budget this year and into the future.



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

The Deacons invite you to make a memorial donation in remembrance or in honor of the ones you love this Christmas. Your gift of \$15 will help cover the cost of the poinsettias purchased by the Deacons to be placed in the sanctuary to give glory to God! While at the same time any monetary gifts that exceed the cost of the flowers will be deposited in the Deacons Emergency Relief Fund, and your donations are used to help others during times of hardship as God calls us all to do.

Please note that the Deacons no longer deliver plants to members' homes after the holidays due to feedback that the plants are not as fresh after several days inside the building. For your gift to be tax deductible, members who make a gift, cannot take plants home.

The names of those you wish to remember and/or honor will be listed in the Christmas Eve bulletin.

To make your gift, simply complete this form and return to the church office with your donation by December 15.

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

This gift is made to the Glory of God!

In honor of _____

OR

In memory of _____

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

Name _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ or Email _____

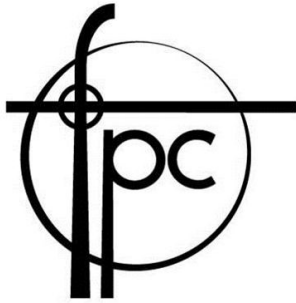
Questions please contact: Sue Van Duyn at susanvdphipps@gmail.com

Thank you!

**Make Your
Honorary/Memorial
Gift Today!**



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



Public Office Hours:
9 a.m.—4 p.m. Monday—Thursday
except holidays or when announced
Ph 319-351-2660
www.firstpresioiowacity.org

First Presbyterian Church Staff

PASTOR
Nathan Willard
nathan.willard@firstpresioiowacity.org
DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
Anna Sheetz
anna.sheetz@firstpresioiowacity.org
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS
Tammy Schroeder
tammy.schroeder@firstpresioiowacity.org

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC
J. Kyle Coleman
kyle.coleman@firstpresioiowacity.org
ORGANIST
Melissa Moll
melissa.moll@firstpresioiowacity.org
SEXTON
Gerald Hill
gerald.hill@firstpresioiowacity.org

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
Tammy Foster
tammy.foster@firstpresioiowacity.org
MANAGER OF FINANCE & PURCHASING
Krista Livingston
finance@firstpresioiowacity.org
ENDOWMENT & MEMORIAL
COORDINATORS
Bob & Millie Youngquist
endowment@firstpresioiowacity.org