

“THE CORNERSTONE”

DECEMBER, 2021 – JANUARY, 2022

First Presbyterian Church PC (U.S.A.)

206 E. 20th Street P. O. Box 444

Falls City, Nebraska 68355

402-245-2650 – <http://www.fallscitypres.org>

Worship Time: 11 am



MAY YOUR HOME BE FILLED WITH LOVE, JOY AND PEACE

First Presbyterian
Church
P O Box 444
Falls City, NE 68355

Pastor's Reflection

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

Isaiah 41:10 KJV

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Good day! And it is a very good day. These last nine weeks have been quite a journey for your Pastor. I want to take this time to thank each and every one of you for your prayers, well wishes and words of encouragement. They all have been an inspiration to me and truly the wind in my sails. I am forever changed in the best way, and I am blessed beyond measure. I have seen God in your eyes, your face, and your touch. I am most grateful to God in using each one of you towards my journey to better health and gratefulness.

It is hard to believe Advent is upon us and yet here it is. Advent is an in-between time of year. It is not just between Thanksgiving and Christmas, though that is when it occurs. Advent is all about what was and what is to be, about what has already happened and what has yet to occur. It's a time of anticipation, of expectancy. To live the Christian journey with expectancy at a most basic level is to be a resident of two worlds. We live fully in the here and now, with all the joys and sorrows, victories and setbacks of incarnate life. We love, laugh, get tired, make mistakes, hurt, rejoice, and grieve in the journey through this wonderful creation and re-creation given us by God. We live with anticipation in the life to come, having entered in the near end of the eternal journey through the waters of baptism, belief, faith, and practice. We are in between the coming of Christ and his coming again, living the "now" with hopeful expectancy that empowers us and sustains us. Glory be to God!

Blessing to you this day.

Pastor

ADVENT/CHRISTMAS SERMON SERIES: LIVING "IN BETWEEN" WILL BE OUR FOCUS DURING THE SEASON.

We will be focusing on the following Sermon series during the Advent/Christmas season:

1st Sunday of Advent	Luke 21: 25-36	The coming kingdom means new life.
2nd Sunday of Advent	Luke 3: 1-6	Shifting our direction and priorities enables reception of new life.
3rd Sunday of Advent	Luke 3: 7-18	Repenting means choosing to live differently.
4th Sunday of Advent	Luke 1: 39-55	We magnify the Lord in our own day.
Christmas Eve	Luke 2: 1-20	As God meets us on the margins, we're compelled to meet others there too.
December 26 th	Luke 2: 39-52	Thinking about Jesus' silent years reminds us how God works slowly in us.

COMMUNITY NEWS

The Community Christmas Carol Sing will be held December 12th at 2 pm at the Falls City High School. A free will offering will be received. Come and enjoy the beautiful music of the sea

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

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. Jeanne Giles was a grateful recipient of a Christmas Joy offering. Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage. This has been a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years. The church will receive Christmas Joy offerings during the Advent Season in addition to our normal offering. Please use the special envelopes for your donation. If writing a check, please note it as Christmas Joy offering. All Christmas Joy offerings will be blessed at the Christmas Eve Service.

CHRISTMAS TOUR OF CHURCHES

Our church will participate in the Christmas Tour of Churches organized by the Friends of the Library. On Saturday, December 18, several Falls City churches will be open from 10 am to 3 pm. This will allow people to see all the beautiful Christmas decorations in our wonderful community churches. Tickets will be \$10 and will be available from Friends of the Library and at each church on the tour. Please talk to Jennifer James (245-7828) if you would be able to greet visitors for part of the tour time, or if you would provide a dozen Christmas treats to offer to our guests.

NEW CHRISTMAS TRADITION SUGGESTION

Beginning December 1st read one chapter of the book of Luke in the Bible each evening. There are 24 chapters. On Christmas Eve you will have read an entire account of Jesus's life and wake up Christmas morning knowing WHO and WHY we celebrate.

FIRST FRIDAY BREAKFASTS

November attendees of the First Friday Breakfast were enlightened by the many facets of the Sheriff's office with a great talk by Sheriff Rick Hardesty. The December meeting is scheduled for December 3rd at 7 am, with Guest Speaker Lucas Froeschl, Executive Director of EDGE. January will feature Dr. Adam Streit, our new orthopedic surgeon at Community Medical Center. Contact John Martin 402-740-5900 or the church office at 402-245-2650 so we may plan food needs accordingly. Start your day off with a great breakfast and interesting speakers. If you have speakers in mind or would like to hear about a topic let John know and he will take it from there.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

The Native American Concerns Committee of the Presbyterian Women of the Synods of Lakes and Prairies continue to provide sewing supplies to the Dakota Presbytery's Presbyterian Women to make masks and other needs for the pandemic. Quality quilting fabric and sewing supplies such as sewing machine needles, 6-inch rulers, measuring tapes, needle and thread, scissors, and straight pins may be sent to any of the following address:

Susie Amos, P. O. Box 104, New Effington, SD 57255
Ida Ashes Brown, 38630 SD Hwy 46, Lake Andes, SD 57356
Ruby Schlueter, 592 E. Hwy 18, Pineridge, SD 57770
Ernestine Youpee, P. O. Box 1491, Poplar, MT 59255

The pandemic has limited access to resources, but has not diminished the desire to do what they can for and with each other. They appreciate all support in their goal.

SPECIAL MUSIC EVENT

As Epiphany begins, we will be focusing on our music ministry. Starting off will be a special music program performed by Michele on January 9th during our worship service at 11 am. Please be sure to attend and invite a friend or even more!

FINANCIAL AWARENESS

Each fall many churches conduct formal stewardship campaigns. We have not done so at First Presbyterian Church for decades. Instead, the Session tries to make you aware of the operational needs of the Church together with our outreach/mission programs. You are aware of the inflation impacting your pockets and this is an issue with the Church budget as well, especially the utilities component. More importantly, we have exciting new programs being planned for 2022 and will have much more information on them over the next couple of months as the Session finalizes the budget.

The upshot of these few sentences is to ask each of you, whether you attend church in person or electronically, to review your past donations and make conscious plans for your 2022 giving. Thank you in advance.

DIAPER CLOSET

Stop downstairs in the Diaper Closet when you have time. The Diaper Closet needed a little spark of color. The session voted to donate \$500 for toys, books, coloring books and other colorful things. Be sure to stop in the Diaper Closet and look at the new toys. We are putting out a few toys and books at a time. We hope to see what is popular, educational and needed. We want to focus on important things like diapers, but a well-loved toy can make a big difference to a child. We do take donated toys as long as they are in good condition. Highchairs, baby carriers, baby bathtubs and other items are welcome. We take clothing up to size 5T. Currently, we don't have a lot of winter clothing for bigger boys, sizes 3T to 5T. If you are cleaning closets and have baby or toddler items, stop on Monday from 4pm to 6pm! Volunteers are always welcome. If you see Judy Crawford, Laura Gonnella, Lena Lippold, John Martin, Judy Mueller or Jennifer James, thank them for volunteering and ask how you can help.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

All newsletter articles for the December-January newsletter will be due to the office by **January 17th**. Please submit an article for the newsletter. Keep everyone informed about the activities of the church. Thank you for marking this *important* date on your calendar!

Recommended Reading

9 Common Lies Christians Believe by Shane Pruitt
The Bridge of Peace by Cindy Woodsmall
Growing True Disciples by George Barna
A Walk with Jane Austen by Lori Smith
Blaze of Light by Marcus Brotherton
What Lies Within by Karen Ball
The Birchbark House by Louise Erdrich
Decolonizing Wealth: Indigenous Wisdom to Heal Divides and Restore Balance

If you have any book(s) you have enjoyed and would recommend, please email to presbyterian@sentco.net

+++++++PARISH NEWS+++++++

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION SERVICE

The Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be held at 6 pm on December 24th. The Christmas Eve Joy Offerings will be dedicated during the service. Services will be held on Sunday, December 26th at the regular time of 11 am.