

NEWS AT FIRST

Our Mission: To make known the love of God through Jesus Christ.

Our Vision: We are empowered to live out our faith in daily life.



We Remember

More than 150 years ago, Memorial Day took shape amid the backdrop of the U.S. Civil War. Before it ended, women began decorating the graves of fallen soldiers. In 1868, when May 30 was designated as Decoration Day, loved ones placed flowers on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers alike.

By 1882, Decoration Day became known as Memorial Day, and soldiers who died in other wars were honored too. Over time, it became a day to remember all loved ones who have died – in war and otherwise. In 1971, Congress declared Memorial Day a national holiday to be observed on the last Monday in May. On Memorial Day, we pause to remember people who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country and for our freedom. We also pray for those who continue serving, especially those in harm's way.

Pastor's (Ponderings)

I have just registered for a "Sabbath Retreat." It is being planned by the Presbytery's Congregational Development & Vitality Team. The event promises "*good food, good conversation, and restorative time in God's good creation.*" Who can resist that?!

The retreat is for those who are serving congregations. It will be held at Camp Wyoming, April 28 and 29. By the time you read this, I may already have had "*24 hours of rest and renewal.*" A second retreat is planned for some time later that will be specifically for ruling elders. Session members from Monticello will be given the opportunity to participate in the next Sabbath retreat.

It is very timely that the lesson for May in the Ruling Elders Workbook is "Transformational Leaders Keep the Sabbath." There is much wisdom in this lesson, such as "*Sabbath is good for us. The consistent and intentional practice of Sabbath transforms us from overworked, scattered, and burned-out people to rested, focused, and energetic ones.*"

We honor the Sabbath when we worship on the Lord's Day, the day of resurrection. But there are many other ways to experience Sabbath. I thought of the Camp Wyoming retreat when the lesson stated "*Twenty-four-hour Sabbath observance is ideal because it gives us the fullness of rest that our spirits, minds, and bodies need.*" Okay—sign me up!

The focus of Sabbath, whether at worship or on retreat, is on God and our relationship to God. Taking time for Sabbath rest and renewal shapes our Christian identity and is vital to our work as spiritual leaders. I imagine all of our elders would like to sign up! Hopefully, some will.

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Treasurer,
Dan Saunders

WORSHIP

Sundays 10 am
8:30 am Sunday
school

9:30 am Fellowship

Join us on FaceBook
live stream for
worship each Sunday.

Facebook:
@Monticellofpc



Congratulations to **Meredith Parker**, daughter of Jeff and Teresa Parker, who was confirmed Palm Sunday (April 10th). Meredith completed her second year of confirmation classes, along with first year students Grant Gassman, Dylan Ricklefs, and Talan Long and Tate Long. The class learned about Presbyterian history and doctrine using a resource from Spark House, a leading publisher of Christian materials for youth.

Confirmation, a rite many churches celebrate each spring, has biblical roots. In Acts 8, Peter and John are sent to lay their hands on new believers and pray for them to receive the Holy Spirit. In the early church, new Christians — usually adult converts — received baptism and confirmation as one ceremony. As more children were brought for baptism, pastors and priests would baptize, but only bishops would “confirm” a baptism, or make it official. Thus, the baptized were granted full membership in the church through confirmation.



Now confirmation allows young people, often after intensive Christian education, to profess for themselves the faith into which they were baptized. Confirmation serves as an important faith milestone, as young adults purposefully embrace a life of discipleship.



Thank you to those that donated Easter lilies for the sanctuary in memory of loved ones from their families:

- *In memory of Craig Parker from Linda Parker and family.*



Sing praise to our Creator God!
Earth prospers from the way
God “mothers” each new child into
This world day after day.

God fabricates in motherhood
A channel from above
That longs to share with every child
God’s comfort, grace and love!

Sing praise to our Creator God,
Who “mothers” us from birth!
Providing what we truly need
Throughout our lives on earth.

—Peggy Ferrell

Newly Revised Mission & Vision Statement

Session created a Task Force to revise our current statement to reflect best practice. The Task Force met to review the Pastoral Surveys, incorporate recurring words and ideas into the statement, and then sent it off to a professional for editing. A final draft was presented to Session and approved at the April meeting. The newly revised statement is presented here:

First Presbyterian Church Mission & Vision Statement

Mission Statement: (What is God calling us to do? What is our common purpose?)

To make known the love of God through Jesus Christ

To make known.

As humble followers of Christ, we devoutly labor in His field by generously using our time, talents, efforts, finances and voices to honor God's directive and address the needs of his creation. We reach out and become active and involved in our community.

The love of God.

The liberating power of love through our Father is discovered as we resolve to reorder our lives and bind them to Christ's message. We passionately devote ourselves to our Father's redeeming purpose.

Through Jesus Christ.

Our charge is to walk with Jesus. Only through him can the soul be nurtured and committed to the love of God, self, and all humanity. The yearning to follow and serve Christ unites us in a community of faith.

Vision Statement: (What will it look like if we live out our common purpose in our context?)

We are empowered to live out our faith in daily life

We.

We perceive life as an exciting journey guided and fully realized through God's word. All who desire to experience the Father's love are warmly welcomed into a friendly and nurturing community of faith.

Are empowered.

Heartfelt discipleship will take root, blossom and flourish as we lovingly cultivate spiritual awareness and engage with the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. We grow in Christlikeness.

To live out our faith in daily life.

An atmosphere is created to enhance fellowship and strengthen our faith. Hospitality and outreach is gladly and readily extended to organizations, the community, and God's world. Worship is a joyous assembly in a spirit of praise and thanksgiving to celebrate God's blessings.



Join us as we honor 2022 high school graduates (and scholarship recipients, too!) of First Presbyterian Church during worship on **Sunday, May 22 at 10:00 a.m.**

Matthew Beal

Lillian Bruns

Bob Bechthold

Sawyer Stephen

Congratulations, Graduates!



Mr. Rogers, to Grads—And to Us All

Our world hangs like a magnificent jewel in the vastness of space. Every one of us is a part of that jewel, a facet of that jewel, and in the perspective of infinity, our differences are infinitesimal. We are intimately related. May we never even pretend that we are not. ... Deep down, we know that what matters in this life is more than winning for ourselves. What really matters is helping others win too, even if it means slowing down and changing our course now and then. ...

[Roman philosopher] Boethius wrote this sentence: “Oh happy race of mortals if your hearts are ruled, as is the universe, by love.” ... [There is a] deep part of you that allows you to stand for those things without which humankind cannot survive: love that conquers hate, peace that rises triumphant over war, and justice that proves more powerful than greed. So in all that you do, in all of your life, I wish you the strength and the grace to make those choices which will allow you – and your neighbor – to become the best of whoever you are.

—Fred McFeely Rogers, 2002

Thank you to the Food Pantry for their continued support to our community when they need it most.

Consider making a donation, if you're able.

Current needs include:

- Tuna
- Chunky soups
- Spaghetti sauce
- Bleach
- Mandarin oranges



You can also consider monetary donations, which enables the food pantry to order from the grocer and get case pricing.

If you'd like to make a **monetary donation**, checks can be taken by drop off or mailed to:

MMA
(Monticello Ministerial Association)
PO Box 62
Monticello IA 52310



Each week during worship, we'd like to include a couple of church families on our Family Prayer list. For the month of May, please remember to include in your prayers each week our May families:



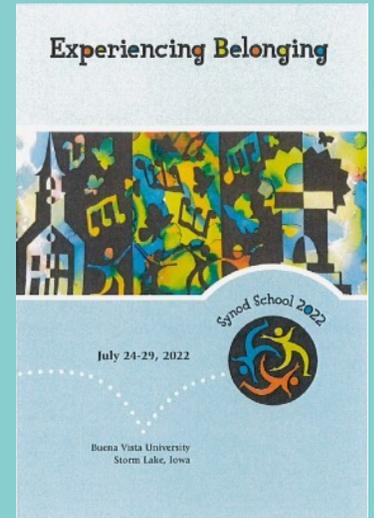
May 1: Barb Decker and Quinton Fellingner

May 7: Tanner, Taryn, Jack & Ryder Fellingner and Tim, Carrie, Madison & DeLainey Fellingner

May 15: Kevin, Chanda, Taylor, Grant & Kinley Gassman and Bill & Suzanne Gilkerson

May 22: Phil, Amy, Quinn & McKinley Gilkerson and Keith & Carol Gillmore

May 29: Pam Goettsch and Lori Gravel



There's still time to sign up for synod school 2022.

JULY 24-29, 2022

Synod School offers week-long classes in personal and professional development and is open to everyone. Our 67th year brought 440 people from 22 states in 2021 — an amazing group in this COVID age. Ordinarily Synod School annually draws more than 600 people of all ages from 27 states.

For more information on Synod School 2022, stop in to the church office to view this year's program book, or visit: lakesandprairies.org



WELCOME INTO BAPTISM ON
SUNDAY, APRIL, 24, 2022

OLIVIA KINZER KELCHEN

BORN MARCH 3, 2022

DAUGHTER OF JOSH & ALLISON KELCHEN



The Camp & Conference Soup Supper on March 31 served 88 people and raised \$1,072. Thanks to those who love our soups and support our young campers!

2022 Scholarship Recipients

Congratulations to our 2022 Scholarship recipients. Watch for our June newsletter for our full article highlighting our recipients and learning about these students' future plans! 2022 Scholarship recipients will be presented award certificates at worship on Sunday, May 22. Join us in congratulating them!



The last day of Sunday school for this school year is Sunday, May 8. Students will also present a gift to all mothers present at worship service. Join us!



VBS will be held this summer, **August 2, 3 and 4 from 6-7:30 pm.** Watch for more information to come!

God's Hands

Exactly a century ago, Irish physician Alexander Irvine published *My Lady of the Chimney Corner*, a book dedicated to his saintly mother. The protagonist, Anna, lives and ministers to others as Irvine's own mother had done.

In the story, Anna visits a neighbor who has just lost a son at sea. After talking for a while, Anna suggests they pray together. With heads bowed, she reaches to place a loving hand on the grieving mother's forehead. Afterward, the woman says, "I think I felt his touch upon my brow," referring to God.

Anna says, "God is everywhere looking for hands to use. Sometimes he takes the hand of a doctor and uses it in healing. Sometimes he takes the hand of a mother to soothe the brow of a fevered child. And sometimes he takes the hand of an old critter like me to bring a bit of help and comfort to a neighbor. But they are all God's hands, and God is everywhere looking for hands to use."



The church treasurer has sent in our full per capita payment of \$5,210, although we have received only 36% to date. If you are an active member and have not submitted \$38.03, please do so as soon as possible. Thanks to everyone committed to a healthy and vital Presbyterian Church!

Keep in your
THOUGHTS &
PRAYERS

Betty Lambert

Doug Mettler

Marge Stubbe
MRNC

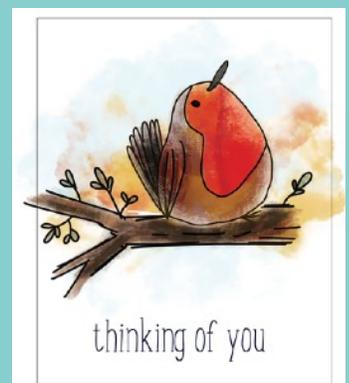
Lorraine Haag
Pennington

Marj Lubben
Pennington

Frank Smith
Pennington

Barb Null
Pinicon Pl

Don Duncan
Mt Vernon





Session News

Confirmand Meredith Parker read her statement of faith and answered questions from the session. She was received into active membership by profession of faith and baptism.

Discussed chapter 3 in the Ruling Elders workbook. The session table was decorated as the communion table is for worship to remind us to do “worshipful work.”

Approved the baptism of Olivia Kelchen on April 24.

Regular session meetings will return to a 6:00 p.m. start time now that confirmation classes have ended.

Tilt is taking a break. They will not meet every week, but only for specific events.

The drive-thru Camp & Conference Soup Supper served 88 and raised \$1,072.

Approved the student recipient recommendations that came from the Scholarship Committee.

Adopted a revised Mission and Vision Statement (see elsewhere in this newsletter).

Requested permission from the Ministers and Congregations Commission (MCC) of Presbytery to form a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC).

Adopted the revised policies for Building Use and Weddings. Will be considering other policies required by the Book of Order and the Presbytery.

OFFERING & FINANCIALS

Did you remember to tithe today?
We offer a number of options. Please contact us if you'd like to hear them. During these uncertain times, we *thank you* for your contribution.



March 2022 Contributions: \$6,389.03 2021 \$8,423.00

March 2022 Expenditures: **\$15,490.38** 2021 **\$5,631.11**

PPS

Presbyterian Pie Service

The Presbyterian Pie Committee is taking orders and there are pies in the freezer for sale. Call

Pam (319-480-7700)

or

Kris (319-480-1538)

to place an order or for a pick up.

Thank you all for your support !

Attendance

| | Worship | SS |
|----------|---------|----|
| March 27 | 41 | 0 |
| April 3 | 68 | 3 |
| April 10 | 56 | 0 |
| April 17 | 107 | 0 |
| April 24 | 57 | 1 |