



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.*

Pressed

Gethsemane, the name of the place where Jesus prayed before his betrayal, is an Aramaic word for “olive press.” During Bible times, olives were pressed three times to remove all the valuable oil. Before being arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus felt the full pressing weight of our sins on his shoulders. Surrounded by olive trees, praying fervently while sweating drops of blood, the perfect Son of God asked his heavenly Father three times to remove the cup of suffering.

Instead of removing that trial, God used it to redeem and save humankind. Likewise, God uses our hardships to refine and strengthen our faith.

In *The Rock, the Road and the Rabbi*, TV host Kathie Lee Gifford and Messianic Rabbi Jason Sobel speculate that if Peter, along with James and John, hadn't fallen asleep in Gethsemane, he may have had the strength to not deny Jesus later that night.

“All of us must be vigilant to watch and pray so that we don't succumb to the temptation to deny the Lord when we go through the olive presses of life and feel like we are being crushed by our situation and circumstances,” the authors write. “We must remember that it is the crushing that brings out the true inner value and worth of the olive.”

FPC's Annual Camp & Conference Soup Supper

will be held on Wednesday, March 7th, 4:30 pm - 7:00 pm.



This benefits the youth of First Presbyterian Church, allowing us to send them to Camp Wyoming at no cost to the camper or family. We will be serving taco soup, potato soup, and vegetable beef soup, along with French bread, and cake for \$7.00. If you wish to donate food, supplies, and/or funds to help support this cause, please contact the office at (319) 465-3393 or office@fpcmonticello.org, or a member of the Christian Education Committee. Thank you for your continued support of this ministry!

FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

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OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR
MACKENZIE KAHLER

TREASURER

DAN SAUNDERS

WORSHIP

10 AM WORSHIP SERVICE

8:30 AM YOUTH

SUNDAY SCHOOL

9:30 AM FELLOWSHIP



“Bill! Nobody wants to talk about death!”

This was the response from a friend when I brought up the idea about having death as a Lenten theme... And it’s true isn’t it. If nothing else, in my 10 years as a hospice chaplain, I have learned that nobody wants to talk about death, even, a lot of times, when they are dying.

To talk about death is to acknowledge the fact that we are mortal, ‘formed of the dust and to the dust we shall return’. To talk about death is to acknowledge that death will come for all, even us. To talk about death is to acknowledge not only death but the process of dying, the vulnerability, the uncertainty, and the grief of saying good bye.

Lent begins with its reminder on Ash Wednesday of our mortality, that we will one day return to the dust. Lent ends with the reminder of death as we recall the crucifixion of Jesus on Good Friday.

”Nobody wants to talk about death!” But the church spends forty days being reminded of death and remembering Jesus own death. Why?

Without death Easter has no meaning. Without death there is no reason to celebrate Easter’s empty tomb. Without death, well, there is no death of death as Scott Cairns writes.

Put fear aside. Now that He has entered
into death on our behalf, all who live
no longer die
as men once died.

That ephemeral occasion has met its utter end.
As seeds cast to the earth, we will not perish,
but like those seeds
shall rise again—the shroud
of death itself having been burst to tatters
by love’s immensity.

*Love's Immensity: Mystics on the Endless Life,
by Scott Cairns. Brewster, MA:
Paraclete Press, 2007. p. 14*

May this season of Lent prepare you for a joyous celebration of Easter! Pastor Bill



Pastor Bill will be gone on vacation from March 8-16. If you have a pastoral need while Pastor Bill is away, please contact one of the Elders on call, Vickie Bone, or Dan Saunders.



Deacons of First Presbyterian Church invite you to a *Congregational Appreciation Brunch* on **Sunday, April 14th, following worship.** They will be serving breakfast casseroles, biscuits, fruit, cinnamon rolls, milk, coffee and juice.

The deacons wish to thank the members of the church for all that they do! Join us.

Updating Contact Information - We are working to update our contact information. Maybe you have dropped your land line in the last few years, or change your cell number. Maybe you got hacked and started using a new email address. Please helping us by sending us your current contact information so we can update our records.

Name _____

Address _____

Preferred email _____

Best phone # to reach you by _____

Is it a cell number Y/N or your land line Y/N

Emergency Contact name _____ and

phone # (cell preferably) _____

You can email this information to office@fpcm Monticello.org

Or cut this out and mail it to:

FPC Monticello

211 W 1st St

Monticello, IA 52310

Or call the office at 319-465-3393, leave a message and we will return your call.

One confirmation student will be confirmed at worship service on **Sunday, March 31st**. Join us as our youth grow and confirm their faith in God. *Congratulations, Carter!* And keep up the good work first-year students: Cameron, Dalton, Drew, Jackson, and Noah.



Remember and honor a loved one this Easter season by purchasing an Easter lily and decorating the church sanctuary.

If you provide a lily in honor of a loved one, please contact the church office by phone/message, 319-465-3393, or email, office@fpcmonticello.org, with the name of loved one(s) to be recognized in the bulletin and newsletter.

Reminder: you are responsible for providing your own lily (these are not purchased through the church). Please arrange for you lily to arrive at in the sanctuary **after** Palm Sunday. Thank you.

Thanks for Helping Out! Picking Up.

It takes all of us pitching in to make the church not only work, but work in the way it was intended.

"Each person is given something to do that shows who God is: Everyone gets in on it, everyone benefits. All kinds of things are handed out by the Spirit, and to all kinds of people!"

— 1Cor 12:7 The Message

People tell me that the church is being used more than it has been in many years. I believe it.

Since I have been here it's not only Sunday mornings with Sunday School and Worship, Sunday evening with Boy Scouts, Monday mornings with the Pie Ladies working hard in the kitchen and Monday evening when the Bravura Jazz group practices. It's not only Monday and Fridays when the Food Pantry is being used or the second Tuesday when Camp Fire scouts gather... but there have been six funerals and two weddings, family gatherings in the Fellowship Hall, the Bravura concert in the sanctuary, the Republican's caucus, and the Lifeline Screening event that will happen in March.

It is great. Great to have the building used and filled with activities.

Thank you all for your hospitality and welcome to all those who come to use our church in so many ways. It is one of the ways we can make know the love of God in Jesus Christ.

When the church is being used like this we can all help out by picking up or cleaning up if we see some need. Heather, the church custodian, does come in at least once during the week to vacuum, empty trash, clean bathrooms, and wash floors when they need it but if you see something that needs to be picked up or cleaned up just go ahead and do it if you can. If the need is something bigger please let us know in the church office.

Thanks for helping out. Thanks for offering hospitality and welcome to all who visit.



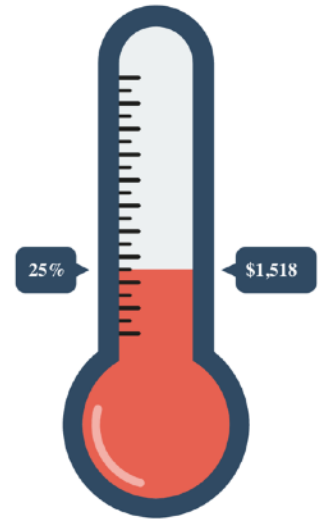
Scholarship application packets are now available. If you would like a packet, please stop in to the church office, or email office@fpcmonticello.org to request a packet to be emailed to you. *Reminder: all applications MUST be submitted in hard copy format to the church office by **April 1st**.*

The 2024 Presbyterian per capita is \$42.17 per active member. Per capita payments received to date are **\$1,518.12 toward our required per capita payment of \$6,072.48. (25.53%)** Per capita is an amount of money per member that our congregation pays to our larger Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). This money is part of the glue that holds presbyterians together. It is the money that enables us to work with other Presbyterian churches in our presbytery and across the country. It is also the money that allows us to work with other churches to further the mission of Jesus Christ around the world

Please make your check payable to First Presbyterian Church, notating funds are for "Per Capita".

Thank you for being a faithful Presbyterian!

GOAL: \$6,072



Thank you for your continuous support of the Food Pantry.

Current needs include:

- **Toilet paper**
- **Oatmeal**
- **Soups**

Donations, food and financial, are taken during pantry hours:

Mondays, 5 pm - 7 pm

Fridays, 2 pm - 4 pm



Registration for **Camp Bear Creek's 2024 summer camp** programs are now open.

Visit bearcreek.camp to see all of the dates and programs available this summer.

Be sure to register soon to guarantee your spot in the camp program of your choice.

Early registration pricing ends March 15th!

IN THIS SEASON OF LENT,
we follow Jesus' example;
walking alongside the most vulnerable
to partner in repairing the harm inflicted upon them.
WE ARE THE CHURCH, TOGETHER;
and we are there with those who need us.

Each gift to One Great Hour of Sharing helps improve the
lives of the suffering and the vulnerable through three
life-saving programs -



**PRESBYTERIAN
DISASTER
ASSISTANCE**
*Restore Streets
to Live In*



**PRESBYTERIAN
HUNGER
PROGRAM**
*Share your Bread
with the Hungry*



**SELF-
DEVELOPMENT
OF PEOPLE**
*Loose the Bonds
of Injustice*

Please give generously.
IF WE ALL DO A LITTLE, IT ADDS UP TO A LOT!

 MATTHEW 25

PC(USA) Special Offering **One Great Hour of Sharing** will be received on Easter Sunday. This month, we've included a special offering envelope for the OGHS offering. Offerings can be mailed in, dropped off to the church office, or dropped in the offering plate. You can use your OGHS envelope, or memo your offering "OGHS." Thank you!



Chili Cook-off Benefit for the family of Holly Iben March 2, 2024



Sponsored by Monticello Knights of Columbus

**Location: Newman Hall,
Basement of Sacred Heart Church
210 E 3rd Street, Monticello, IA 52310**

**Time: 4-8 pm
Cost: \$10 adults/\$5 kids**

Serving Chili, Sandwiches, and Dessert

Holly
Iben passed away in November 2023 leaving behind two children, Landon & Lianna. She was a kind-hearted person who always had a smile on her face and was willing to help anyone in need. The Monticello Knights of Columbus would like to honor her giving spirit by holding this benefit where all proceeds will go to her children.

Chili Cook-off Details:

\$10 Entry Fee
Multiple Prizes to be awarded
Enter by Sunday, February 25th to guarantee your spot!
To enter contest please contact:
Ryan Sperfslage (319-480-3839)



VBS 2024 is Announced!

July 29th-August 2nd, 2024

Parents-if your students loved the MMA VBS in 2023 at the Youth Development Center or if you missed the deadline for last year's VBS-

Please Mark Your Calendar for 2024 VBS!

Registration starts May 6, 2024

It will again be online registration. More information to come!

March 10th



Presbyterian Pie Service

Need something sweet after that corned beef and cabbage? Contact the Pie Committee to reserve your pies today!

Contact Pam at (319) 480-7700 or Kris (319) 480-1538 to place your order.



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



March 3: Tim, Carrie & DeLainey Fellingner, and Quinton & Breanna Fellingner

March 10: Tanner, Taryn, Jack & Ryder Fellingner, and Kevin, Chanda, Taylor, Grant & Kinley Gassman

March 17: Phil, Amy, Quinn & McKinley Gilkerson, and Bill & Suzy Gilkerson

March 24: Keith & Carol Gilmore, and Pam Goettsch

March 31: Lori Gravel and Denny Gray



The family of
Lisa Williams
(Mother of Penny McLaughlin)

Betty Lambert

Doug Mettler

Betty Yount

Anamosa CC

Barb Null

Corridor Crossing-CR

Marj Stubbe

Pennington Square

Lorraine Haag

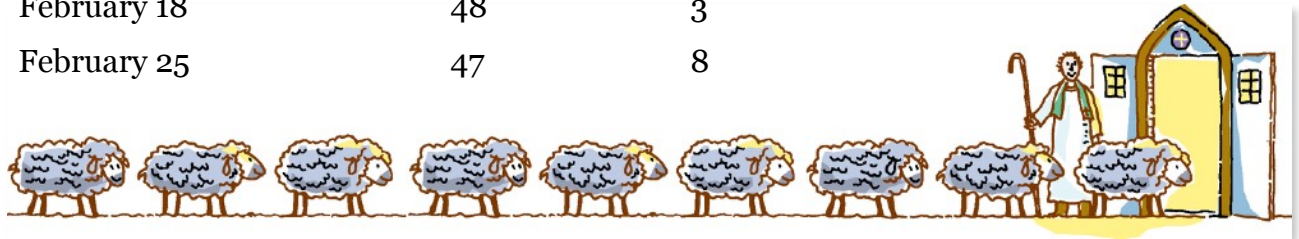
Frank Smith

Attendance

Worship:

Sunday school:

January 28	31	4
February 4	42	7
February 11	55	7
February 18	48	3
February 25	47	8



Session Meeting Highlights – February 2024

Communion served February 4th - 41 served

Camp & Conference drive thru soup supper will be held March 5th from 4:30-7:00.

Ecumenical Vacation Bible School will be held July 29-August 2.

Deacon Appreciation Brunch will be held on April 14th at 11:00.

Sill on the big stained glass window needs to be replaced.

Pastor Bill served home communion on February 6 to 4 members. He contacted 14 members thru him visits, hospital, in-office, or by phone.

Rev. Melody Oltmann, former member, will be our guest pastor March 10th.

Rev. Kristy Parker will be on call week of March 8th while Pastor Bill is on vacation. Session contact members are Vicki Bone and Dan Saunders.

Pastor Bill will be Pastor-in-Residence at Camp Bear Creek the week of June 16.

We thank you for your generous and gracious financial support!

January 2024 Contributions

\$18,841.45

January 2023 Contributions \$18,581.69

January 2024 Expenses

\$12,048.15

January 2023 Expenses \$8,919.52



THANK YOU FOR YOUR
**FINANCIAL
SUPPORT**