

December 2024

# 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.*

## Be Prepared ... to Wait

My husband always keeps a book handy. When he picks up our kids or heads to an appointment, a current title is tucked securely under his arm. He expects to wait — and is prepared to do so. What could have been a frustrating delay turns into extra time to delve further into the story.

I, on the other hand, get caught off-guard if a doctor runs late or a meeting runs long. As the minutes tick by, my down time gets wasted — unless I quietly reflect on God's goodness, return an email, take a short walk or chat with the person next to me.

“Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord,” says Psalm 27:14 (NIV). That's an important reminder as Advent nears. Scripture advises us to use our waiting time wisely, preparing for God and drawing closer to him. What will you do while you wait for Jesus?

—Janna Firestone

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## LOVE CAME DOWN AT CHRISTMAS...

These words have become a part of Christmas for many of us. We hear them in the background when Christmas music is playing, or maybe we heard them when we sat at a Christmas program. Maybe we have played them on the piano when no one was around, or sang them as a part of some choir.



*Love came down at Christmas,  
Love all lovely, Love Divine,  
Love was born at Christmas,  
Star and Angels gave the sign.  
Worship we the Godhead,  
Love Incarnate, Love Divine,  
Worship we our Jesus,  
But wherewith for sacred sign?  
Love shall be our token,  
Love be yours and love be mine,  
Love to God and all men,  
Love for plea and gift and sign.*

Christina Rosetti penned these words, originally as a poem, sometime in the early 1880s. They were later set to music. This is how most of us know them. I find that they perfectly capture the essence of God's love for all humanity, for us, in the birth of Jesus. In them I am reminded both of what God has given to us at Christmas and what we in-turn are to give...love to God and all men.

Donna and I wish you a blessed and love-filled Christmas,

Pastor Bill

### FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

211 W 1st St Monticello, IA 52310

Worship ~ Sundays 10:00 a.m.

Youth Sunday School 8:30 a.m..

Fellowship 9:30 a.m.

Facebook: @MonticelloFPC

### Pastor

Bill Warhover

cell 319-202-4977

[pastor@fpcm Monticello.org](mailto:pastor@fpcm Monticello.org)

### Office Administrator

Mackenzie Kahler

office 319-465-3393

[office@fpcm Monticello.org](mailto:office@fpcm Monticello.org)

### Treasurer

Dan Saunders

## CHRISTMAS CAROLING 2024



Let us raise our voices and go Christmas caroling! On **Wednesday, December 11th**, we will meet at the church at **5:30 p.m.** We will visit the local assisted living and nursing rehabilitation facilities, as well as some of our homebound members. Bring your voices and your appetite, as pizza and cookies will be furnished afterwards. If you have any questions, call Larry Lamont, home phone 563-926-2913 or cell 563-212-4361. All are welcome. See you there!



The Christian Ed Committee is very happy to share that they made **\$1,476.40** at the Camp & Conference Baked Potato Bar Fundraiser. This is up over \$300 from last year.

Thank you to everyone that contributed and participated in this event!

**WORSHIP  
WITH US THIS  
Christmas**

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24 AT 6:00PM  
211 W 1ST ST | MONTICELLO, IA**

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
Find us on Facebook @Monticellofpc



Plan to join us for the **2024 Sunday School Children's Program: A Christmas Journey, by Kathy Murphy.** *Sunday, December 15th* during our 10 am worship service.

PreK-HS Youth Sunday school classes will have their **final class** for the year on **Sunday, December 15.** Classes will **resume Sunday, January 12.**

### CONFIRMATION

There will be **NO confirmation classes** December 18, 25, or January 1. Classes will resume January 8. Happy Holidays!





It's *Christmas Care and Share Program* time. The deacons have adopted 6 children this year. The Care & Share tree has been assembled in the overflow room and is waiting for our generous members to select a tag, or two, to shop for. Monetary donations will be accepted as well. Items and monetary donations should be turned in by Monday, December 9th. The deacons will meet Wednesday, December 11th to finalize our gifts. Thank you for your generosity in supporting our community!

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### FILL THE CHURCH WITH CHRISTMAS SPIRIT!

**Provide a poinsettia** in memory or honor of a loved one to help us decorate the sanctuary. Poinsettias should be brought or delivered to the sanctuary the week leading up to Christmas.

*Please note: when you sign up to provide a poinsettia, please arrange to purchase it and bring it or have it delivered to the church. We do not arrange for the purchase of the plants.*

If you choose to provide a poinsettia, please notify the church office of your donation, as well as who you are donating it in honor of, so memorials can be included in our Christmas Eve service bulletin, and newsletter.

Call 319-465-3393 or email [office@fpcmonticello.org](mailto:office@fpcmonticello.org). Thank you!



This month, we've included an envelope for our annual Christmas Joy Special Offering, which is collected during the Advent season. Please consider donating to this cause to support past, present and future leaders within the Presbyterian Church (USA). Offering envelopes can be dropped in the regular offering plate, mailed to the church, or dropped off to the church office. Thank you!

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If you would like to request a pastoral visit due to being homebound, or recovering from an ailment at home, in the hospital or a rehabilitation facility (and you are able to have visitors according to facility policy), please contact the church office to arrange a visit. Oftentimes the pastor is not aware that a visit is desired until after the opportunity has passed. Call the church office at 319-465-3393, or contact Pastor Bill directly, to request your pastoral care visit.

10th Annual  
**Live Nativity**  
 and  
**Streets of Bethlehem**

**Saturday, December 7**  
 1:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m. & 5:00 p.m.  
**Sunday, December 8**  
 1:00 p.m. & 3:00 p.m.



SCAN ME

The Bean Farm  
 7731 148 Street  
 Scotch Grove, IA 52310

For more information  
<http://www.thebeanfarmofscotchgrove.org/>



**Bravura** will host their  
 holiday concert:  
 Joyful Expectations,  
 here at First Presbyterian  
 Church on **Sunday,**  
**December 15, at 4:00 pm.**  
 Join us!

**Thanks for your support!** You make the mission and ministry at First Presbyterian Church happen. You are the reason we can pay for children and youth to attend Camp Bear Creek (formerly Camp Wyoming). You make sure we can support the Food Pantry. You provide for our worship, Sunday Schools, and youth programs. Through your giving, you ensure that First Presbyterian Church continues to demonstrate the love of God in this community. Thank you!

As you consider your **end of year giving, please consider directing a part of that giving to First Presbyterian Church** so we can continue to do good things in this community to the glory of God.



Presbyterian Pie Committee is asking for your cooperation this holiday season by placing your pie order *early*. They will do their best to accommodate all orders, and ask for your patience at this time. Thank you!

To place your order or check freezer stock, call:  
**Pam (319-480-7700) or Kris (319-480-1538).**

## Office Closures

Mackenzie will be on vacation from Wednesday, December 11 thru Monday, December 16.

Pastor Bill will be on vacation from Thursday, December 12 thru Thursday, December 19.

Vickie Bone and Don Smith will be the elders on call during these vacation leaves. If you have an urgent need, please contact one of these session members, and they will address your concern and put you in touch with the pastor on-call. Thank you!

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### CHURCH OFFICE

Church offices will be **CLOSED Wednesday, December 25 through Wednesday, January 1** in observance of the Christmas and New Year holidays. If you have anything you would like submitted to the January newsletter, please note the deadline of *December 10* to ensure it is completed before the holiday closure. As always, if you have a pastoral emergency, please contact Pastor Bill at 319-202-4977. Happy Holidays!

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#### FOOD PANTRY

REMINDER: As the cold weather approaches, the Monticello Food Pantry will be closed if the Monticello Schools are closed due to weather.

The Monticello Food Pantry will be closed **Friday, December 27** in observance of the holidays.

OPEN : Mondays, December 23rd & 30th, 5-7pm

If you are able to give to our community in need this holiday season, food pantry needs are included below. Thank you for your continued support!

**All food donations will be gratefully accepted this holiday season. Hygiene supplies (shampoo, detergent, toilet paper, toothpaste) are also gratefully accepted.**

#### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

First Presbyterian Church is responsible for **staffing** the Food Pantry in the **month of January**. It is important to have *two volunteers staffed each shift*. Weekly times are:

*Mondays, 5 - 7 pm*

*Fridays, 2 - 4 pm*

Please call the church office at 319-465-3393 to sign up for a shift and help us fill the month of January. Many hands make for light work.

## Noisy Coin Offering, Making a Come Back



On **Sunday, December 29**, we will be having a Noisy Coin Offering as a part of worship.

Traditionally Noisy Coin Offerings are where people bring their loose change to contribute to a special cause. In December that cause will be FPC's Camp & Conference Fund.

The Camp and Conference Fund provides for children and youth to attend any of Camp Bear Creek's summer camps without charge.

We hope to have these noisy coin offerings on the last Sunday of those months where there five Sundays. So start saving your change!





**Betty Lambert**

**Evalena Lang**

**Doug Mettler**

**Betty Yount**

**Monticello Nursing**

• **Lorraine Haag**

**Anamosa Care Center**

• **Barb Null**

**Corridor/CR**

• **Marj Stubbe**

## Thanks for Helping Out (Everyone)! {Hospitality}

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*

Hospitality is something we can all do. It is not something you have to sign up for or schedule but it something that should always be on our mind whenever and where ever we are at. Hospitality is the gift of making people feel welcomed and putting them at ease. Hospitality is about letting a visitor know where the bathrooms are or that their children are welcomed in worship. Hospitality is about helping the newcomer know how things work so that they feel included in things with out feeling embarrassed. Hospitality is about remembering that we too are often the visitor or newcomer who needs help too.

In the season of Christmas when friends, family, or strangers might visit our home or us here at church let us all be practicing the gift and the art of making all feel welcomed and cared about.

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

December 1: Roger & Anita Benedict and Chris, Sarah, Kennedy & Brooklyn Bone

December 8: Erin Bone and Jim & Vickie Bone

December 15: Mark Bone and Pat Bonjour

December 22: Tammy, Charles & Lilly Bruns and James Bruns

December 29: Phyllis Campbell and Jamie, Jaxson & Cohen Chappell



## Session Summary - November 13, 2024

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- Session meeting moved from December 11 to December 4.
- December 1 Congregational meeting to elect new officers for 2025.
- Christmas Caroling December 11 from 5:30 to 8:30 pizza following in Fellowship Hall.
- Baked Potato Bar made \$1,551.40. 2025 Baked Potato Bar is scheduled for October 15.
- Deacons waiting for list of families for Care and Share. No Fellowship December 22 and 29.
- Don resealed overhang on south entrance and replaced O rings on kitchen faucets.



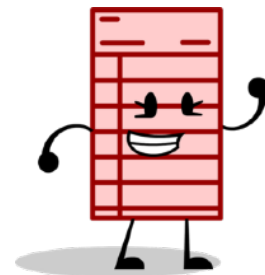
### CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

**Our Congregation's Annual Meeting will be held on  
Sunday, January 19, 2025  
at 11:00 am, following worship.**

**\*\*\*\*Please submit reports by Monday, January 13th for  
the Annual Report. Thank you!**

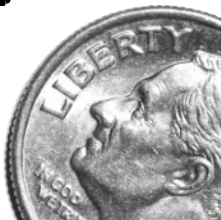
### ATTENDANCE:

Week of:	Worship	Sunday School
Oct 27	39	11
Nov 3	54	11
Nov 10	65	10
Nov 17	51	7
Nov 24	48	8



### OFFERING & FINANCIALS

**Tithe**



**Thank you** to those that have been giving and generous to the church. We thank you for your contribution. Every little bit helps. year-to-date: October 31, 2024

**Income—**  
Actual. \$130,736.02  
Budget. \$168,656.40  
Percent. 77.52%

**Expenses—**  
Actual. \$167,142.20  
Budget. \$207,144.52  
Percent. 80.68%