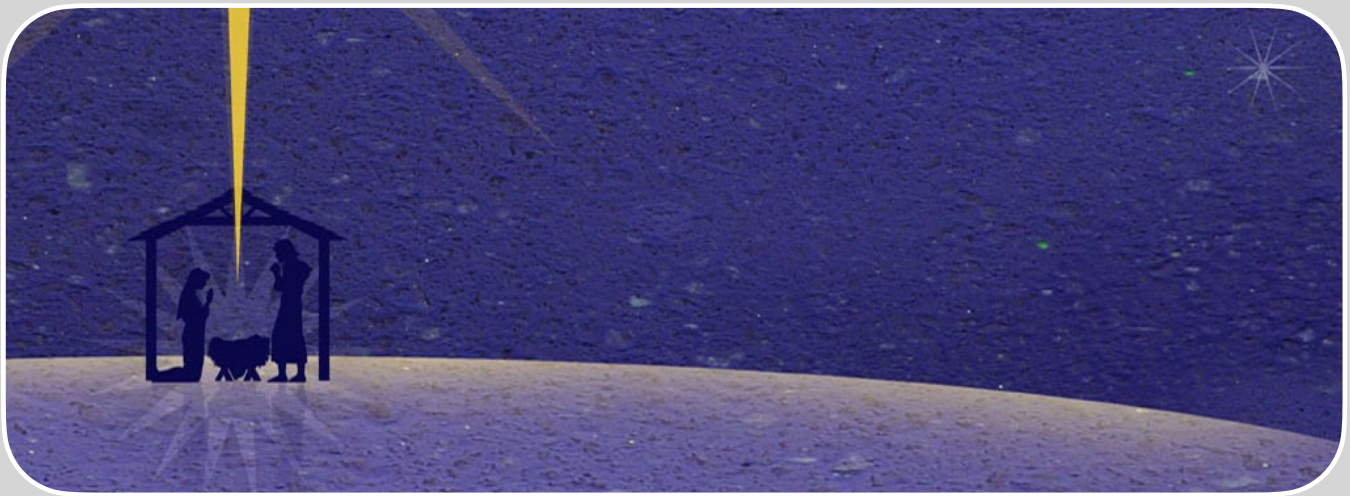


December 2022

News at First



Manger Hearts

God came to earth in the Christmas birth of a
tiny baby boy,
Whose life and death are redeeming us yet
with blessings, grace and joy.

Our minds may know this history
but stand in awe at mystery.
So faith becomes the way
to make our hearts like “manger hearts” where
Christ can dwell and God imparts his
wondrous love each day.

—Peggy Ferrell



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ADVENT 2022

Happy to be a Presbyterian this Advent!

I heard a good story the other day. It leads up to Advent, the beginning of a new Church year. This story reminds me of the scripture where Jesus is telling the disciples that he will be going to prepare a place for them, and there will be many rooms or mansions.

An elderly man was ending a doctor's appointment and was about to leave. The doctor asked him if he had any questions. The old man stood there for what seemed like an eternity, and then he told what had been bothering him for some time, "Doctor, I am afraid to die. Tell me, what lies on the other side?" The doctor said, "I don't know." "You don't know? You're a Christian doctor, and yet you don't know what's on the other side?"

The doctor was holding the handle of the door, on the other side came a sound of scratching and whining. As the doctor opened the door, a dog sprang into the room and leaped on the doctor with an eager show of gladness and affection. Turning to the old man, the doctor said, "Did you notice my dog? He's never been in this room before. He didn't know what was inside. My dog knew nothing except that his master was on the other side of this door, and when the door opened, he sprang in without fear. I know little of what is on the other side of life, but I do know one thing about death. I know my master is there, and that's good enough for me."

As we begin again a new church season with Advent starting on November 27, let us look ahead for new beginnings in Christ. May the Lord bless us as we prepare for Christ's coming in our hearts; may the Lord bless you, and all those you love, and all those who nobody loves. Amen and Amen.



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

Interim Pastor
Gary L Burnett

cell 319-530-7638

Burnett.anita1@yahoo.com

Office Administrator
Mackenzie Kahler

office 319-465-3393

office@fpcmonticello.org

Treasurer
Dan Saunders

CHRISTMAS CAROLING 2022



Let us raise our voices and go Christmas caroling! On **Wednesday, December 21st**, 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!



Join us for the **2022 Sunday School Children's Program**
Sunday, December 11th
during
our 10 am worship service.

CHURCH OFFICE

The church office will be closed **Saturday, December 24 through Sunday, January 1** in observance of the Christmas holiday. If you have anything you would like submitted to the January newsletter, please note the deadline of *December 15* to ensure it is completed before the holiday closure.

Fill the Church with Christmas Spirit

You can sign up to decorate the church with a poinsettia, donated in memory or honor of a loved one. You can do so by calling the church office at 319-465-3393 or emailing office@fpcmonticello.org.

Please note: when you sign up to bring 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. Thank you!

Christmas Eve

Join us for Christmas Eve worship service
on **Saturday, December 24 at 6:00 p.m.**

Care & Share



It's *Christmas Care and Share Program* time. The deacons have adopted 3 families this year, with a total of 8 children. The Care & Share tree went up in the overflow room this week and is waiting for our generous members to select a tag, or two, to shop for. Monetary donations will be accepted as well. Thank you for your generosity in supporting our community!

Thank you to all that stayed after worship to help decorate our church for Advent and Christmas season. It looks beautiful. We will take down the decorations after worship on *Sunday, January 3*. Updates will be posted on our church's Facebook page (@MonticelloFPC) page in case these plans need to be adjusted. Many hands makes for light work. Join us!



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 Gary directly, to request your pastoral care visit.

Presbyterian Pie Committee is asking for your cooperation this holiday season by placing your pie order *early*. Supplies are an issue. We will do our 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).**





The family of
JOANNE SCHENCK
Betty Lambert
Doug Mettler

Pennington Square,
Monticello

- Lorraine Haag
- Frank Smith

Monticello Nursing &
Rehab, Monticello
•Marj Stubbe

Pinicon Place,
Anamosa
•Barb Null

Hallmark Care Center,
Mt Vernon

THE PERFECT GIFT.

Through the Christmas Joy Offering,
we come together to support past, present and future leaders,
embodying God's perfect gift to us, Jesus Christ.
When we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.



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!

FOOD PANTRY

REMINDER: As the cold weather and holidays approach, the Monticello Food Pantry will be closed if the Monticello Schools are closed.

The Monticello Food Pantry will be closed

Monday, December 26

in observance of the holidays.

OPEN : Fridays, December 23rd & 30th

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!

Dry soup mixes, dry milk, toilet paper, shampoo.

Dear First Presbyterian Church and Scholarship Committee,

I would like to send a warm thank you to the First Presbyterian Church for awarding me with the Dale L. Streif Memorial Scholarship. I would also like to thank the scholarship committee themselves for choosing me out of many other deserving candidates. This money will be put to good use as I acquire my associates degree from Kirkwood Community College and move on to a 4-year institution in order to fully obtain a bachelor's degree in computer science.

Sincerely,

Rease Saunders

Thank You!



Congregations are encouraged to embrace generosity and gratitude for the connectional church at work through per capita. **Per capita for 2023 is \$40.70, per member.** Your per capita can be sent to the church office for the treasurer, or left in the offering plate with designation "Per Capita." Funds will be collected, after which the church treasurer will mail in the entire payment for our congregation's per capita to PC(USA). Thank you!

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 4: Frank Smith and Bruce and Lisa Smith

December 11: Kaylee & Shay Stephen and Roger & Sandra Stephen

December 18: Kevin & Gayle Stingley and Marj Stubbe

December 25: Jodi Suthers and John & Stacey Takes

Christmas crackups

Enjoy these kid-friendly holiday jokes!

What did Adam say the day before Christmas?

It's Christmas, Eve!

What does the gingerbread man put on his bed?

Cookie sheets.

What do you sing at a snowman's birthday party?

"Freeze a jolly good fellow!"

What is a Christmas tree's favorite candy?

Ornamints.

What goes "Oh, Oh, Oh"?

Santa walking backward.

Why did Rudolph get a bad report card?

Because he went down in history.

What is an elf's favorite kind of music?

Wrap music!

How much did Santa pay for his sleigh?

Nothing. It was on the house!

What kind of photos do Santa's helpers take?

Elfies.



ATTENDANCE:

Week of:

Worship

Sunday School

Oct 30

38

1

Nov 7

39

8

Nov 13

32

4

Nov 20

26

5



Session Summary - November 9, 2022

DISCUSSION ON COVID – No changes at this time.

CLERK'S REPORT

a. Next session meeting Dec 7th Session meeting at 6:30 pm

PASTOR'S REPORT –

- Scholarships letters written and sent.
- Starting to do home visits.
- Confirmation class started Oct 26th so have met 3 times.
- Pastor office days are Wed and Thursdays.
- Home communions served Thursday, Nov 3 .

SESSION AND OTHER COMMITTEE REPORTS/UPDATES

Christian Ed (Anita) – Dec 11th Youth Christmas program. March 8th drive thru Camp and Conference soup dinner 4:30-7 pm.

Finance – Dan passed out ledger budget Jan 1-Oct 31 and Oct 1-30. Dan passed out a draft of proposed 2023 budget. We will finalize at Dec meeting. Dan had a letter from Presbytery asking for our mission. It was decided to do \$3,000 (same as last year) for mission with Presbytery for 2023.

Building(Don) – Don replaced all downstairs bulbs. Still planning to do sanctuary when they come in. Coffee maker - we are looking at options.

TiLT - Not meeting currently. Active on Facebook.

Personnel – Annual reviews coming up. Mackenzie is in office with pastor on Wed/ Thurs.

Deacons – Planning Care and Share. They will be helping Christian Ed with Camp and Conference.

Nomination (Curt) – They are working hard to get us a ballot for 2023.

Worship Committee – It was decided to do Christmas Eve at 6 pm. Christmas Day 10 AM worship. We would like to add , announcements, church calendar and birthdays and anniversaries to the bulletin.

Pies (Vickie) – Gave the church a donation of \$5,000.

Scholarship (Vickie) - Checks went out October 31st.

Membership (Sherri) - Bobby and Jared Williams have requested to be members by transfer of membership.

OLD BUSINESS - List of home bound updated.

NEW BUSINESS - Check with Larry L to Christmas Caroling. Motion to set third Sunday, January 15th, as our Annual Congregational meeting. 8:05 pm Pastor closed with prayer.



OFFERING & FINANCIALS

Thank you to those that have been giving and generous to the church. We thank you for your contribution. Every little bit helps.

October 2022 Contributions \$19,275.79
(October 2021 \$21,588.97)

October 2022 Expenditures \$13,463.36
(October 2021 \$18,804.22)