

News at First

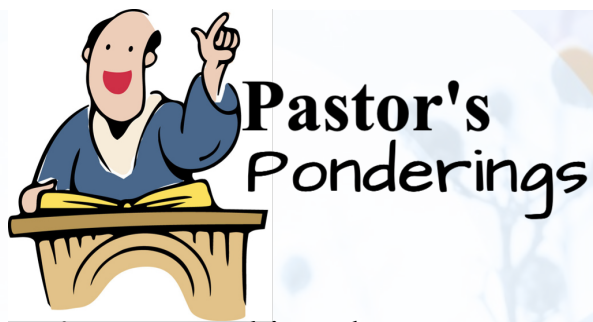
Writing Our Life – With God’s Help

A journalist once said you can measure the quality of a piece of writing by the quality of what has been cut. No matter how beautiful or interesting a phrase or sentence is, the piece may be stronger without it.

Rabbi Evan Moffic applies this wisdom to life in general. Too often we refuse to let something – a habit, a memory, a process – go, even when it no longer serves us. Thinking of our life as a book, we can cut out, edit or rearrange some pages or sentences to reflect our new learnings and growth.

This is not always easy, but we don’t have to do it alone. “God is our ‘editor-in-chief,’” says Moffic, “and we are part of God’s story. [While] God ... gives us free will to decide what to write on the pages of our lives, ... God is always there for conversation and consultation. And God left us a great guidebook called the Bible. Its lessons make our writing shine with truth and beauty.” With God’s guidance, what will you “write” in the new year?





We're approaching the new year, Christmas is past, and we are looking forward to the new experiences which await us for the year 2023. Our Pulpit Nominating Committee is earnestly starting the planning for your new Pastor. In the mean time, I would like to share some of my thoughts.

What Christmas decorations are the most important to you?

Is it the pine or an artificial tree? Some of my fondest memories while our two girls were growing up was going to a tree farm and finding just the right Christmas tree. The early December ritual involved finding and bringing home a tree which would grace the center of our activities for the next month. The ritual involved our whole family, including our dog. Everyone had veto power with each possible tree as we searched through the tree farm. The selected candidate (tree) became the center of attention for our family activities. The final part of the ritual was when each family member placed their favorite decorations on the tree.

Is it your decorations and outdoor scenes which are most important for you? As I have traveled the Midwest, I have discovered many homes lavishly decorated with lights and nativity scenes. The reindeer placed so carefully upon the roof with Santa next to the chimney.

Importance is the family Christmas meal? I have heard so many Christmas rituals involving the preparation of the meal where the family enjoys their favorite foods. In some families, all the cooks bring their favorite recipes. What I have discovered is that at each family gathering, there is a wide variety of rituals. Each family ritual has it's importance and symbolizes relationships within the family.

Is the most important Christmas decoration in your home the manger scene or Creche? Is there a special table for the Creche? Is it placed under the tree? Is it placed where family and friends will notice it right away? Or is it tucked away? Come to think about it, when Jesus was born, He was sort of tucked away. There was no room in the inn, so He was born in a stable. Even the Wise Men looked in the wrong places before God's Word and the Christmas star showed them where He was.

So I ask you again, what decorations are most cherished by you? I believe each of us has our own answer. Share your thoughts with others as you remember past Christmases.

In Christ, Gary L. Burnett, Interim Pastor

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

211 W 1st St Monticello, IA 52310

Pastor's Office Hours (part-time): Wed 10 am - 5 pm, Thur 10 am - 3 pm
(community visits 1pm - 3 pm)

Worship Sundays 10:00am | (resuming 1/8) Sunday school 8:30am | Fellowship 9:30am

POSTPONED: Adult Bible Study

Facebook: @MonticelloFPC

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



PLEASE NOTE

The office will be closed **Saturday, December 24 through Sunday, January 1**. If you have a pastoral emergency, please contact Pastor Gary via cell (319-530-7638).



As we approach the winter weather season, watch for winter weather related announcements. A decision will be made whether to hold Sunday morning worship, ideally by 6 am. If it is decided to cancel worship, announcements will be made to KCRG, as well as on our Facebook page: @MonticelloFPC.



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 at 319-530-7638, to request your pastoral care visit.

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

January 1: Margaret Thoeni and David & JoAnn Warner

January 8: Jared, Bobby, Carter & Reagan Willms
and Tom & Diane Yeoman

January 15: Lisa & Mick Adams and Helen Alden

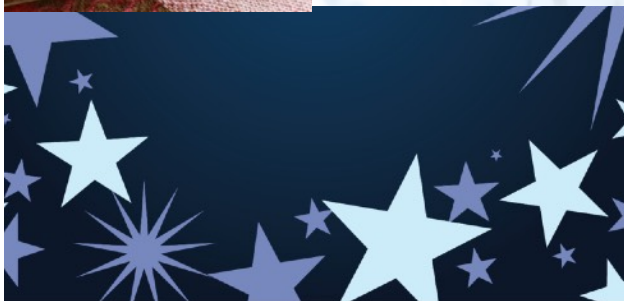
January 22: Jim & Karen Anderson and Peg Arduser

January 29: Randy & Ann Argall and Jane Barnes



Thank you for your continued support of the
Presbyterian Pie Committee!

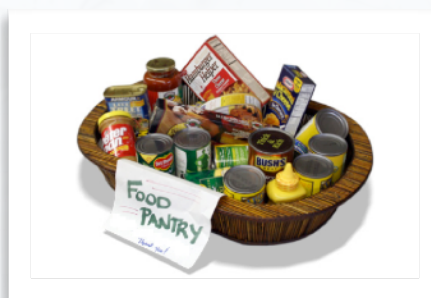
To place your order or check freezer stock, call:
Pam (319-480-7700) or Kris (319-480-1538).



CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

**Our Congregation's Annual Meeting
will be held on
Sunday, January 15, 2023
at 11:00 am, following worship.**

******Please submit reports by Friday,
January 6th for the Annual Report.
Thank you!**



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. Thank you!

**Current needs: shampoo, ketchup,
Kleenex tissue, and peanut butter.**

PER CAPITA SUNDAY

JANUARY 22, 2023



The 2023 Presbyterian per capita is **\$40.70** per member. Please make your check payable to First Presbyterian Church, noting funds are for "Per Capita." Thank you!

Per Capita connects Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations and mid councils with the work of the wider church. As the primary source of funding for the Office of the General Assembly (OGA), it is how Presbyterians mutually and equitably share the costs of moving the church forward in the 21st century.

"Per Capita is crucial to the overall health of the PC(USA), because it binds presbyteries, synods, and congregations together in one church."

– J. Herbert Nelson, II

Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the PC(USA)

Dear First Presbyterian Church,

I sincerely appreciate the academic and monetary value that the Hosford scholarship is giving me! The money is helping me pay for my pursuit of a chemical engineering degree at the University of Iowa. Thank you guys for the continuous support throughout the years!

Caden Reinke

Thank You!

Dear Building Committee,

Recently I have been informed how much you do in the church. I just want to say thank you for all your hard work. If something breaks or doesn't work, you're on it. You guys keep this church up and running. So once again, I say thank you!

Sincerely, Carter Willms

Thoughts & Prayers

Betty Lambert
Doug Mettler

Pennington Square,
Monticello
Lorraine Haag
Frank Smith

Monticello Nursing &
Rehab, Monticello
Marj Stubbe

Pinicon Place, Anamosa
Barb Null

Hallmare Care,
Mt Vernon
Don Duncan



\$40.70

2023 Per Capita



Week of:	Worship:	SS:
November 27	45	8
December 4	42	7
December 11	61	7
December 18	51	-



- The Deacons wish to thank you for your generous financial donations to the Care and Share program. This year, we sponsored three families with eight children. Your gifts and financial support were truly a gift for these three families!
- You are invited to stay after worship and help take down decorations after worship Sunday, January 1. Many hands make for light work!



Session Meeting Summary - December

PASTOR'S REPORT –

- Home visits: 1
- Confirmation class: Continuing Old Testament studies and a review of PC(USA) logo.
- Pastor office days are Wed and Thursdays.

SESSION AND OTHER COMMITTEE REPORTS/UPDATES –

Christian Ed (Anita) - Dec 11 Youth Christmas program. March 8th drive thru Camp and Conference soup dinner 4:30-7 pm. Made treat bags for Sunday school kids after performance.

Finance (Dan) - We got a thank you from University of Dubuque for our donation. Dan passed out ledger budget Jan 1-Nov 30 and Nov 1-30. Dan passed out the proposed 2023 budget. This was discussed and any proposed changes pointed out. Motion made to accept as presented by Dan **MSC** Much thanks to Dan!

Building (Don) -

- Coffee maker purchased
- Hallway door repaired and repainted.

Personnel (Don) - Annual reviews - met with Mackenzie. Will meet with Heather this week or next.

Deacons (Curt) - Care and Share tree up helping multiple families. They will be helping Christian Ed with Camp and Conference meal. Taking break for coffee hour while Sunday School is off. Thinking of planning a meal in January.

Pies (Vickie) - Making pies 19th and take orders.

OLD BUSINESS

- Roasters loaned out for Thanksgiving meal in town. We handed out and had them check to see if they agree with assessment. They came back just as good or better than lent out. We now have a master sheet noting what was not perfect and they signed off when taken that they agreed with the master assessment list.
- Christmas Caroling scheduled for Dec 21st. Meet at 5:30 here at church and pizza afterwards till about 7.



OFFERING & FINANCIALS

Thank you for your giving and generous contributions to the church. Your contribution allows us to continue to do God's work!

November 2022 Contributions \$13,553.00
(November 2021 \$15,607.87)

November 2022 Expenditures \$8,714.38
(November 2021 \$15,210.79)