

NEWS AT FIRST

First Presbyterian Church, 211 W 1st St, Monticello, IA 52310

Death Doesn't Win

In the final hours of 2021, a wildfire near Boulder, Colorado, destroyed 1,000 homes, including one belonging to Pastor Bill Stephens. His family, out of town at the time, lost all their possessions. After months of feeling buried in debris, insurance paperwork and mourning, Stephens decided that Easter 2022 would mark a fresh start.



During worship that morning, the pastor shared a photo of vibrant daffodils emerging on his charred property. Burned remnants were visible in the background, just as Easter's backdrop includes the pain and death of Good Friday. But the empty tomb in Easter's foreground means death won't win, reminded Stephens. Even when earthly life "isn't all daffodils," we have hope and eternal life through Jesus.

Easter reveals that God will "give us the joy, and it's going to be in the heart of pain that we go through as well," added the pastor. "And that just makes me draw closer to God."



A crowd gathers, waving branches and shouting "Hosanna" (Hebrew for save us), and wanting to crown Jesus as king. As the story unfolds, the shouts of praise turn into demands for his death.



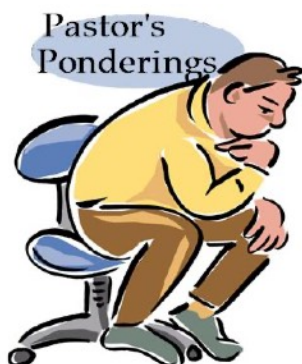
Proclaims Jesus' new commandment to love one another as he has loved us. It celebrates Christ's example of humble service and self-offering.



Proclaims the good news of salvation through the suffering and death of our Lord Jesus Christ.



Proclaims God's victory over sin and death through Christ's resurrection.



I Like Eagles!

Traveling gives me time to think. Many times, as I travel, my mind wonders and, on one such trip, I discovered why “I Like Eagles!” I have observed their flight along the Mississippi River Valleys in Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. Eagles soar so gracefully and high above most other birds on motionless wings. As a pilot I know eagles are hitching a ride on rising currents of hot air or thermals. Once an eagle gets into a thermal, it can just spread its wings and float upward with very little effort. Their eyesight is far superior to us humans. I understand that an eagle can focus on small objects at long distances and probably can see prey as small as rabbits two miles away.

As we confess our belief in Jesus Christ and experience Easter together, consider how we are eagles soaring and looking at our faith and commitment to Jesus. I am grateful and thankful for the opportunity to celebrate Easter with you, the Body of Christ at First Presbyterian in Monticello.

The season of Pentecost follows Eastertide is approaching and is a time of reconciliation and renewal which emphasizes Christ's compassion, faithfulness, and sacrifice to the disciples and to the early Church. As Monticello begins a new relationship in pastoral leadership in the coming months, I'm sure you will soar like eagles into the future. May God be with us as we continue the search for an installed pastor.

In Christ, Gary L. Burnett, Interim Pastor.



Pastor Gary L Burnett

319-350-7638

burnett.anita1@gmail.com

Office hours: W, 10am-5pm,
Th, 10am-12 pm



Office Administrator, Mackenzie Kahler

319-465-3393

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

fpcm Monticello.org

Treasurer, Dan Saunders

Hours vary



Worship

Sundays 10:00 a.m.

8:30 a.m. youth Sunday school

9:30 a.m. Fellowship

If you're not able to join us in person, join us for FaceBook live stream Sunday Worship service each Sunday.

Scholarship applications are due in physical hard-copy form **SATURDAY, APRIL 1st!** No fooling (since they are due on April Fool's Day)! Applications can be mailed to or dropped off at the church: 211 W 1st St, Monticello, IA 52310. We are so fortunate to be able to provide a number of options to our students looking to better their future.



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

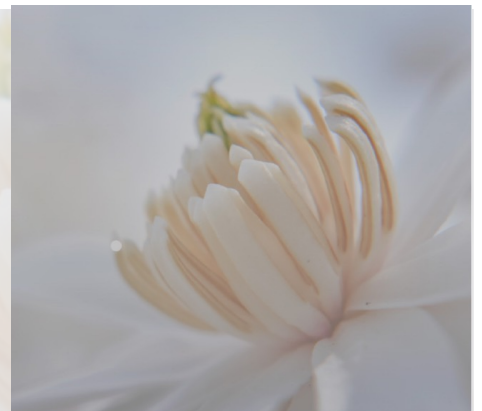
If you provide a lily in honor of a loved one, please contact the church office by phone/message, 319-465-3393, or email, office@fpcmonticello.org, with the name of loved one(s) to be recognized in the bulletin and newsletter.

Reminder: you are responsible for providing your own lily (these are not purchased through the church).

Four confirmation students will be confirmed at worship services on **Sunday, April 2.** Join us as our youth grow and confirm their faith in God. Congratulations, Grant, Talan, Tate and Dylan! And keep up the good work first-year student: Carter.



Lord, we pray for our next pastor. We pray that God will increase their passion for the Word of God. We pray that God would give them a love for our church and the strength to leave their current position. We pray that they will begin new relationships at our church in the right way. We pray that God will prepare them to shepherd our church through the trials and blessings they have faced and currently face. We pray for their family. Amen.





Congratulations and THANK YOU to our 2023 Session members! This group donates their time to the mission and leadership of our church.

Jim Anderson

Peg Arduser

Anita Benedict (Christian Education Committee Session rep)

Vickie Bone (Pie Committee Session rep, Scholarship Committee Session rep)

Curt Mayo (Deacons Session rep, Nominating Committee Session rep)

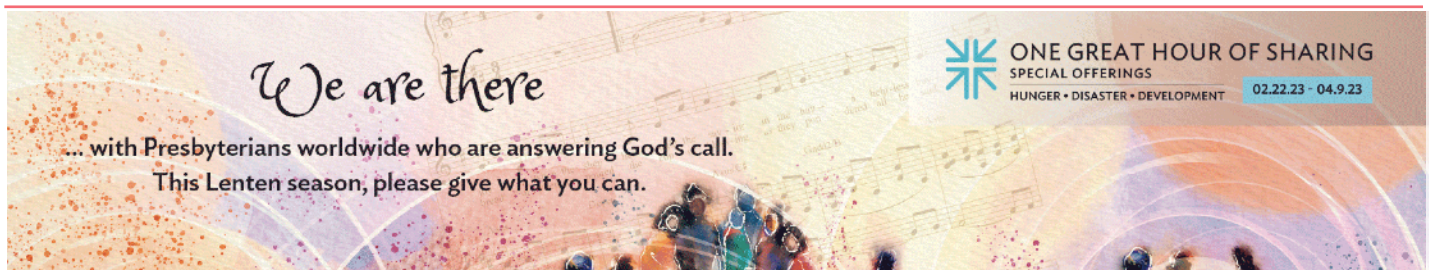
Sherri Neofotist (Membership Committee Session rep, Memorial Board Session rep)

Dan Saunders (Treasurer/Finance Session rep)

Don Smith (Building Committee Session rep, Personnel Committee Session rep)

Stacey Takes (Worship Committee Session rep, Clerk of the Session)

Meredith Parker, youth



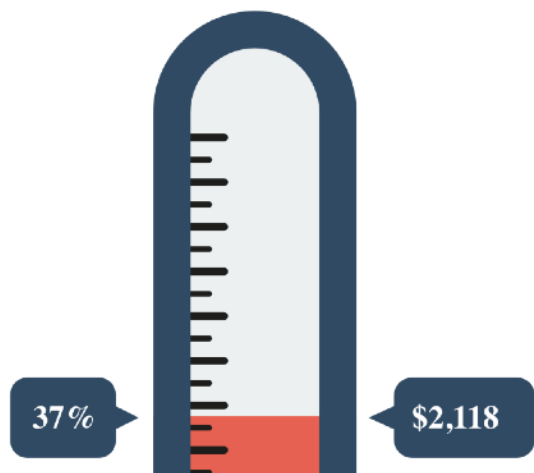
This month, we have included an envelope for this special offering of the Presbyterian Church (USA). It is one of our four annual special offerings by Presbyterian congregations. This offering will be received on Easter Sunday, April 10. You may bring your envelope to worship, drop it off at the church office, or mail it to us.

During Lent, we celebrate that God connects with us through Jesus' resurrection and connects us with "those who have least"—and that's what One Great Hour of sharing is all about. People who experience oppression, need, loss, or lack, those are the people Jesus connected with, the Bible says, and they are the people we are invited to connect with today.

One Great Hour of Sharing is the single, largest way that Presbyterians come together every year to work for a better world. 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, Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People.

If we all do a little, it adds up to a lot!

Per
CAPITA \$
GOAL: \$5,657



The church treasurer has sent in our full per capita payment of \$5,657.30, although we have received only 37.44% to date. If you are an active member and have not submitted \$40.70, please do so as soon as possible. Thanks to everyone committed to a healthy and vital Presbyterian Church!



The commercial coffee maker in the kitchen was recently replaced. We are looking to sell the old coffee maker, as well as kitchen mats. Make an offer!

Further information was not available at the time of publication. For more information, contact Don Smith.

Our Family Story

What is Synod School?

Synod School is a learning and personal enrichment experience for people of all ages. We seek to create an environment of hospitality, healing, and hope. The week is designed for laity and clergy as well as individuals and families with classes and activities for adults, youth, and children.

2023 is the 69th year of Synod School in Iowa. People will come from all over the country with their friends and families to share in this week of worship, study, play, and life together. It is an opportunity to learn something new, to continue conversations begun by keynote speakers with others over meals or a board game, to share talents of creativity and music, to worship without being in charge, to be energized for service, and to enjoy not having to cook for a week.

2023 Synod School Theme: Our Family Story

...All Jesus did that day was tell stories—a long storytelling afternoon. His storytelling fulfilled the prophecy: *I will open my mouth and tell stories; I will bring out into the open things hidden since the world's first day.*

Matthew 13:34-35-34-35 MSG

The theme for Synod School 2023 is "Our Family Story." As living and breathing entities of Christ, we are each natural storytellers—whether we believe so or not. Each experience we carry is sewn into the tapestry that our ancestors created, and these experiences carry us forward toward relationship and connection with others. Stories from the Bible connect us as children of God. We will share time together learning about the differences between historical, literary and theological "chairs" and why, to fully understand stories from the Bible, we must take time in all three chairs to better know the rich characters and lessons that we have been given. In a time when biblical stories are picked apart to suit a particular message, we will gather and study familiar stories in new ways in hopes of gaining a new closeness with God, and each other.



Mark your calendars for **July 23-28, 2023** for our 69th Synod School! Registration begins April 1.

Be prepared! Things to know about before you register: RAGBRAI, COVID-19, Online Registration, Housing – No linens this year! Construction on campus! Visit https://lakesandprairies.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/SScatalog23_B.pdf for the full catalog.

DID YOU KNOW?...

First Presbyterian Church is joining Monticello Ministerial Association's community VBS program this summer!

All 3 year old's through 6th graders are invited to join us for this Stellar VBS to rocket kids on an out of-this-world adventure that's light years of faith-building fun!

July 31st- August 4th from 9am-1pm at the Youth Development Center.

Visit <https://forms.gle/vXbpdxPbdx9Tvh8h6> now to register!



Food Pantry Update: 🍏🍏🍞🍗🍽️

*The Monticello Food Pantry is serving the community Mondays (5 p.m.-7 p.m.) and Fridays (2 p.m.-4 p.m.).

*If you are able, consider donating to those in need. You can donate products, or consider a monetary donation. DID YOU KNOW?: When the Food Pantry receives monetary donations, they use this for needs not filled by HACAP, and those purchases are made locally (Fareway) and are bought by the case at a discounted case pricing, so *they are able to purchase more with the money you donate. Thank you!*

*If you have a donation (product or monetary), those can be brought to the Food Pantry during normal operating hours (Mondays from 5 pm-7 pm and Fridays from 2 pm-4pm), or a half hour before. Monetary donations can be left with the check-in volunteer located in the church. For product donations, please knock on the Food Pantry door and our volunteers would be glad to help you drop off. We will be serving people during this time, so we appreciate your patience.

Here are Food Pantry current needs should you like to pick up an extra item or two, or more, the next time you head to the store: **Canned fruit, canned vegetables, canned chicken, and dry cereals.**

Thank you for your help making sure our community is taken care of!



Thank you to all that contributed their time, supplies, financial donations, and patronage to our annual Camp & Conference Soup Supper! One hundred people were served, and \$1,171 was raised for our Camp & Conference fund to send our youth to camp at no charge to youth or their family.

THANK YOU!

Presbyterian Pie Committee

The Presbyterian Pie Committee is taking orders and there are pies in the freezer for sale. Don't forget Easter is coming up and we would like to make your Easter Dinner special with a pie. Call Pam at 319-480-7700, or Kris at 319-480-1538, to place an order or for a pick up.

We appreciate your continued business.

Betty Lambert

Marge Stubbe, MNRC

Lorraine Haag, Pennington

Doug Mettler

Barb Null, Pinicon Pl

Frank Smith, Pennington

Don Duncan, Mt Vernon



We're thinking of you!

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



April 2: **Quinton & Breanna Fellingner and Tanner, Taryn, Jack & Ryder Fellingner**

April 9: **Kevin, Chanda, Taylor, Grant & Kinley Gassman and Phil, Amy, McKinley & Quinn Gilkerson**

April 16: **Bill & Suzy Gilkerson and Keith & Carol Gillmore**

April 23: **Pam Goettsch and Lori Gravel**

April 30: **Dennis Gray and Lorraine Haag**

March Session Summary

Clerk has approved the changes in Presbytery site to our MIF. PNC Still working with demand much higher than supply and waiting on new list to contact. Going to check once a week to get updated list to see if any new candidates thru the presbytery.

All annual forms send back to presbytery by Feb 16th due date.

Boy scouts checking to see if we need any outdoor landscaping help before Easter. Vicki needs someone to help dig up plants but not before Easter.

Installed: Jim Anderson as elder for 2023-25 on Feb 26th.

Communion: Feb 5th with 40 served by Curt & Pam Mayo

Building Use Request: Richard King for Janean's 80th birthday following worship. Not using kitchen. Serving pulled pork and cake. Congregation/church family is invited.

Next session meeting April 12th at 6:30 pm

Presbytery Stated Meeting March 11 hybrid meeting 10 am – 2 pm

Pastor office days are Wed and Thursdays. Confirmation class: Session will meet with confirmands on Sunday Mar 26th after appreciation lunch to hear their Statements of Faith. Will be confirmed Sunday April 2nd.

Christian Ed had the drive thru Camp and Conference soup dinner Mar 1st 4:30-7 pm. Served 100 people made \$1171 for camp and conference. Will do community VBS July 31- Aug 4th. Also planning on doing a combined youth group in the community.

Dan passed out ledger budget for Feb and Jan-Feb. Paid MMA (Monticello Minister's Association) dues. We will go back to having a second person count offering every week, so we have a check and balance.

New coffee maker is in use. Have Mackenzie work with Don to put out there that we want to sell the coffee maker and big mats with make an offer. We took some screens from Sunday School wing out and took down to McNeil's to get repaired. Don making a wish list for others to come in and help clean up church and finish projects. Will set date for this spring workday(s) at next session meeting.

Deacons' appreciation brunch on March 26th.

Meredith has agreed to be our youth elder for this year. Congregational meeting to vote her in is March 19 along with her ordination and installation?

Session wants to add a specific prayer to worship for a called pastor each Sunday.

Scholarship applications need to be in office by April 1st. May 21 will be senior Sunday and scholarships will be awarded.

Annual requirement for audit of books. Elissa Bailey sent review guide 2-9 and Dan S has a copy.

The Bravura jazz group has decided to hold a spring concert June 4th and will begin practices on Monday evenings in March. An additional practice on 3rd. Also, a spring piano recital on May 7.

Update committee assignments – a session member to represent each committee.

Updates all Session member contact info.

Sunday School kids created thermometer for Per Capita Sunday 2-26. Stacey and Dan to coordinate each month and update it.

Marcella and Lillian are present their mission trip on March 19 during worship service.

Mackenzie is having ACL surgery April 3rd. Can't drive for 4 weeks. Vickie will answer phones on Mondays while off. Curt will cover on Wednesdays. Sherri willing to back up if needed.

Pray for our PNC.

We thank you for your generous and gracious financial support!

February 2023 Contributions
\$8,485.50

February 2022 Contributions \$7,897.51

February 2023 Expenses
\$8,158.56

February 2022 Expenses \$10,645.21



Treasurer's Report



ATTENDANCE	Worship:	Sunday school:
February 25	51	3
March 5	40	3
March 12	35	5
March 19	46	1