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# *First Press* *First Presbyterian Church* *January 2021*

Mark your calendars for Jan. 17!!

## **The Installation Service for Pastor Stephanie Ells**

The Session is excited to announce that, on Sunday, January 17, 2021, during the 10:15 a.m. worship service, the Reverend Stephanie Ells will be installed as pastor of First Presbyterian Church by an administrative commission of the John Knox Presbytery. Because of COVID restrictions, we will be streaming the service.

Rev. Ells began pastoral leadership on August 1, 2020, having been approved by the congregation on May 31, and was welcomed into the presbytery at the August 15 meeting. A graduate of Northwestern College and Western Theological Seminary, Pastor Stephanie wrote in her application in answer to the question about the ministry setting to which she feels called, "God has called me to be a shepherd who knows and cares for her flock. I want to be part of a ministry that is more than a place to attend. It is a place to belong, with all of our quirks, mistakes, triumphs, capabilities, and failings. A ministry where, when challenges or changes arrive, grace and patience abound with a sense of adventure at being part of the work God is doing."

We rejoice that God has brought Pastor Stephanie to FPC and welcome the opportunity to serve Jesus Christ together through the mission and ministry of the church. We plan to celebrate Pastor Stephanie's installation at a later date when it is safe to do so.



### **FPC's New Officers**

On January 10, FPC will ordain and install new officers as Deacons and Ruling Elders.

Franklin Yartey will be ordained and installed to the office of Deacon. John Dillman and Bryan Blair will be installed as Ruling Elders and Annette Boelk will be installed as a Deacon. Please keep these officers, and those serving with them, in your prayers as we begin 2021.

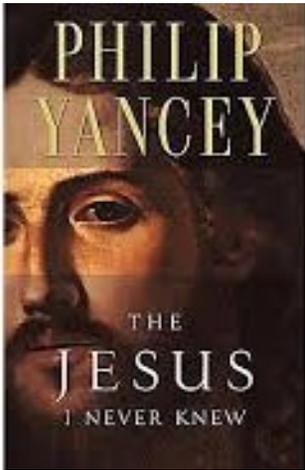
### **Annual Meeting**

The Annual Congregational meeting to review and receive the Annual Report will be held after worship on January 24 via Zoom. The 2020 Annual Report will be sent to you via email. Please plan to attend this important meeting as we review the mission and ministry at FPC.



# Christian Education

## New Sermon Series and Study Starting Jan. 24



Beginning on Sunday, January 24, 2021, our congregation will be embarking on a journey together of discovering “the Jesus we never knew.” Now, you might be thinking, “What on earth are you talking about, Pastor Stephanie? I have known Jesus my whole life! I know the Bible front to back. What do you mean ‘the Jesus we never knew’?” Excellent point.

The amazing thing about Jesus is how wide and deep his life and message runs. We learn about Jesus in church as children, but these years do not mark the end of our learning. Our view of Jesus, as I am sure many of you could attest to, grows and changes over the years as we mature and have different experiences with Jesus and his followers. We may even find ourselves confused or questioning our understanding of Jesus' life and message when we have these experiences or read a Scripture passage. This is all normal for a person who

walks with Jesus. Being his follower, and doing so with intentionality and awareness should challenge us.

A few years ago, I read the book “The Jesus I Never Knew” by Philip Yancey; and it brought me wonderful insight into the life and message of Jesus. Yancey does a beautiful job of stripping away all the layers of bias that the church and followers of Jesus have added to the gospel over the centuries. In a straightforward and approachable way, Yancey tackles topics like: Jesus' lessons on love, his demonstrations of grace, the miracles of Jesus, and his death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. Finally, the focus shifts to the effect the life and death of Jesus should have on the lives of believers today as we are to carry on Jesus' message.

Yancey's book is based on the biblical message of the Gospels, and sets a perfect stage for a sermon series and study. **Every Sunday at 4:00pm via Zoom**, there will be an adult study opportunity. We will discuss what was preached in the sermon, the corresponding Scripture passages, and a chapter in the book. Each week of discussion will stand on its own, so you can choose to attend whenever your schedule allows without being there every week.

“The Jesus I Never Knew” by Philip Yancey is available in many forms: paperback, audiobook, ebook, and even in full text for FREE at <http://www.oocities.org/yahwehcalls/pdf/TheJesusINeverKnew.pdf>. If you want to participate in the study; and would like a copy of the book but are unable to purchase one for any reason, please contact Pastor Stephanie or Linda Longfield and one will be provided.

## CHRISTMAS NOTES of LOVE



A special thank you to Tracy and Bob who, even in the midst of a pandemic, continued their tradition of

wishing Merry Christmas to FPC kids of all ages. Since we couldn't hold our annual Christmas luncheon filled with laughter, food, and the much-enjoyed treat bags, Tracy and Bob took it upon themselves to send Christmas "treats" through the mail. What a wonderful way to share Christmas cheer with your church family! Many thanks!!



## Advent Study Wrap-Up

During Advent, a dozen folks participated in a Bible study called “Light of the World”, led by Hannah Eby and Pastor Stephanie, and guided by the book *Light of the World* by Amy-Jill Levine.

Using the birth narratives in Matthew and Luke, the class discussed the accounts of Zechariah and Elizabeth; Mary and the Magnificat; the holy family's journey to Bethlehem; and the presentation of Jesus in the temple.

Thanks to Hannah and Stephanie for their leadership.

# Christian Education

## Reflecting on the Nativity

*(Loosely based on "Christmas Letters" written by Gail G. Martin ©1997 by Standard Publishing Co.)*

Thanks to all who participated in the Christmas play this year. Due to the pandemic, it took some creative thinking to produce this message of hope. We pray that the Gospel message of Christ's coming was revealed to you in new ways through the voices of these participants.

### Cast

**Scripture Reader:** Sandy Spencer

**Sunday School Class:** Ryan McClain, Ethan Blair, Matt Gunn,  
Thomas Blair, Sam Klinebriel, & Linda Longfield

**Soloists:** Aggie Herbst, Sam Klinebriel, Audrey Holdener, & Jill Klinebriel

**Actors:** Joseph: Sam Daniels  
Mary: Mackenzie Daniels  
Gabriel: Michelle Daniels  
Innkeeper: Chris Daniels  
Shepherds: Sam, Jill, & Joe Klinebriel  
Angels: Michael, Audrey, Jean, & Chris Holdener

**Readers:** Letter from Joseph: Bryan Blair  
Letter from Mary: Sara Blair  
Letter from Innkeeper: John Dillman  
Letter from Shepherd: Sam Morales  
Letter from Angel: Stephanie Ells

**Producers:** Joe & Jill Klinebriel

**Director:** Linda Longfield



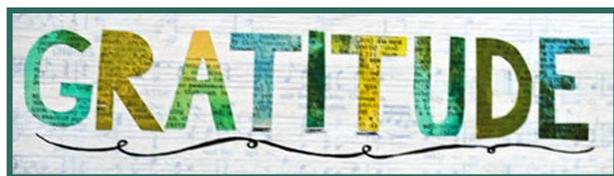
# Thank You!



# Mission

## A GRATEFUL Mission Committee

We reflect on this past year with gratitude for the work this church continued to do despite the pandemic. We are grateful for the generous service of the Deacons who worked so hard to do pick-ups and deliveries for Food for the First, Supplies for the Second, and Café Ministry! We are encouraged by this congregations' faithfulness in giving these supplies and financial support so that we can continue to be a presence of Christ's love to our neighbors near and far. On behalf of the Mission Committee, thank you all!!



## JOY Offering Update

We are grateful that during Advent, when we collect our JOY Offering each year, VeNita, Leon, and Betty shared a Minute for Mission. We were inspired to learn how our JOY Offerings directly benefited friends of Leon and Betty!



We thank God for his goodness and we also thank this congregation for its many acts of kindness and generosity. The collection

for JOY Offering at this writing is \$795.00!

## Our "F"ar-away Friends

What a joy to receive another greeting and update from our friends during our Dec. 27 service. Note that even as their work continues, "C" took an early retirement this fall to help with the denomination's financial challenges. She will continue to help "L." Please continue to pray for them and the needs they share. If you'd like to send them a card or email, ask a member of the Mission Committee for contact information (Judy Sheridan, Sandy Spencer, Tom Jack or Annalee Ward).



February 7, 2021

### What is Souper Bowl of Caring?

Souper Bowl of Caring is a youth-led nation-wide program with the goal of tackling hunger in local communities. Collected at the time of the Super Bowl, this program works to transform the big game into a time of giving to local food banks to help those in need.

### Is it very effective?

Yes it is! In the 30 years since it began in 1990, Souper Bowl of Caring has raised over \$163,000,000. Last year, across the nation 5,143 groups raised over 10.5 million dollars in cash and food for local charities. Our church raised \$815 and collected 157 food items for the Dubuque Food Pantry.

### How can we help?

The pandemic causes even more need! Since we can't meet in person, we invite you to send in your checks to the church, memo line Souper Bowl of Caring by Feb. 5. We will coordinate with the deacons to collect any food donations you might have. Watch your email for more information!

## Giving Tree Update

The Mission committee had the idea of a "Giving Tree" this Advent season to encourage the congregation to support others who need our help. We also thought this would help us discern where Mission funds should be distributed at the end of the year. Through your generosity, the following was donated: Dubuque Food Pantry: \$240.00; Victim Services Shelter: \$85.00; Dubuque Rescue Mission: \$300.00; and our Thailand friends: \$285.00. Thank you!



# Mission

## Remembering Our Ministry Roots: Meeting Community Needs

By Tom Jack

First Presbyterian Church in Dubuque worshiped together for the first time on Christmas Eve in 1846. Over the years, FPC has long been involved in community outreach. The Mission Committee's "Giving Tree" donations this Advent season remind us of some of those efforts, both past and present.

**The Dubuque Rescue Mission** began as a soup kitchen during the Depression. Our congregation has served meals, worked in the clothing store and garden, sorted donations, and offered financial and spiritual support. **The Dubuque Food Pantry** began in the Mission with the help of our congregation, before moving out on its own. Food for The First and the Souper bowl of Caring offerings continue to support this ministry. **Hillcrest Family Services**, a Presbyterian supported ministry, began as the "baby fold" with our involvement. We also support **Dubuque Area Congregations United (DACU)** which began in 1974, have been involved in their CROP Walk and, at Thanksgiving, support DACU's outreach of People in Need (PIN). We give to **St. John's Lutheran Church's Closet and Homeless Men's Shelter** that grew out of the Center for Public Ministry which our church supported during the community's dark days in the 1980's and 1990's.

At times like this, when we find ourselves groping in the "COVID shroud of darkness," it is good to remember that when community needs arose in the past, our church was there to help meet those needs, and will continue to do the same as we journey into the future. Below is FPC at the CROP Walk in 1994: Do you see some familiar faces?



On Shoulders: Sara Utley, Samantha Simm

Back Row: Dave Utley, Terry Simm, Dave Thompson, Cindy Hedgepeth, Molly Dykstra, Penny Shaw

3rd Row: Billy Yu, Tom Jack, Dawn Simm, Sara Simm, Daniel Trickey

Second Row: Nancy Zurcher, Vivian Ho, Alex Jack, Peter Hoff, Scott Simm

Front Row: Joy Ebertz, VeNita Fawcett, Tracy Wildermuth

*Dear Friends at FPC,*

*Thank you for your contribution of 50 lbs. of groceries to the Dubuque Food Pantry. What a blessing! We are so blessed to be able to help our community this year as the needs this holiday season are great. Friends like you are vital to our mission. We are so grateful for your giving hearts. May God bless you abundantly for all you do!*

*Sincerely, Theresa Caldwell, Manager of the Dubuque Food Pantry*



# January 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27 No Sunday School 10:15am Worship: Dr. Mark Ward, preaching via live stream	28	29	30	31	1 JANUARY New Year's Day	2
3 9:00am Sunday School - PreK-12th grade -Online lessons 10:15am Worship: Rev. Stephanie Ells, preaching via live stream	4 4:15pm CE (Zoom)	5	6 10:00am Church Chat 6:30pm Confirmation	7 7:00pm Worship Com.	8	9
10 9:00am Sunday School - PreK-12th grade -Online lessons 10:15am Worship: Rev. Stephanie Ells, preaching via live stream Ordination/Installation of deacons	11	12	13 6:30pm Confirmation	14	15	16
17 9:00am Sunday School - PreK-12th grade -Online lessons 10:15am Worship: Rev. Katrina Richardson preaching via live stream Installation of Rev. Stephanie Ells	18	19 7:00pm Building/ Grounds	20 10:00am Church Chat 6:30pm Confirmation	21	22	23 9:00am-12:00pm Session Retreat @ FPC
24 9:00am Sunday School - PreK-12th grade -Online lessons 10:15am Worship: Rev. Stephanie Ells, preaching via live stream 11:30am Annual Congregational Meeting 4:00pm JINK Study via Zoom	25	26	27 6:30pm Confirmation	28	29	30
31 9:00am Sunday School - PreK-12th grade -Online lessons 10:15am Worship: Rev. Stephanie Ells, preaching via live stream 4:00pm JINK Study via Zoom	1 FEBRUARY	2	3 10:00am Church Chat 6:30pm Confirmation	4	5	6

## Birthdays & Anniversaries—January

Happy birthday! Happy birthday! Happy birthday!

- 4 Dick & Delores Muntz
- 8 Scott McCaw
- 10 Sara Blair
- 11 Franklin Yartey  
Sam Daniels
- 17 Roger & Susan Ebertz
- 18 Debbie Stant  
Bobby McCaw
- 19 VeNita Fawcett  
John Wehrspann
- 20 Sam Morales  
Lupe Morales  
Brian & Sharon Hallstoos
- 21 Stephanie Ells
- 22 David McClain
- 23 Audrey Okey
- 24 Jonah Brehm  
Elias Brehm

## OFFICE HOURS

Due to the current COVID pandemic, **Pastor Stephanie's office hours at the church will be \*Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00am-1:00pm\* (\*note the change).** Pastor Stephanie requests you set up an appointment time if you would like to see her, even during office hours. Masks will be required to protect one another's health and well-being.

**Pastor Stephanie can be reached at (cell) 507-227-8537 or [fpcdbq.pastor@gmail.com](mailto:fpcdbq.pastor@gmail.com).** In case of emergency, please call her cell number. If she does not answer, leave a voice message, and she will get back to you as soon as possible.

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**Administrative Assistant, Ginger Vander Broek, works from home. Her hours are Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 9:30-1:30pm.** She can be reached through the church email: [firstpresdbq@gmail.com](mailto:firstpresdbq@gmail.com)



Each year FPC pays John Knox Presbytery a “per capita” for each member of the church. This money goes to support the work and ministry of John Knox Presbytery, the Synod of Lakes and Prairies, and the General Assembly. This year that amount is \$33.70 per member. If you would like to help defray the cost to the church, please send in your check with a note on the memo line: “Per capita.”

**Per Capita**



Electronic giving is available at FPC. For more information and/or to set up an account, please contact church treasurer Bob Monthey at [fpcdbq.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:fpcdbq.treasurer@gmail.com)

## PREACHING SCHEDULE

### JANUARY



January 3	Rev. Stephanie Ells
January 10	Rev. Stephanie Ells
January 17	Rev. Katrina Richardson
January 24	Rev. Stephanie Ells
January 31	Rev. Stephanie Ells

## FPC Financial Update

Thank you for your faithful support of the mission and ministry at FPC. Although the financial report from 2020 reflects expenditures that exceed income, our financial picture remains positive because of the generosity of this church family. The shortfall, paid from multiple funds, is due to several major capital improvement projects to our buildings, including the first stage of tuck-pointing the sanctuary and manse, and repairs to gutters and downspouts. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to Elder John Dillman.

## Join Us for the Weekly Church Chat!

During the pandemic, at 10am every 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month, Pastor Stephanie will host an online church chat to help us stay connected. Everyone is welcome to join for much needed fellowship. Be looking for the email with the Zoom information for each chat.



# Love Your Neighbor as Yourself

Since we will not be gathering for face-to-face worship in January, and therefore cannot bring donations to the church, the deacons will plan to collect items from your porch for the Dubuque Food Pantry (Food for the First) and the Victim Services Shelter (Supplies for the Second). Watch your email for details.

You may also choose to give monetary gifts by sending a check to FPC marked for the Dubuque Food Pantry or Victim Services Shelter.

## Items particularly needed include:

### DBQ Food Pantry:

Canned vegetables, boxed potatoes, and pasta mixes but all non-perishables are welcome, as well as, diapers (size 3-5) and baby wipes.



### Victim Services Shelter:

Disinfecting wipes, paper towels, glass cleaner, and shampoo/conditioner.



Thank you for supporting these ministries.

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