

1684 Iowa Street
Dubuque, IA 52001

(563) 582-4494
firstpresdbq@gmail.com



First Press First Presbyterian Church December 2020

FPC Giving Tree

FPC is a generous congregation. The Mission/Stewardship Committee, on behalf of the congregation, contributes around \$7,000 annually to a variety of local service organizations that provide much needed food, shelter, and financial assistance; on top of the nearly \$2,500 you contribute to the Joy Offering .

We would like to give the congregation an opportunity to grow FPC's gift for the holidays, in addition to the Joy Offering, as the needs in our local community are greater than ever. The boxes beneath the Christmas tree to the right bear the names of the organizations in need of additional help.



Make FPC's gift grow by following these easy steps:

1. Choose the "gift box" organization you'd like to assist
2. Make a check out to out to FPC, putting in the line item at the bottom of the check the name of the organization you want to donate to
3. Mail the check to: First Presbyterian Church, Attn: Bob Monthey, 1684 Iowa St., Dubuque, IA 52001

At the end of December, we will gather the money for each group and distribute it accordingly - reporting back to the congregation the results of our Giving Tree in January!



Christmas Program:

"Christmas Letters" has been postponed until December 20th!

We will then proclaim the Good News of the Gospel in the form of a play during worship.

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP

Celebrate the Birth of Christ virtually with a service of Lessons & Carols at 7:00pm on Thursday, December 24th. Watch your email for the bulletin and link to the Christmas Eve Service or you can find the link on our website www.firstpresdbq.org



Christian Education



Advent Study

During Advent, you are invited to a study called "Light of the World."

Hannah Eby and Pastor Stephanie will take turns leading this study, guided by biblical scholar Amy-Jill Levine and her book, *Light of the World*. Together we will explore the events of the Christmas narrative, highlighting the accounts of Zechariah and Elizabeth; Mary and the Magnificat; the holy family's journey to Bethlehem; and the flight to Egypt.

You may purchase the book if you would like, but it is not necessary to participate in the study. Each session will stand on its own, so you may come one week or all four. A Zoom link is sent in the email for the Sunday service link.

CHRISTMAS COFFEE HOUR Dec. 13



Following worship on Dec. 13, Pastor Stephanie will host a virtual Coffee Hour. Participants can socialize, enjoy some fun activities and be in virtual community. A Zoom link will be sent before the event. Mark your calendars!

ATTENTION! ATTENTION!

***There will not be Sunday School
on Dec. 27th.***



Please enjoy the time with your family. Come ready to learn more about the saving love of Jesus Christ on Sunday, January 3rd at 9:00am.

**SAVE
THE
DATE**

*For
Pastor Stephanie's
Installation Service
on
Sunday,
January 17, 2021
at 10:15am.*

Annual Report Reminder

**The deadline for annual
report submissions is
January 3rd.**

Please honor this deadline as extra time is needed this year due to method of distribution. Thank you!



Mission

Community Corner

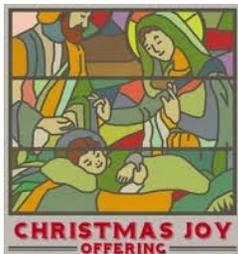
This new section is meant to provide information on happenings in the community. You may find something of interest or an opportunity to serve. While the Mission Committee is not sponsoring these events, we recognize them as potential ways to build a bridge to our neighbors. Tom Jack has graciously agreed to collect and share this information with us.



In November, Dubuque congregations joined for a virtual Thanksgiving Service, sponsored by the Dubuque Area Congregations United (DACU), of which our own Jean Holdener is the President this year. Rev. Stephanie Ells gave the message and the music was provided by the members of the Julien Chamber Choir directed by Kristin Eby. Collections were taken during the virtual service for People In Need (PIN), an organization which provides emergency assistance for those in need locally.

The DACU newsletter this month reminds us of the needs in the community at this time of the year, needs which are compounded by Covid. We are encouraged to give locally to the Dubuque Food Pantry, the Rescue Mission, Opening Doors, Almost Home, and the Lantern Center. These are just a few of the organizations which the Mission Committee hopes you will consider supporting by your designated gift to the church – see the “FPC Giving Tree” on the front page of this newsletter.

Christmas Joy Offering



The Christmas JOY Offering is being collected during Advent. With a contribution to this offering, First Presbyterian Church supports past, present, and future leaders in the Presbyterian Church.

The Christmas JOY Offering helps current and retired church workers and their families who experience critical financial needs through the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions. It also develops future leaders by providing assistance to students attending Presbyterian-related schools and colleges that equip communities of color like Stillman College, Presbyterian Pan American School, and the Menaul School.

Please be sure to make your designation for this offering clear in the memo line when sending it to the church.

Donation Pick Up



Deacons Jamie Dillman and Mark & Deb Stant are picking up Food for the 1st and Supplies for the 2nd donations on Friday, December 18th from 10:00AM-

noon. Please call or text one deacon no later than Thursday, Dec. 17th if you have items for pick up.

Place your items in bags labeled with the organization they are for and put them on your porch for safety.

Your donations bring comfort and nutrition to many people in our community. Thank you for your continued support of this ministry.

Update from Our Friends in Asia

“C” has made the decision to retire from working full time. “L” will continue in his community development work.

They have had opportunities to share good news with their two young adult “adopted sons” and have seen them grow.

Please continue to pray for peace in “C’s” decision, for her healing, for safety, and for open doors as they share their lives and the reason for hope with their neighbors.



Mission

Trusting and Tithing

Trusting and tithing is a combination that goes together in the Stant household. We've learned in the last few months exactly how important they both are.

With Mark's impending surgery looming over my head, I didn't know how things were going to happen financially with Mark needing to take leave. During one of our conversations, Mark reminded me that we were going to put it in God's hands. We asked our church family to pray for us and God was listening. In time, I had to change my prayers from requests with a little worry to prayers full of thanksgiving for answered prayers. This started a landslide of blessings.

Things for surgery were coming together so we discussed our budget and what we could change to help during Mark's leave from work. The first thing on our budget is giving back to God - tithing. We decided we couldn't afford to cut our tithing and that we would trust in God to see us through. Warning! Do not underestimate the power of the Lord! We've been blessed to see everything we need, and then some, has been taken care of.



Trusting and tithing do go together. You put your trust in the Lord and then give back to him to say thank you. Mark and I could never repay the Lord for what he's done and will do. We will continue to thank him. Praise be to God!

-Mark and Deb Stant

FPC Home Meals Fund



The deacons have set up an account to help provide home meals. If anyone would like to contribute to the FPC Home Meals fund, please send a check to First Presbyterian Church, ATTN: Deacons. Please put "FPC Home Meals" on the memo line of your check. The donation will be deposited into the FPC Home Meals account to be distributed as needed. The current balance on this account is \$50.00. Blessings to all from the deacons at FPC!

Café Ministry Update

The Café Ministry staff send their gratitude for supplying hotdogs and buns on October 29. They had enough even though numbers have grown. On November 19, they served over 280 people and needs for food and basic supplies keep growing. The folks at First Congregational are exhausted. *They will not be serving a meal on December 31 the week we would normally supply hot dogs and buns so we do not need donations this month.* However, if you'd still like to contribute to this ministry, here are a few ways to help:



* Thursday Café Volunteer: They are asking for volunteers to come in between 3:30-5:00pm, 4:00-5:30pm, and 4:30-6:00pm. Click to sign up <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0B4AAAA72BA1F85-cafe>.

* They are collecting men's winter coats. Leave coats on the table just inside the door.

* They've started a Hygiene Closet and need basics like shampoo, hand sanitizer, toothbrushes/tooth paste, laundry pods, toilet paper, dish soap, etc. Again, donations can be left inside the front door.

December 2020

Deacons of the Month: Mark & Deb Stant

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|-----|-------------------------------------|---|---|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 29 1st Sunday of Advent 9:00am Sunday School - PreK-12th grade -Online lessons 10:15am Worship: Rev. Timothy Slemmons, preaching via live stream 4:00pm Advent Study via Zoom | 30 | 1 DECEMBER | 4 10:00am Church Chat via Zoom 6:30pm Confirmation | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 2nd Sunday of Advent 9:00am Sunday School - PreK-12th grade -Online lessons 10:15am Worship: Rev. Stephanie Eills, preaching via live stream 4:00pm Advent Study via Zoom | 7 | 8 | 11 6:30pm Confirmation | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 3rd Sunday of Advent 9:00am Sunday School - PreK-12th grade -Online lessons 10:15am Worship: Rev. Stephanie Eills, preaching via live stream 11:30am Christmas Coffee Church Chat via Zoom 4:00pm Advent Study via Zoom | 14 | 15 7:00pm Buildings & Grounds | 18 10:00am-12:00pm Donation pick up 10:00am Church Chat via Zoom 6:30pm Confirmation | 17 7:00pm Children of Abraham via live stream | 18 | 19 9:30am Session |
| 20 4th Sunday of Advent 9:00am Sunday School - PreK-12th grade -Online lessons 10:15am Worship: Christmas play "Christmas Letters" via live stream 11:45am Deacons via Zoom 4:00pm Advent Study via Zoom | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 7:00pm Christmas Eve worship via website link | 25 Christmas Day | 26 |
| 27 No Sunday School 10:15am Worship: Mark War, preaching via live stream | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 NO Café Ministry | 1 JANUARY New Year's Day | 2 |
| Pastor out of the office | | | | | | |

Happy birthday! Happy birthday! Happy birthday!

Birthdays & Anniversaries

December

- 2 Joplin Hallstoos
- 16 Tracy Wildermuth
- 17 Tom Boelk
Dick Muntz
- 18 Terri Gronau
- 23 Linda Longfield
- 24 Victoria Slemmons
- 27 Joyce McClain
Delores Muntz
Micah Dillman
- 28 Tim Slemmons
- 29 Joel Samuels
- 31 Sherry Heer

If we missed anyone's special date, please contact the church office so we can celebrate with you!



Your Church Family Needs You!

All areas of ministry at FPC could use your gifts. Please speak to the committee chair listed below to join.

- Buildings & Grounds* – Tom Boelk
- Christian Education* – Linda Longfield
- Congregational Life* – Terri Gronau
- Finance & Personnel* – John Dillman
- Memorial* – Sandy Spencer & Linda Longfield
- Mission & Stewardship* – Annalee Ward & Sandy Spencer
- Worship* – Kristen Eby & Bradley Longfield



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

OFFICE HOURS

Due to the current COVID pandemic, **Pastor Stephanie's office hours at the church will be Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:00am-1:00pm.** 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. 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.



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

PREACHING SCHEDULE

DECEMBER



- December 6 Rev. Stephanie Ells
- December 13 Rev. Stephanie Ells
- December 20 Christmas play
- December 24 Lessons & Carols
- December 27 Dr. Mark Ward

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.



Thank You!

First Presbyterian Church,

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

*Sincerely,
Theresa Caldwell, mngr. Dubuque Food Pantry*

Thank you for you UDTS scholarship, an important part of the University's overall Mission. An important piece of that Mission is to help each of our students develop their God-given talents and abilities to go on to serve the church and the world. I am pleased to share that this academic year, your scholarship was awarded to Amber Balista.

With appreciation for your support, Rev. Jeffrey F. Bullock, President of the University of Dubuque



When the pandemic hit and we were no longer able to attend church new challenges emerged.

The deacons were trying to figure out new ways to continue to do God's work of helping those in need. The need for contributions to the Dubuque Food Pantry, the Victim's Services Shelter, and Café Ministry is greater than it's ever been. With God all things are possible and this challenge is being met by our church family even though we aren't able to worship together.

When we contribute to those in need, we are gathering together in spirit. Remember we are the church and God is calling us to continue to share his love. The recipients of your donations have expressed greatly how much they are appreciated.

Love in Christ,
Deacons



** To the deacons for picking up and delivering donations to the Café Ministry, the Dubuque Food Pantry, and the Victim's Services Domestic Violence Shelter

** To member Richard Biechler for installing new exterior lights around the front sanctuary doors (see left)

** To those Christmas elves who spent time decorating the church after worship on November 22nd (see top)

Love Your Neighbor as Yourself

Since we will not be gathering for face-to-face worship in December, 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:

Stuffing mixes and canned vegetables for the holidays, 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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