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# *First Press*

## *First Presbyterian Church*

*December 2019/January 2020*

### **Joy to the World!: Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany**

The coming months bring three important seasons in the Christian year.

In December, we enter the liturgical season of Advent, a time when we anticipate the coming of Jesus, both his birth in Bethlehem and his coming again in glory at the end of time. During Advent worship we attend to God's gifts of hope, peace, joy, and love. So we sing "O come, O come Emmanuel and ransom captive Israel."

During the twelve days of Christmas we celebrate the wonder of the incarnation of the Word of God in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. So we sing, "Yea, Lord we greet thee, born this happy morning; Jesus to thee be all glory given; Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing! O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!"

And Epiphany begins on January 6. Epiphany celebrates the coming of Christ, the light of the world, for the salvation of the nations. So we sing, "To God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit, Three in one, May every tongue and nation raise an endless song of thankful praise."

Join in worship each Lord's Day, and on Christmas Eve, as we give thanks for the amazing grace of God revealed in Christ our Lord!



### **Christmas Program** **December 15<sup>th</sup> at 10:15 a.m.**

MARK YOUR CALENDARS TODAY for December 15th!  
The proclamation of the Good News of the Gospel in worship will take the form of a play.

### **CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP**

Celebrate the Birth of Christ  
with Lessons & Carols  
5:30 PM  
Tuesday, December 24



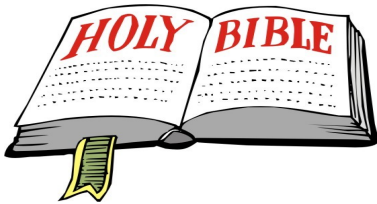
# Christian Education



## Christmas Program Rehearsal Schedule

Sunday, Dec. 8	12:30-1:30pm
Saturday, Dec. 14	11:00am-12:00pm
	Dress rehearsal
Sunday, Dec. 15	Program is presented during worship

*"Love the Lord your God  
with all your heart, with all  
your soul, with all your mind,  
and with all your strength."*  
Mark 12:30



The Adult Sunday School invites you to join our warm and vibrant fellowship at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday.

**December:** John Armstrong helps us reflect on the major themes of Advent: Hope, Peace, Joy and Love.

**January:** John Eby will be leading a study on Apartheid & Christian Theology.

**February:** Timothy Slemmons will guide us in a time with the Psalms.

Make this rewarding time of fellowship and learning a regular discipline in your life. We gather each Sunday in the downstairs fellowship hall.



## Waiting for the Christmas Guest

By: Janet Meili (1978)  
Revised by Linda Longfield  
(2019, for First Presbyterian Church, Dubuque IA)

A dramatic adaptation of the poem  
"How the Great Guest Came" by Edwin Markham

The CE committee invites you to worship on Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> when the Christmas play will be presented. Sunday School participants will help us prepare our hearts to welcome the Christ child.

**SUNDAY, Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>**  
**10:15am**

## Christmas Program Luncheon



Following the Christmas program, the Congregational Life committee invites you to a special coffee hour time of food and fellowship.

## ATTENTION! ATTENTION!

***There will not be Sunday School  
on Dec. 29th.***

Please enjoy the time with your family. Come ready to learn more about the saving love of Jesus Christ on Sunday, January 6th at 9:00am.



# Mission

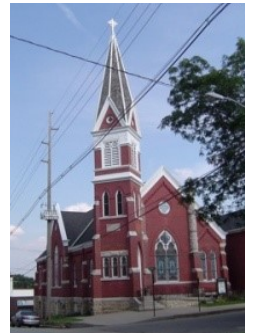
## The Blessings of being a Church for Seminarians by Tom Jack

This fall's meeting of the John Knox Presbytery was hosted by the Zalmona Presbyterian Church near Waukon, IA. The founding father of the church was Rev. Adrian Van Vliet. Only nine years after he started our church, Van Vliet led German settlers in the northeast corner of the state to open the Zalmona Church. The current pastor, the Rev. Tim Rupert, who worshiped at FPC when he was in seminary, serves as the Committee on Ministry representative to our Pastor Nominating Committee.

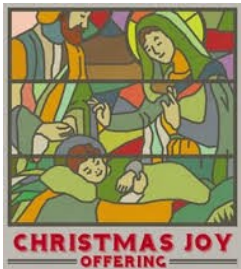
At the Presbytery meeting, Tim's wife, Kate Rupert, was approved for ordination on December 15. Kate, a former SPM intern at FPC, will be the new pastor of the Postville Presbyterian Church. Presbyters also approved Katrina Richardson, another former SPM intern at our church, for ordination next year to the Bellevue Presbyterian Church.

Beginning with the training of German pastors by Rev. Adrian Van Vliet and continuing to the present with Kate and Katrina, First Presbyterian Church has been a "beacon of hope." Seminarians often get their practical training as pastors in our congregation before heading out into the "mission field". We can be proud of our role in this training and rejoice in the connections we make.

The next time you travel towards downtown Dubuque on Rhomberg Ave. from Eagle Point Park, look up! You will see the steeple of First Presbyterian Church. Then consider how far that "beacon of hope" shines, not only from Postville to Bellevue but also throughout this country and beyond. On Christmas Eve this year, we celebrate the 172<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the founding of this congregation of German immigrants – we are truly a church blessed by God's amazing grace.



## Christmas Joy Offering



This Christmas season, PC (USA) & First Presbyterian Church will focus on the Joy Gift Offering. The Joy Offering is taken during Advent to support past, present, and future leaders in the Presbyterian church.

Please place your contribution any Sunday in the envelopes provided in the pews. In addition, the Christmas Eve offering will be dedicated to the glory of God at work through this Joy offering. May God bless our hearts with generosity.

## SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY is February 2, 2020: *Don't stand on the sidelines! Gear up to help!*

Did you know that more than 48 million Americans, including 15 million children, suffer from hunger? Souper Bowl of Caring is a youth movement across the nation working to fight hunger and poverty in our communities. It takes place around the time of the Super Bowl football game.

Last year we raised \$755 and collected 172 cans of food for the Dubuque Food Pantry. Nationwide, 3,769 groups generated \$8,127,435 in cash and food items for local charities.



## Mission Notes & Upcoming Events

- **Joy Offering** is being collected through 12/24.
- **Mission/Stewardship Committee** meets **December 10, 3:45pm** at church.
- The next **Café Ministry** opportunity for FPC is **January 30**.

## DACU THANKSGIVING SERVICE

Jean Holdener, President-elect of DACU gave the closing words at the interfaith Thanksgiving service November 27 and Kristen Eby directed a group of singers from UD. The service was well-attended and brought people of various religions together from all over Dubuque.



# Around the Church



## From Rev. John Armstrong

Pastoral care for other members of our faith community at FPC is an act of compassion we all should be participating in. Yet, many of us are uncomfortable with suffering, which could cause us to avoid our brothers and sisters who are mourning. We might stay away because we don't know what to say or do. But by not acknowledging their loss, we hurt them even more. The truth is, we don't need to say anything. Often a listening ear and the presence of someone who cares is all they need.

Hurting Christians need someone who will sit with them and hear their story of loss rather than trying to fill the silence with statements we think will make things better. Scripture says to mourn with those who mourn.

To mourn well with those who hurt, we need to stick with them for the long haul. We need to show steadfast love and patience, remembering God's steadfast love for us in Christ. To mourn with one who mourns means being a constant and reliable friend who gives space and time for the mourner to grieve.

## Annual Congregational Meeting:

Our Annual Congregational meeting will be held on January 26, following worship to receive the reports found in the Annual Report. Please plan to attend this enlightening meeting.

UN-Decorating



the church!

Following worship on January 5th, you're invited to help take down and put away the Advent and Christmas decorations.

Join in the fun.

Many hands make light work!

## Decorating the Church

Thanks to the many folks who stayed after worship on Nov. 24 to help decorate the sanctuary and basement fellowship hall for the Advent and Christmas season: Deb & Mark Stant, Hannah Eby, Alex Jack, Victoria Slemmons, Steve & Beth Foxen, Judy Sheridan, Chris, Michelle, Sam & Kenzie Daniels, Sam Klinebriel, Jean, Chris, Audrey & Michael Holder, Stephenie Morales, John & Jeannie Armstrong, Jonah Brehm, Brad & Linda Longfield, and Bryan, Sara, Ethan & Thomas Blair.

Everything looks beautiful!



## Advancing Our Ministry and Mission

The Session is overseeing numerous deferred maintenance projects on our sanctuary and manse in order to advance our ministry and mission on the corner of 17<sup>th</sup> and Iowa. In addition to re-roofing the sanctuary and replacing damaged windows in the manse, the rotting siding on the back porch of the manse and the manse cellar door have been replaced to make the building more secure from rodents and the weather. Currently, the inside of the manse is being completely repainted.

Many thanks to Steve Foxen and Alex Jack for installing a new shed in the back of the manse to store outdoor equipment and to all of those who have made donations to support these essential improvements. If you would like to contribute to any of these important projects, please speak with Treasurer Bob Monthey.



## WEATHER BAD? IS CHURCH CANCELED? SEE BELOW HOW TO FIND OUT...

- ♦ Call the church office (582-4494) after 7:30AM on Sunday mornings.
- ♦ Watch your email for an all-church announcement.
- ♦ Check this FPC link: [firstpcdbq.webs.com](http://firstpcdbq.webs.com)
- ♦ *(This link is also available on the church website <http://www.firstpresdbq.org>)*
- ♦ Notice hopefully provided on KCRG, KWWL, KDTH (and others)

# December 2019

## Deacons of the Month: Mark & Deb Stant

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 1st Sunday of Advent Food for the 1st 9:00am Sunday School for all ages 10:15am Worship: Rev. Bradley Longfield. preaching Sacrament of Holy Communion 11:30am Deacons meeting	2	3 11:30am Young at Heart @ Village Inn	4 5:00pm Choir	5	6 1:30pm Manor Care: Tom Jack	7 8:00am Men's Breakfast @ Sunshine 8:30am Congregational Life
8 2nd Sunday of Advent Supplies for the 2nd 9:00am Sunday School for all ages 10:15am Worship: Rev. Marsha Wilfong. preaching 12:30pm Play practice	9	10 3:45pm Mission @ Wendt Center, UD	11	12	13	14 9:30am Session 11:00am Play practice
15 3rd Sunday of Advent 9:00am Sunday School for all ages 10:15am Worship: Presentation of the Christmas play	16	17	18 6:30pm Choir	19	20	21
22 4th Sunday of Advent 9:00am Sunday School for all ages 10:15am Worship: Rev. Marsha Wilfong. preaching 1:30pm Bethany Home: Tom Jack & TBD	23	24 5:30pm Christmas Eve Worship	25 Christmas Day	26	27	28
29 NO SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:15am worship: Rev. Beth McCaw, preaching	30	31	1 January	2	3 1:30pm Manor Care: Tom Jack	4 9:30am-12:30pm Session retreat 11:00am Annual joint meeting with the deacons

# January 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29 NO SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:15am worship: Rev. Beth McCaw, preaching	30	31	1 January	2	3 1:30pm Manor Care: Tom Jack	4 8:00am Men's Breakfast @ Sunshine 9:30am-12:30pm Session retreat 11:00am Annual joint meeting deacons
5 Food for the 1st 9:00am Sunday School for all ages 10:15am Worship: Rev. John Armstrong, preaching Sacrament of Communion 11:30am Church undecorating	6	7 11:30am Young at Heart @ Village Inn	8 6:30pm Choir	9	10	11 8:30am Congregational Life
12 Supplies for the 2nd 9:00am Sunday School for all ages 10:15am Worship: Rev. Marsha Wilfong, preaching	13	14	15	16	17	18
19 9:00am Sunday School for all ages 10:15am Worship: Rev. Timothy Slemmons, preaching	20	21	22 6:30pm Choir	23	24	25
26 9:00am Sunday School for all ages 10:15am Worship: Rev. Marsha Wilfong. Preaching Annual Congregational Meeting 1:30pm Bethany Home: Tom Jack & Jill Klinebriel	27	28	29	30 5:00-7:00pm Café Ministry	31	1 February 8:00am Men's Breakfast @ Sunshine

## Birthdays & Anniversaries—December

Happy birthday!

- 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
- 30 Kate Biekert
- 31 Sherry Heer

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

## Birthdays & Anniversaries—January

Happy birthday!

- 3 Brennan Tesdahl
- 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
- 22 David McClain
- 23 Audrey Okey
- 24 Jonah Brehm  
Elias Brehm

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

## PREACHING SCHEDULE

*Thanks so much to those listed below for proclaiming the Word in the coming months while we are engaged in our  
pastoral search. We praise God for your gifts and generosity!*

### DECEMBER

December 1	Rev. Bradley Longfield
December 8	Rev. Marsha Wilfong
December 15	Christmas Play, Sunday School participants
December 22	Rev. Marsha Wilfong
December 24	Service of Lessons & Carols
December 29	Rev. Beth McCaw

### JANUARY

January 5	Rev. John Armstrong
January 12	Rev. Marsha Wilfong
January 19	Rev. Timothy Slemmons
January 26	Rev. Marsha Wilfong

## OFFICE HOURS

### Secretary:

Mon. 9:00-1:00pm  
Wed. 9:00-1:00pm  
Thu. 9:00-1:00pm



### Holiday Office Hours for the Secretary

Ginger Vander Broek will be out of the office  
December 23rd—27th



## Food for the First December/January



The Dubuque Food Pantry needs your help. All non-perishables are welcome especially macaroni & cheese, tuna and other canned meat, soup, peanut butter & jelly, cereal, rice, pasta, boxed potatoes, #3 baby food, diapers (size 3-5), and baby wipes.

Please place your donations to Food for the First in the basket in the Narthex. Deb and Mark Stant will deliver them. Your generous donations assist those in need in our neighborhood and help to make their lives a little brighter.

**Thank You!**

Mission Committee

## “Supplies for the Second”

While serving at the Domestic Violence Center we learned how we can help by providing supplies that are always needed: toilet paper, paper towels, boxes of tissues, toilet bowl cleaner, cleaning products like Windex, laundry detergent, diapers.

**This month’s needs: cleaning wipes,  
paper towels, glass cleaner, and  
shampoo/conditioner.**



Please bring your “Supplies for the Second” to the church and place them in the basket in the narthex the second Sunday of each month. Terri Gronau delivers them to the collection site.