

First Presbyterian Church

321 N. 5th St., Burlington, IA 52601, 319-752-6626

1stpresb@1stpresb.org

www.1stpresb.org



Connections



January 2025



Pastor's Thoughts

They (whoever they are) say the only thing constant is change. Well, if that's true, then the most timeless song that can be written is one about that very fact. Bob Dylan knew it. Hence his classic, "The Times They Are a-Changin'."

The line it is drawn, the curse it is cast
The slowest now will later be fast
As the present now will later be past
The order is rapidly fadin'
And the first one now will later be last
'Cause the times, they are a-changin'

You're starting a new year and you look forward to doing some things differently. Or maybe a new life has been thrust upon you without your full consent, and you're feeling anxious and uncertain about starting over. New beginnings can be the result of well-laid plans or a life tragedy.

They can be welcome or unwelcome. But in either case, they are opportunities for growth and positive change. They stretch us and invite us to live up to our fullest potential — or design a new potential for ourselves. Taking the first steps toward a new beginning is always daunting. **The fear of the unknown paralyzes even the most adventurous.**

So what are some new beginnings? Not in order of importance, but let's begin with graduations. Whether it's kindergarten graduation or one for post-doctoral work, graduations represent the closing of one chapter and the start of a new one. For students, it is growing up and becoming more independent. For parents, it is letting go and trusting that everything the children have been taught is enough. Another new beginning is with relationships. All new relationships are a tabula rasa (Blank Slate), an opportunity to be your best. But the flip side is when relationships end and the need to redefine who we are and explore what is next. There are new jobs and business ventures, and how about moving. It could be down-sizing, get rid of years of "stuff," or being that

stranger in a new community where new relationships must be formed. And, Lord forbid, we forget the challenges that are thrust upon us by technology.

The thing is, no matter how much we try to hang on to what always has been, the more things will change, with or without our permission. T. S. Eliot said, "Every moment is a fresh beginning." Louie Herron is quoted as saying, "Everything begins at the beginning, and quite often the beginning begins when you shift your mind in a new direction." Being open to new ideas, new ways of thinking; that's the beginning of change. Someone else said, "This is the beginning of a new day. You have been given this day to use as you will. You can waste it or use it for good. What you do today is important because you are exchanging a day of your life for it. When tomorrow comes, this day will be gone forever; in its place is something that you have left behind ... let it be something good."

We all will nonchalantly take down our 2024 calendars and open a fresh 2025 calendar in its place and begin to scribble dates and events so they aren't forgotten. But we need to be aware that as much times change and we will change, the most important things don't. God says to us "I am the same yesterday, today and tomorrow." No matter how much will change and either excite or frustrate us, everything about God is the constant in our lives. That becomes our relief and safe-harbor. We can handle change, new beginnings, so long as God's love, grace, presence and promises remain unchanged. But let's all be aware that God is calling us out to new adventures in faith. God is calling us to rely on his steadfastness, to reach out, go out and speak out. God expects us not to waste this day or any day try to desperately hang on to what must pass away. God expects us to keep looking for ways to "do church differently and better," and all the while hold onto the unchanging and timeless truths of God's Word. The times they are a-changing, but thank heavens, God isn't.



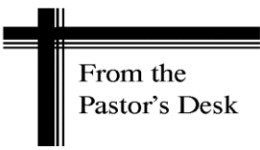
Congregational Meeting

The Session has called the annual congregational meeting for Sunday, January 19, 2025 immediately following the worship service in the sanctuary. The purpose of the meeting is to review all reports from the officers and organizations of the church, act upon any recommendations, and provide opportunity to discuss any and all matters related to the life and ministry of the congregation.



2025 Per Capita

Within the PCUSA there is this thing called Per Capita. It is an “apportionment,” and provides each congregation, in the denomination, the opportunity to support the regional, national and international work and outreach of the church. It’s called an “apportionment” because each congregation, based on their membership, contributes their fair share. Our apportionment here at First Pres. is based on a membership of 104 members. The per capita is \$45.34 per member. The Trustees and Session are asking that every member contribute that amount in addition to their pledge. Our total congregational per capita, which will be sent to the presbytery, is \$4,715.36. Of that total, \$10.84 supports the work of the General Assembly, \$5.50 supports the work of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies, and \$29.00 will remain in the Presbytery of East Iowa to support the work undertaken by our presbytery.



January Sermon

In the spirit of a new year, the sermons for January will reflect on the theme “New Beginnings.” Every day is a new beginning when God is present. God provides opportunities to shake off the old and embrace the new. God is constantly refreshing us with insights and understandings. God provides us a way of seeing we’ve never experienced before. No matter how old we old, God makes us fresh and vital for the new ways God provides to meet the needs of each and every day. The challenge for us is to be open to God’s leading to be new and different. It isn’t about resolutions, but bravely following the Holy Spirit into new adventures of the soul.

January 5th Lord’s Supper
Text: Isaiah 65:17-25
 II Corinthians 5:16-21
Title: “It’s Already Started”

January 12th
Text: Psalm 40:1-8
 Acts 3:1-26
Title: “No Cost Beginnings”

January 19th Annual Congregational Meeting
Text: Ezekiel 36:24-36
 Ephesians 4:17-32
Title: “All New Beginnings Start with God”

January 26th
Text: Isaiah 43:1-21
 Ephesians 3:7-14
Title: “Watch What I Am About To Do”



Sunday School



After taking the Fall off, Youth Sunday School will be resuming classes on Sunday, January 12th! We will meet at 9:00am on Sunday mornings. All classes will be held downstairs in the youth rooms! Join us for some fun and learn all about Jesus!



Adult Sunday School

Beginning Sunday, January 5th, the Adult Sunday School class will undertake a study entitled, "Small but Mighty" and will be a focus on the shortest books of both the Old and New Testaments. These books are not frequently read, and because they are short, it is often assumed they have little to say. Well, they wouldn't be in the bible if they did not have a message we needed to hear. So, at 9:00 on Sunday morning, why not wander down to the chapel and find out the wonder and majesty of the message of Philemon, Jude, Titus, Nahum and Habakkuk.

Here's a suggestion ... Try it ... you may just like it!!!!



**Sunday Morning
Adult Study**

Photos of Fun from the Lighted Holiday Parade!

Enjoy some photos from the Lighted Holiday Parade! We passed out lots of candy canes and hot cocoa to the patrons and had loads of fun! Photo credits to Pat Saldeen and Lily Nalley.





How awesome is this place!

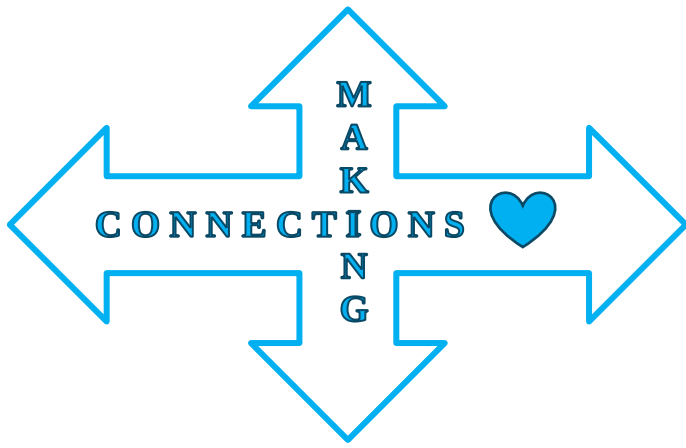
Hymn Festival

giving thanks for the restoration of the bell tower and the new roof on the anniversary of the dedication of the church.

Sunday, January 26 at 3 pm

Reception to follow.

How can I help? Invite your friends and neighbors to attend. There are posters and invitation cards at church; help get them up and around the community. Share the items on Facebook (this is REALLY important!) Offer to come and be hosts for visitors in our home.



**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY**

January Birthdays

- 04 – Jim Hugg
- 08 – LaDonna Putnam
- 21 – Lauren Briggs
- 21 – Vicki Carhoff
- 23 – Jolene Schaffer
- 24 – Doyle Ruble
- 25 – Randy Lee Webster
- 27 – Pauline Johnson
- 29 – Anita Erickson
- 29 – Brenda Frederick

2nd Sunday Luncheon

Sunday, January 12
following morning service!

“Oh, the weather outside is frightful”

Comfort food for the month of
January

Please Join Us!

Luncheon is free and gracious
donations help to defray the cost and
are much appreciated.



Table for One

Our January event will be held Wednesday, 1/8 @ 5:30p.m. @ Marcia Bailey's home @ 1007 Messiah Dr. Burlington, IA

Yum-Yums

News from Yum Yums. Yum Yums did not meet in December. Those attending in November, chose to go to El Toro, on the corner of Division St. & Flint Hills Dr. in Burlington, IA We will meet on January 16, 2025 @ 5:00pm. If you have any questions, call or text Sandy Russell @ 319-572-6124



On Wednesday, December 4, Table for One met for a lovely holiday meal at Doyle Ruble's home! (around the table, left to right) Sue Gilchrist, Pat Saldeen, Leona Byars, Marcia Stiefel, Eva Ann Elmer, Marcia Bailey, Sally Bell, & Pat Whitmore
Photo credit to Doyle Ruble

Meeting Highlights

The Presbytery meeting that was held here on November 23 was discussed. We received many thank yous and wish to extend a thank you to everyone who contributed to make this day a success.

Our participation in the holiday parade turned out very well, and we are already looking forward to next year. Thanks to everyone who contributed candy canes and hot chocolate packets, and participated in any way.

The communion schedule for 2025 has been approved.

The call for the Annual Meeting in January was approved as follows: The Session is calling the annual congregational meeting to be held on Sunday, January 19, 2025 immediately following the worship service. The reports found in the annual report will be reviewed and approved. At this meeting any and all business related to the ministry and mission of the church can be discussed.

Next Session meeting is Thursday, January 2, 2025 at 1:00 P.M.

Cheryl Lotz, Clerk of Session



Messages from the Deacons

Many of you who attended the Presbytery meeting back in November, had asked about the recipe for the Chicken & Wild Rice soup that was served for lunch! Below is that recipe! Bon-a-petite!

Chicken and Wild Rice Soup

6-8 servings

Ingredients:

1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into ½ inch cubes
2 Tbsp. olive oil
1 medium yellow onion, peeled and diced
2 medium carrots, peeled and diced
2 stalks celery, diced
6 cloves garlic, minced
8 ounces fresh mushrooms, diced
¼ cup cornstarch
6 cups chicken broth
1 cup uncooked “Wild Blend” Lundberg Gourmet Rice
1 tsp. crushed rosemary
2 bay leaves
2 cups whole milk
3 large handfuls fresh baby spinach
Salt and Pepper to taste

Instructions:

Heat oil in a large stockpot over medium-high heat. Add diced chicken breast and sauté, stirring occasionally until cooked. Remove cooked chicken from the pot and set aside. Add the onions and sauté for about 4 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add all the remaining vegetables and continue to sauté and stir for another 4 minutes. Add in the cornstarch and sauté for 1 more minute, stirring frequently. Gradually pour in the chicken stock, stirring frequently as you pour so that the clumps of cornstarch can melt into the broth. Add the sautéed chicken breasts, wild rice, rosemary, and bay leaves. Stir to combine. Let the soup continue cooking until it reaches a simmer. Then reduce heat to medium-low to maintain the simmer, cover and cook for 40-45 minutes or until the rice is tender. You will need to stir the soup every 10-15 minutes so that the bottom of the pot does not burn. Once the rice is tender, stir in the milk and baby spinach until combined. Remove and discard bay leaves. Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve warm and enjoy.



A Thank you from Rev. Sarah Hegar from First Presbyterian Church in Mt. Pleasant

Thank you so much for hosting the recent presbytery meeting. I felt welcomed from the moment I entered and lunch was delicious! Thanks for being part of the connectional church!

Peace,
Rev. Sarah Hegar
Mt. Pleasant

Thank you from Community Action

We want to extend our sincerest gratitude for your generous food donation. It has helped our pantry tremendously since our shelves have been hard to stock up. Thank you!

With Gratitude,
Your Community Action
Neighborhood Center Family
Kim, Shelby, Stacy, Pat, and Tom.

A thank you from University of Iowa Health Care

Dear First Presbyterian Church,

Thank you so much for the lovely donation! We are so grateful for your generosity!

Best Regards,
Concierge Services
UI Health Care

A thank you from The Burlington Area Homeless Shelter

The Burlington Area Homeless Shelter and its Board of Directors would like to thank you for your generous support in 2024. You have truly been a light in giving hope to the homeless! May many blessings follow you into 2025.

Sincerely,
The Burlington Area Homeless Shelter

A Thank you from Steadfast Children's Hospital Level 11 Pediatrics Unit

Thank you for your support each and every year! Your gifts bring so many smiles to our patients faces!

Happy Holidays,
Rachel

A Thank you from Steadfast Children's Hospital Level 11 Pediatrics Unit Classroom

Thank you! It was such a blessings to receive such a great gift from your church.

Many thanks to everyone!
Megan, Pediatric Teacher

A Thank you from Adult Unit
3JCP

The gift cards arrived! Thank you so much. Thank you for sending sunshine to our patients. They will be very surprised and appreciative.

Sheri

Missions Is Up To Doing Good

Mission Committee Upcoming Meeting

The Mission Committee plans to have its monthly meeting on the first Wednesday of each month at 12:00 noon. Bring a sack lunch. January 8th next meeting, due to the holiday on the 1st.

Christmas 2024

A Big “Thank you” to all of you who helped provide food for the Christmas Baskets, 14 families received baskets on December 20.

Also, we received names of 22 families needing help with Christmas gifts, so our Angel Tree was bursting with tags this year! We truly appreciate the help of the Congregation in providing their wishes come true.

After church on the 15th, we still had a full tree of tags, so the Mission Team got together and divided the tags up and went shopping, wrapped, sorted, delivered or got them ready for pick-up on December 20th. So, what seemed to be mission impossible, became a mission possible!

So, a big shout-out to the Mission Team for all their hard work, hours, and love spent on this project!

Thank you so much, Leona, Vicki, Kevin, Brenda, Pat W., Pat S., Jill, Sandy W., Cheryl, Dick J., Jordan.

139 gifts was the total given!

If you have any gift bags, wrapping paper, bows, ribbon or tissue paper you would like to get rid of, we would love to have it for next year’s Christmas projects! Thank you!



Terri, Moderator



Cozy Tree



January 5th will be the last Sunday for collecting items! They will be distributed to our local schools. Thank you to all that have donated to this Cozy Mission!



Bone Marrow

Janet Calvin always makes sure that children that are getting treatment in the Cancer Unit in Iowa City, and their families, and, also, Adults receiving treatment, get gifts from us.

20 children (in-patient) were gifted books

20 families were gifted \$30 gift cards

20 Adults (in-patient) were gifted \$30 gift cards

20 children (out-patient/in-patient) classroom were gifted stockings with pencils & lip balm.

These gifts were purchased from the Bone Marrow budget and the Bonnie White Memorial.

An anonymous donor purchased the books.

A Big “Thank You” to them!

This Mission has been going on since 1984, 40 years! So, “Thank You”, Janet for being so dedicated to this Project!



Farmer's Market

Last January. We decided to continue this mission year 'round. We saw the need in our community. The outreach has been truly amazing!

We have served 263 families and 711 individuals this year!

So thanks so much for all the volunteers that help make this mission possible each month!



A BIG Thank you to ALL that give year 'round to our Missions!

Community
Action

Transitions
DMC

Shepherd's
Table

Homeless
Shelter

Cozy
Tree

Farmer's Market/
Food Giveaway

Angel
Tree

Holiday
Baskets

Christmas Gifts
SFCH Pediatric
Children's Cancer
Unit

Treasure
Chest

Adult Bone Marrow
Transplant Unit
Iowa City

Domestic
Violence
Shelter

School Supplies for local
and Iowa City Children's
Hospital

What a difference we make for so many people in need!

The Mission Committee

Transitions DMC Donations

As stated in December's newsletter, Transition's DMC has been facing a financial challenge and any donation would be very much appreciated. Below is a list of items they are in need of:

Paper towels
Laundry soap
Bleach
Pine-Sol
Any brand will do!

Thank you for your generosity. Bring to church and place in fellowship hall.

Second Sunday Luncheon

January 12 following the morning service

“Oh, the weather outside is frightful!”

Comfort food for the month of January

The luncheon is free, and your gracious donations help to defray the costs.

Please attend and invite someone to come with you.

Announcements!



Office will be closed on Wednesday, January 1st in observance of New Year's Day!

Sunday School is back! We will start back up with Sunday School at 9am on Sunday mornings, starting on January 12, in the lower level! Come have some fun, learning about Jesus!

The Annual Congregational Meeting will be on Sunday, January 19, 2025 following worship service! Annual Reports will be out the previous Sunday, January 12.

Second Sunday Lunch will be on Sunday, January 12, following morning service. "Oh the Weather Outside is Frightful" Comfort foods is on the menu for this month.

Reminder to make sure you have turned in your pledge cards for 2025! Pledge cards were sent out in the mail in the end of November. If you did not receive your pledge card in the mail, please contact the office.

The Hymn Festival "How Awesome Is This Place" will be held on Sunday, January 26 @ 3pm with reception to follow!

Farmer's Market at the Church will be on Thursday, January 16 from 4:30pm-6pm. If you or anyone you know are in need of food, please come see us!

Shepherd's Table will be on Wednesday, January 29 from 4:30pm-6pm at First Congregational Church. This is a free meal and open to anyone!

We are very saddened of the news of Penny Rucker's passing. Her funeral and visitation will be held here at First Presbyterian on Saturday, January 18. Time has not yet been decided at this time.

Live Streaming our Worship Services

Can't make it to Sunday service? No problem! Every Sunday service is live streamed on Facebook! Please join us! Just go to Facebook on your phone, tablet, or computer and navigate to our Facebook page!

If you have not yet watched a Facebook service, or don't know how, locate Facebook on your phone, tablet or computer, search for First Presbyterian Church of Burlington, Iowa, and then sit back and enjoy. The weekly bulletin is being provided via e-mail so you can follow along and take part as you wish. Comments are appreciated.





January 2025



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>Office Hours <u>M-W-F 1:30 pm-4:30pm</u></p> <p>T-Th 9:00am-1:00pm</p>			<p>1</p> 	<p>2</p> <p>Session Meets @ 1pm</p>	3	<p>4</p> 
<p>5 2nd Sunday of Christmas 9:00 a.m. Adult Ed. 10:00 a.m. Worship <i>Annual Reports are due!</i></p>	6	7	<p>8</p> <p>8:30 a.m. Bible Study <u>Mission Mtg @ noon</u> <u>KnitWits meets @ 10am</u> <u>Table 4 One meets @ 5:30pm @ Marcia Bailey's home</u></p>	<p>9</p> 	10	11
<p>12 Baptism of Our Lord 9:00 a.m. Sunday School & Adult Ed. 10:00a.m. Worship 2nd Sunday Luncheon <i>Annual Reports to be distributed</i></p>	<p>13</p> 	14	<p>15 8:30 a.m. Bible Study</p>	<p>16</p> <p><u>Farmer's Market @ the Church</u> 4:30pm-6pm</p> <p>Yum Yums @ 5pm @ El Toros in Burlington</p>	17	<p>18</p> <p>Penny Rucker Funeral & Visitation Time to be determined.</p>
<p>19 2nd Sunday after Epiphany 9:00 a.m. Sunday School & Adult Ed. 10:00 a.m. Worship <i>Annual Congregational Meeting following worship service</i></p>	<p>20</p> <p>Deadline For Connections</p>	21	<p>22</p> <p>8:30 a.m. Bible Study</p>	<p>23</p> 	24	25
<p>26 3rd Sunday after Epiphany 9:00 a.m. Sunday School & Adult Ed. 10:00 a.m. Worship 3pm Hymn Festival <i>"How Awesome Is This Place"</i></p>	<p>27</p> <p>Trustees Meet @ 10 a.m.</p>	<p>28</p> 	<p>29</p> <p>8:30 a.m. Bible Study</p> <p><u>Shepherd's Table</u> 4:30pm-6pm</p>	30	31	