

# The Messenger

February 2021

Dear friends,



February marks the beginning of the Lenten season. Like most everything in our world over the last year, it will be different. No soup and sandwich suppers

because of the rules against eating together in church. The worship will be virtual, and it may look different at the different churches. You will have the opportunity to join on zoom and on Facebook live. Each church will set their own limits for in-person worship. We will be getting the exact information out to you soon.

In a way, we have been experiencing a kind of prolonged Lenten journey; we faced the start of COVID expecting a short battle and ended up facing a long hard, divisive struggle. The disciples went with Jesus on the journey to Jerusalem confident of victory and anxious to take their places in Jesus' kingdom on earth. It didn't go the way they'd planned or hoped for. Likewise, the COVID pandemic has not gone the way any of us planned or hoped for. The disciples ended up finding a different sort of victory than they expected. I would hope we could look around and find some unexpected victories in our year of COVID; the church has certainly stepped up its online presence, you all have been faithful in gifts and attending in the ways you could, we will all appreciate the coffee hour and potlucks more after losing them for a year, we've been able to find ways to stay in touch; emails, texts, cards, letters, zoom, phone calls, and there has been more quiet time with the opportunity to draw closer to God in prayer and meditation and reading.

The end timing of COVID is unknown. But we live in hope and expectation that God will continue to work all things together for good for those who are in relationship with Jesus Christ our Lord. None of us knows what is ahead, but we set our faces firmly toward "Jerusalem" as did Jesus and his disciples. We will seek to be true to our calling even when all seems out of control. On Good Friday when everything seemed lost, God knew that Sunday was coming, and victory was in sight. When things seem lost, look to God and live in hope!

Pastor Gordy

Pastor Gordy's office hours are Tuesday and Thursday from 3-5 PM. He can be reached at (c) 320-221-0489 (h) 693-3437 or at church at 320-693-3548



Souper Bowl Sunday: The confirmation class, well, Kennedy, is again holding a food collection for the Souper Bowl of Caring project. Last year he sponsored a drive to fill the pew with food for the food shelf. He is again collecting for the Meeker Area Food Shelf, but will do a parking lot collection. Sunday morning, Feb 7th before and after church he will be in the church parking lot to collect food or cash for the food shelf. We will also collect for an hour on Saturday the 6<sup>th</sup> from 8:30-9:30 am for those who can't make it on Sunday. Thank you for your generosity!

## FEBRUARY

- 1 PWCT 9:00  
2 Bible Study 10:00  
3 Sunday School 10:00  
4 Confirmation 3:00  
6 Souper Bowl food shelf collection 8:30-9:30 in parking lot, Presbytery meeting 10:00-noon  
7 Food shelf collection before and after church  
9 Food delivery 8:00; Deacons meeting 3:00; Session 5:00  
10 Sunday School 10:00  
15 Presbytery Leadership Zoom mtg Pastor Gordy 10:30  
16 LAMA 8:30, Bible Study 10:00, MAM 11:00  
17 Sunday School 10:00; Ash Wednesday service, TBD  
22-27 Pastor Gordy and Julie in Arizona  
23 Bible study 10:00  
24 NO Sunday School, Ash Wednesday service TBD  
**March** 1 PWCT 9:00  
2 Bible study 10:00



forgiveness.” <sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”



### Lenten Meditations:

If you are on Facebook and have liked the First

Presbyterian Church site, you are invited to midweek Lenten devotions led by Pastor Gordy. He plans to post on Wednesday mornings a short reading or share thoughts about our Lenten journeys. It will be similar to what we did during Advent. Keep checking our Facebook site!



To help you with any questions you may have, here are the committees of First Presbyterian Church and the people you can talk to about whatever you need to!



- 4-Gwendolyn Ann Pennertz  
(1 year!)  
12-Dean Sabacky  
22-Pastor Gordy (65!)  
26-Sharon Detert



### **Bible Verse of the month:**

Our Bible verse for February comes from Scott Rech. Scott said that he loves this verse

because “it makes him realize how much God loves us. He gave us his Son for our

**Building and Grounds:** Don Mackay chr., Don Ackman, Scott Rech, Mark Kolle and Steve Graphenteen

**Worship/Christian Education:** Amy Levinski, Julie Rae Pennertz (co-chair), Rosie Graphenteen, Jayne Ackman, Mary Crosbie

**Stewardship/Personnel:** Bob Powers chr., Roger Crosbie, Leetha Waldron, Darlene Kotelnicki, and Ryan Ackman

**Christian Community:** Robbie Nordling chr., Rosie Graphenteen, Stephanie Rech, Judy Holmes

**Nominating:** Sue Berg chr., Mary Crosbie, Jayne Ackman

**Technology:** Julie Pennertz chr, David Pennertz, Kennedy Rech

## Presbyterian Women Coordinating

**Team:** Rosie Graphenteen,  
(moderator/secretary) Julie Rae  
Pennertz (Treasurer/Missions) Jayne  
Ackman, Darlene Kotelnicki, women of  
the church



**Per Capita** Per capita is the fee each member of the Presbyterian Church(USA) is asked to pay to fund the regional and national branches of

our church. **This year's share for each member is \$43.00.** (Our Presbytery financial commission shared this update: "Since 2017 we have kept the Presbytery portion of per capita at \$27.00, even though our ... membership has decreased 15.3%, from 6,871 to 5,818. This year we propose raising the Presbytery (share of) per capita to \$28.52 bringing total per capita to \$43 per member (from \$41.45 in 2020). This will keep 2021 per capita income the same as 2020.") ***Please consider giving your share as our church will be paying \$1978.00 with or without your contribution.***



### Worship

**Services:** We continue to meet via Zoom for most members and

guests. But the opportunity to worship in person is now ours. I am also live streaming on my Facebook page and sharing it on the church Facebook page on Sunday afternoon. We will be doing these forms of worship so all can worship together or on your own later. Again, if for some reason you do not have the Zoom link, let Pastor Gordy know and he will get it to you.



### Bible Study:

**Bible Study:** Our Tuesday morning bible study continues Tuesday mornings at 10:00. Our new

Bible Study will be on the book of Acts. Please join us, just let Pastor Gordy know if you need help connecting with us. Reminder, we will be taking the second Tuesday of the month off. Pastor Gordy has particularly busy days the second Tuesday and with the food delivery early that morning and the possibility of bad weather it just would make life easier.

### February Liturgy:

**7<sup>th</sup>:** Isaiah 40:21-31...1 Corinthians 9:16-23...Mark 1:29-39

**14<sup>th</sup>:** 2 Kings 2:1-12...2 Corinthians 4:3-6...Mark 9:2-9

**ASH WEDNESDAY:** Feb. 17<sup>th</sup>: Isaiah 58:1-12, 2 Corinthians 5:20-6:10...Matthew 6:1-6,16-21

**21<sup>st</sup>:** First Sunday in Lent: Genesis 9:8-17...1 Peter 3:18-22...Mark 1:9-15

**28<sup>th</sup>:** Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16...Romans 4:13-25...Mark 8:31-38



## Presbyterian Women

The PW Coordinating Team met on January 4, 2021. Present were Darlene, Jayne, Rosie and Julie Rae. Rosie opened with prayer.

The secretary's and treasurer's reports were approved. Our newest balance is \$1971.14.

The Chili Supper was discussed and felt that everything went well. Thank you will be sent to Swans for their donation of sour cream packets and wrapped crackers.

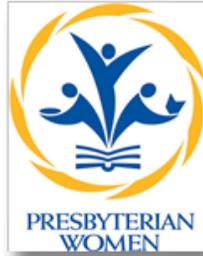
The Gifts of Women Sunday will be held on March 7<sup>th</sup>. (more information to follow)

CLEANING of the church will be held during the week of March 14<sup>th</sup>. (Due to COVID restrictions, there will NOT be a lunch). Please let Pastor Gordy, Rosie, or Julie Rae know when you would like to go in and clean so they can make sure the church is open. We will have several people cleaning on the 15<sup>th</sup>, so you can drop by and practice social distancing.

The Lilac Luncheon will be held on May 19<sup>th</sup>. Plans will be formulated and more information will be coming.

It was voted on to continue our mission pledge with the PW of \$450 per year.

We will once again plan on sending Valentine's to our shut ins. (If you need Valentines and the list of people, it will be at church by February 7<sup>th</sup> or you may contact Julie Rae for an email listing)



Our next meeting will be Monday, February 1<sup>st</sup> at 9 am.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rosie Graphenteen  
Moderator/Secretary



## SESSION MEETING

January 12, 2021 at  
5:00PM

The Session met on January 12, 2021. Pastor Gordon Pennertz opened the meeting with prayer and education. The education focused on the responsibilities of the Ruling Elders in 2020. It was a year of flying by the seats of our pants because committees were not meeting and Pastor Gordy took over the emergency response to any issues that came up. He is hoping that 2021 allows the committees to be more hands- on in terms of the committees. We all prayed together. The Agenda was presented. The minutes of the December 8, 2020 session meeting were reviewed and approved. The Treasurer's report was presented and approved as printed. Balance on hand, \$ 49,487.59 in designated funds, and \$ 36,713.22 in undesignated funds.

### PASTOR'S REPORT

Home Communion and visitation in the month of January were not provided due to the restrictions of the Pandemic. There were no hospital visits made, but there were zoom visits made nursing home to 3 residents along with several in Bible study for 6 and 11 office visits. He also sent out cards and letters to 15

members. Pastor Gordy is planning to take vacation from February 22-27.

### CLERK'S REPORT

The number of people served communion for the month of January was 40.: A card and letter was received from the Barr family

### OLD BUSINESS:

1. Congregational Vitality Assessment discussed and decided to wait on looking into this program

### NEW BUSINESS:

1. Meeting dates and time. We are planning to leave this as it is for right now
2. Souper Bowl of Caring, this is a confirmation project and Kennedy is planning to do a collection for the Food Shelf
3. The Preaching schedule was discussed and it was decided that Gordy would continue to have a Sunday off every other month and this will stay in effect. He gets 6 Sundays off and 4 weeks of vacation. He is going to look at a schedule for the 6 Sundays off and work that out with Amy L. and Judy H. and split it between them. The was M/S/C.
4. (Committees shared earlier in newsletter)
5. Approve Communion: Maundy-Thursdays, Easter, Christmas Eve, and 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of every month. This was M/S/C.
6. Assign a Presbytery Commissioner: Susan Berg and Robbie Nordling as alternate
7. Approve the statistical report. Presented to the session and it was M/S/C.

**PRAYER:** Pastor Gordy prayed for the elders and the church family, the government and for healing. We long for togetherness.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Worship/ Christian Education: Chair-- Amy Levinski—Blue Christmas went well via Zoom. They are meeting in February to do documents and to do a meeting

Buildings and Grounds: Chair: Donald MacKay— heat is stable/ Pastor Gordy is doing the snow. Following discussion it was M/S/C to pay him \$20/time for doing the sidewalks.

Stewardship/Finance/Personnel: Chair: Bob Powers—pledges are coming in slowly he will contact members that have not submitted a form.

The next meeting will be held on February 9th at 5:00 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 6:07 with the Blessing Prayer.

Susan Berg, Clerk of Session

