

December 2021
Volume 69, Issue 12

December Newsletter

INSIDE THIS ISSUE		<u>FROM PASTOR LEANNE</u>
		Planning and Enjoying
PASTOR'S MSG	1	<p>I am blessed with an easy gift that a few other pastor-friends have envied. During worship on Sunday mornings, I am able to actually <i>worship</i>. Yes, I know I must keep things moving along as listed in the bulletin, and I know that I must stay watchful that the worship service is organized, understandable and smooth running – but on Sunday during worship, I have never found it a struggle to also really pray, instead of reading and leading prayer, compose my heart to affection for God during the songs. I know many pastors that have to work at that. I am glad it comes naturally to me.</p>
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STEWARDSHIP	3	<p>Yet, being grateful for that puts me in mind of what it is like for us all to plan Advent and Christmas events. We want them to go smoothly, for the enjoyment of our loved ones. We want to think of every detail ahead of time, so that there will be no glitches that leave anyone disappointed. It takes a LOT of effort to think events through ahead of time, and evaluate one's plans in terms of the differing needs of differing people. And because there are so many details, sometimes, it can sap us of our enjoyment – of the process, of the planning, and of the very celebration itself.</p>
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CHILD CARE CTR	5	<p>But there comes a time to let go of the planning and just <i>enjoy</i>. Ok, so what if it turns out there was a forgotten detail, or something doesn't go as planned. It happens. The real point of the season is to celebrate what God has done for us in Christ, and it is very hard to do so if all one focuses on is the fact that the meringue shrank a little bit. The value of celebrating the season of "peace on earth" and good will to all humankind" with the people we love in limitless. Imperfect pies or imperfect family satisfaction are worth so little in the long run. Enjoy the fruit of your labors. Enjoy your family and friends. Enjoy worship, the music, the scripture, the reminders of God's love. Once you have planned, - let go of control, and just enjoy. Worship. Love. Laugh. Meet Christ in your laughter and find peace in God's gifts to you! That's what I am planning to do! Leanne</p>
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SESSION HIGHLIGHTS NOVEMBER 23, 2021

CLERK'S REPORT

The deaths of Alan Van Voorhis, October 4, 2021, Patti Koranda, October 27 and Elaine Mahlum, November 2 were reported. Membership is 351.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Total Income YTD Actual	\$435,044	Budget	\$426,299
Total Expense YTD Actual	\$368,805	Budget	\$471,354
NET Income	\$66,239	Budget	-\$45,055
General Fund Unrestricted	\$316,659		

MODERATOR'S REPORT

Pastor Leanne gave the list of events for November and December. Elder training and examination of new Elders and Deacons will occur on December 4, beginning at 10:00.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Administrative and Personnel—The committee is assigning new Elders to committees. Tony Bartole will be working less than 35 hours per week and will receive an hourly wage increase. Holiday dates for 2022 were determined.

Hospitality—Red and green potluck will be after the Children's Christmas program December 12. Several donations were made to agencies providing food assistance. Starbucks gift cards will be sent to college students.

Proclamation-Christian Education, Worship and Music—Plans are in place for decorating the church, for special music and the Children's program.

Property and Equipment—The water fountains will be replaced and have a bottle refill function.

Resource Management—To date (11/15), 115 pledges for \$301,898 have been received. Expectations are that about \$16,200 more could be pledged. Session approved the 2022 budget which has total income of \$453,000 and total expense of \$527,363. The budget deficit -\$74,363 would be reduced by a transfer to cover half the salary of the Parish Nurse and covered by Unrestricted General Fund.

Recently a \$20,000 gift was given to the Parish Nurse Fund.

Session approved the Christmas Eve offering be used for our Youth programs. The PCUSA Christmas Joy offering will be collected in December.

Board of Deacons—Instead of cookie trays, Christmas flowers will be distributed to homebound members and those in care facilities.

Child Care Center Board—Various grants for stabilization and health/safety have been received.

Nominating—Session had approved by email vote on November 17, the nomination of Kim Wassim to complete the term of Hannah Luciano. The congregational meeting to approve Kim's nomination is November 28, following worship service.

NEW BUSINESS

Jim Skaret, Commissioner to Presbytery reported on the meeting held November 6. There will be a positive budget for 2022 because the position of Executive Leader will not be filled.

Alice Nix, Clerk of Session

Red and Green Potluck



Following the Youth Christmas Program on December 12th.

It's the Annual "Red & Green" Potluck to be held in Ramstad Hall after the Worship Service on Sunday, December 12th. Our service this day will feature the presentation of the Youth Christmas Pageant. Please join us in the opportunity for food and fellowship with our church family. Guests, including family and friends, are especially encouraged to attend. When you come please bring food to share if you are able. To enhance the Christmas Spirit, if you like, bring a red or green main dish, salad, vegetables or a dessert. A sign-up sheet is posted on the Volunteer Board in the Narthex. Help cleaning up after the meal will be appreciated.

DECEMBER 2021 STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE UPDATE

The 2022 Annual Stewardship Drive has continued to generate pledged income for the 2022 Budget that has now reached the \$ 300,000 level with 115 pledges submitted thus far. If you have not yet submitted your Estimate Of Giving Card, and you intend to submit one, please try to complete the card and submit to the church office by December 19. In 2021 a total of 133 pledges for a total of approximately \$ 330,000 was received. If those with a history of pledging in 2021 were to pledge the same amount for the 2022 Stewardship Drive, we will be near the total amount pledged last year.

To those who have submitted a pledge to date, we express our sincere gratitude. This congregation continues to display its generosity and love for our church in many ways. Thank you.

Resources Management Committee

Stewardship
a way of life



Christmas Joy Offering

Each year during the Advent and Christmas Season, we turn our eyes to Bethlehem and celebrate the wondrous gift of Jesus Christ, our Savior. The Christmas Joy Offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930's. This special offering distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. The Assistance Program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families. By giving to the Christmas Joy Offering, you honor God's gift of Jesus Christ by providing assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and developing our future leaders of Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

You can give to the Christmas Joy Special Offering anytime during the Advent season. Write Christmas Joy Offering on the memo-line of your check and deposit in the offering basket on any Sunday during Advent or send/drop off at the church office.

TREE OF LOVE

The Hospitality Committee has again, set up the Tree of Love with much gratitude for your past loving actions. The Tree of Love will be in the Narthex through **December 12**. Each paper ornament on the tree contains a gift request. Please take one or more ornaments from the tree, purchase the item, and return the ornament and gift item to the church. Please wrap your gift (or use a gift bag) and tape the ornament to the gift. If your ornament requests a gift certificate, please place the gift card with the ornament taped to it in the box at the base of the tree. Your generous gift donations are for families with limited financial resources who attend the FPC Child Care Center. The Hospitality Committee thanks you in advance for your generosity. Below is a list of items still needed:

FPCCC Family #1 (single mom with 5 month old son; mom works full time)

A gas gift card

Size 3 diapers

Dreft laundry detergent for newborn/stage 1

Baby boy shoes for a 12 month old

Baby boy outfits or a 12 month old

Socks for a baby boy, 6 months +

8 ounce baby bottles

Size 2 bottle nipples



FPCCC Family # 2 (single mom with two children; mom works full time)

T-Fal hard anodized cookware set of nonsstick pots and pans, 18 pieces, thermo-spot heat indicator, (grey/black) from Wal-Mart

Tide laundry soap, original

Apple gift card (\$ 20, \$30 or \$50) to be used to purchase an I-Pad for child #1

Amazon gift card (\$25, \$25, \$50) to be used to purchase Leap pad for child #2

FPCCC Family #3 (two parent household with both parents working; have an 8 year old daughter and a 3 year old daughter)

Laundry pods, All original

Fabric softener, Snuggle blue sparkle

Gas gift cards

Girl leggings, size XL, 14/16

Fur Real Walk-a-lot unicorn, \$32.49 at Target



CHILD CARE CENTER

The Child Care Center has been very busy these eleven months and now are planning for the December Celebration with the Birth of Jesus. We will continue to complete items that need to be finished during this year and start the process for the coming new year 2022. Our first responsibility of course is to provide the safety and protection for our children and with the Director, Assistant Director and the Child Care Board

Members approval we were able to continue to follow the guidelines the North Dakota Human Services and CDC mandated. Our Child Care Center completed the year with the annual survey and did not receive any citations. All the necessary trainings are completed as required by Licensing of North Dakota. Congratulations to the Directors and all the staff for a job well done.

Secondly the Child Care Center was repainted and additional bulletin boards were hung to place notices and other items up so all staff are aware of changes and needs. This change was completed by volunteers and staff. With this change we also updated some equipment that needed to be replaced and looking forward to update other items as needed with funds that are budgeted or from grant money received. Next we as a team have worked with the Committee to raise funds for the HVAC project by writing grants and donations from dedicated individuals to the Child Care Center and First Presbyterian Church. With this in mind our Directors have just completed the applications for two grants. One is for \$10,000.00 which is from Department Human Services/Health and Safety Grant for equipment and the other grant is the Child Care Stabilization Grant to help with cost of utilities, PPE, equipment and supplies, Mental Health, past expenses, and the Child Care Board voted to add the HVAC project on the list. We also have other outstanding grants that have been completed and waiting for responses. We have received some funds and have been denied some at this time.

Last but not least the Child Care Center has revised policies and procedures to meet the guidelines and regulations required by the State of North Dakota Licensing and following guidelines of the First Presbyterian Church. Our center continues to follow guidelines and we continue to search for employees so we can increase our attendance of children to reach our license capacity. Donations to the Child Care Center for the month of December is Tree of Love Gifts for the families of the Child Care Center and if you feel you would like to donate towards the meals for employees during their monthly meetings it is very much appreciated for your kindness and dedication to the Child Care Center. From all of the Child Care Center Board Members and Child Care Staff we wish everyone a very MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A BLESSED NEW YEAR!

Child Care Center Board Members



From Wanona, Parish Nurse

December Blessings from your Parish Nurse. I cannot believe 2021 is coming to an end. This year First Presbyterian Church welcomed special births of little angels from above and God has given some of our faith family their heavenly wings. Merry Christmas to all of you! The Strengthening Class will continue every Monday at 10 am and Thursday at 11 am. We will cancel class from Dec 20th to January 6th during the holiday season. I am working on getting life alert pendants through the Cares Act so if interested please contact me. There will be a Sunday BP clinic on December 12th.

Here is a Christmas prayer for you.

Lord, we ask You to grant us peace. Peace in our homes, peace in our churches and peace in our hearts, especially when it feels like the world all around us spins out of control. Help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and worship of the wise men. Help us stay focused on You, this Christmas time and always. Thank You for loving the whole world enough to send the greatest gift, Your Son, so we might truly have a very merry Christmas, even in a not-so-merry kind of world.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us joyful to be your children, and Christmas evening bringing us to the end of the day with grateful thoughts, forgiving and being forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

I have tagged yet another member of your faith family. I would like to introduce JoAnn Hodny.

They lived near Dead Heart River and enjoyed the benefits of living the rural life. JoAnn enjoyed the outdoors, skating and hiking while exploring the river banks of the Heart River. She attended the Mandan schools and graduated from Mandan High School. She continued her education at Bismarck Junior College, University of North Dakota and University of Minnesota in Mankato receiving a Bachelor of Science in Physical Education and a Master's in Health Education.



JoAnn had various jobs while attending college which include working at a Super Valu at the meat counter, the work study program at college, helping at the American Heart Association, working at a dry-cleaners and a secretary at a church.

JoAnn's first job out of college was a teacher at Wachter Middle School for 37 years.



"The Grandkids!"



JoAnn and Bill Hodny

When asked what her favorite past-time was she responded, “just being outside”. She enjoys gardening, hiking the hills and pastures in Morton County. The wonder’s of nature provides joyful experiences for her such as watching her garden grow, hearing the first meadowlark in the spring or seeing and hearing the crane way up in the sky or witnessing new born calves, foals and fawns frolicking in the pastures. During the winter months she goes snow-shoeing and ice skating. She is a true outdoors person. During cold weather JoAnn likes to read.



Her most memorable event was the birth of her two children AriAnna and Tim, and of course those six wonderful grandchildren. She cherishes her memories of a trip to Europe after college. She and her late husband took several motorcycle and canoe trips. Now, she and her husband enjoy trips to historical places and national parks. When asked who her hero was JoAnn said her mother. “She had a good life, but there was also adversity, which her mother faced with courage, faith and a positive attitude.”

JoAnn joined the First Presbyterian Church in Bismarck in 1979. She helped teach Sunday School and had her daughter and son involved in the Sunday School program. JoAnn also was involved in Presbyterian Woman as a moderator of the local congregation and the PW of the Presbytery. She also has been a deacon several times. She attends two Bible Studies. Three goals she wanted to accomplish in life are owning a motorcycle (which she has), going up in a hot air balloon (which was amazing) and yet to achieve waltzing in a ballroom in Austria. Still working on that.

Thank you JoAnn for sharing your life ‘s journey



JoAnn’s daughter
AriAnna

JoAnn’s son, Tim
and grandson, Rhett.



Wanona’s recommended best medicine

Here Comes The Humor: Paddy and Murphy were watching a movie: Paddy said to Murphy. “I bet you €5 (5.7 dollars) that John Wayne falls off this horse and the horse goes over the cliff.” Murphy said. “Ok, Paddy.” So there they are, watching the film and John Wayne falls off the horse and the horse goes over the cliff. Paddy turns around to Murphy. “I told you what would happen.” Murphy said. “You’re right Paddy, there you go €5. Paddy thinks and at the end of the film, says. “I feel pretty bad here Murphy.” “Why is that Paddy?” “Because I’ve seen this film before.” Murphy says. “So have I, but I didn’t expect him to make the same mistake twice.”

At a local catholic school, the children were lined up for lunch. At the head of the table was a large pile of delicious looking apples. A nun had placed a note on the tray of apples saying, “TAKE ONLY ONE, GOD IS WATCHING”. Moving further along the lunch line at the end of the table was a large pile of homemade chocolate chip cookies. A child had written a note beside the luscious pile of cookies saying, “Take all you want, God is watching the apples!”

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Linda Tonolli	1st
Stan Halling	4th
Hailee Bitz	4th
Sigrid Bucklin	8th
Laken Gratz	8th
Bert Asselin, Jr.	8th
David Shockman	9th
Audre Goll	9th
Linda Stensrud	11th
Danette Pengilly	11th
Arne Arneson	12th
JoAnn Hodny	12th
Richard Belisle	15th
Janice Mayer	16th
Chris Hellman	17th
Laura Adair	18th
David Bachmeier	18th
Arley Gallup	19th
Bob Kinnischtzke	20th
Kade Massey	20th
Jae Reile	21st
Ella Gutzke	22nd
Bob Tonolli	22nd
Patricia Keller	27th
Doug Sturlaugson	28th
Shiny Mahlum	30th
Kaye Halvorson	31st
Caroline Barks	31st

ANNIVERSARIES

John & Kim Dixon	5th
Paul & Kristi Ronningen	18th
Jim & Nanc Skaret	21st
William & JoAnn Hodny	30th

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

Our prayers and sympathies go to family and friends on the death of:

Jan Gilchrist's mother, Carol Dykema,

and Clinton Dykema, nephew

Elaine Mahlum

Debi Roger's mother

Dee (DeLores) Blanc

Please let us know if we've made a mistake or omission or if you would prefer not to have your special day published.

~ Thank you ~



First Presbyterian Church

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Sunday Worship: 10:00 am

Office Hours: 8:00 am - 4:30 pm



Pastor

Rev. Dr. Leanne Simmons

Finance Assistant

Carol Thompson

Administrative Assistant

Crystal Robinson

Parish Nurse

Wanona Goetz

Youth Ministry Assistant

Marete Snortland Farver

Organists

Arvy Smith & Gail Snustad

Choir Director

Debi Rogers

Handbell Ensemble Director

Lael Hoerauf

Maintenance Manager

Tony Bartole

Membership Services

Judy Lentz

Child Care Center Director

Shawn Stettner

Child Care Center Asst Director

Vanessa Hein

Nursery

Mary Jones

Christian Ed Interns

Sophie Svihovec & Mark Jensen



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 5:45 pm Pac/Teens 6:00 pm W. Chimes 7:30 pm Chancel Choir	2	3	4 10:00 am Elder Training 1:30 pm Cookie baking with youth
5 ADVENT II	6 Proclamation (C&E) meeting 7:00 pm Suzuki 5:30 pm	7 12:00 pm Blue Christmas P & E meeting 5:45 pm	8 Blanc Funeral 2:00 Pac/Teens 5:45 pm W. Chimes 6:00 pm Chancel Choir 7:30 pm	9 Hospitality 7:00 pm	10	11 Youth Christian Pageant Civic Chorus concert 7:30 pm Bells playing at Cathedral
12 Advent III Children's Christmas Program	13	14 CCC Meeting 5:30 pm	15 5:45 pm Pac/Teens 6:00 pm W. Chimes 7:30 pm Chancel Choir	16 Deacons Board 7:00 pm	17	18
19 Advent IV Choir & Bells	20 Resource Management Noon Admin & Personnel 5:00 pm	21	22	23	24 Christmas eve services 4:30 pm 11:00 pm, 	25 No School
26 First Sunday of Christmas "Carol Sing"	27	28 Session 6:00 pm	29	30	31 No School	

