

## DECEMBER 2020

*The angel said to the shepherds,  
"Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of  
great joy for all the people:  
to you is born this day in the city of David  
a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. Luke 2:10-11*



**This is the irrational season  
When love blooms bright and wild  
Had Mary been filled with reason  
There'd have been no room for the child.  
--Madeleine L'Engle**

Dear Family of Faith,

This short prayer by Madeleine L'Engle has been a favorite Advent poem of mine for years. I like its call to see the love that blooms "bright and wild" in these days leading up to Christmas morning. As we feel hemmed in, constrained, confused and at times broken-hearted by all the changes that have been part of our lives in 2020, Advent is drawing closer. Advent calls us to live this last month of 2020 with expectation and with hope because of our God of Love. Advent calls us to be people of hope, even when that goes against all reason! God's Love is deeper and reaches farther than all that 2020 holds. God has been with us breath by breath this year, and now invites us to live with expectation and hope in the season of Advent.

The season of Advent is the four weeks before Christmas when, for centuries, Christians have prepared their hearts for the great, surprising, stunning, love-infused Good News that our God has chosen to come and make God's home with us.

So with all that 2020 has held, may we make room in our lives as Mary did, for love, hope, joy and salvation to be born anew in our lives. Our schedules may be greatly changed, but let us put God's Good News story into the center of all we do in the month of December. Let us prepare our hearts for the mystery, the miracle, and the astonishing truth that our God lives among us. As the Gospel of John says, "The Word became flesh and lived among us." Our ever-present God is here...let us prepare again to celebrate the Good News that has the power to hold and guide us through these days.

With thankfulness for the GIFT of each of you in my life, and the GIFT of getting to be the Family of Faith at First Presbyterian, Pastor Becky

#### **WHERE'S PASTOR BECKY DEC. 27TH to JAN. 3RD**

I will be on a stay-cation following the Sunday Gathering on Dec. 27th. I will be back in the office on Monday Jan. 4th. If you need pastoral care during that time please call Karol Ellison, Laura Brown or Aneita Buss and they will get you in touch with the Pastor on call! We will welcome the Rev. Joyce Chamberlin, the former pastor of Milan First Presbyterian into our pulpit on Jan. 3rd.

## **"O Lord, You Were Born!"**

--by Ann Weems

Each year about this time I try to be  
sophisticated  
and pretend I understand the bored  
expressions  
relating to the "Christmas spirit."  
I nod when they say "Put the Christ  
back in Christmas."  
I say yes, yes when they shout  
"Commercial" and  
"Hectic, hectic, hectic."  
After all, I'm getting older,  
and I've heard it said, "Christmas is  
for children."  
But somehow a fa-la-la  
keeps creeping out...  
So I'll say it:  
I love Christmas tinsel  
and angel voices that come from  
the beds upstairs.  
And I say three cheers for Santa Claus  
and the Salvation Army bucket  
and all the wrappings and festivities  
and special warm feelings.  
I say it is good,  
giving,  
praising,  
celebrating.  
So hooray for Christmas trees  
and candlelight  
and the good old church pageant.  
Hooray for shepherd boys who forget  
their lines  
and Wise Men whose beards fall off

and a Mary who giggles.  
O Lord, you were born!  
O Lord, you were born!  
And that breaks in upon my ordered life  
like bugles blaring,  
and I sing, "Hark, the Herald Angels"  
In the most unlikely places.  
You were born  
and I will celebrate!  
  
I rejoice for the carnival of Christmas!  
I clap for the pajama-clad cherubs  
and the Christmas cards jammed in  
the mail slot.  
I o-o-oh for the turkey  
and a-a-ah for the Christmas  
Pudding  
and thank God for the alleluias I see in  
the faces of people  
I don't know  
and yet know very well.  
  
O Lord, there aren't enough choirboys  
to sing what I feel.  
There aren't enough trumpets to blow.  
O Lord, I want bells to peal!  
I want to dance in the streets of  
Bethlehem!  
I want to sing with the heavenly host!  
For unto us a Son was given  
and he was called God with Us!  
For those of us who believe,  
the whole world  
is decorated with love!

# HOLIDAY BUCKET LIST



*Be*

**1. Buy presents**

**2. Wrap gifts *someone in a hug***

**3. Send gifts *love***

*Donate*

**4. Shop for food**

**5. Make cookies *memories***

*Be*

**6. See the lights**

## **ADVENT and CHRISTMAS EVE** **AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

Prepare again for the coming of Christ  
into our lives and into the world!



### **SUNDAYS IN ADVENT**

Each Sunday during the Season Advent we will spend time with one of “The Angels of Advent” who are part of the story of Jesus coming to earth. Come and listen for the ways the stories of their visitations speak to our lives this year!

Nov. 29th--The Angel Comes to Zechariah

Dec. 6th--The Angel Comes to Mary

Dec. 13th--The Angel Comes to Joseph

Dec. 20th--The Angels Come to the Shepherds.

### ***Would you like to help with the Lighting the Advent Wreath Candles During the Sunday Gatherings by Zoom?***

Each Sunday we will light the Advent Candles at the beginning of our Sunday Gathering. This will also happen on Christmas Eve by Zoom. If you individually, or you and your family, would like to be one of the readers, please contact Pastor Becky right away. Parts will be given on a first come, first served basis!

**Advent Devotions--”Discerning God’s *Kairos* in the Midst of our Daily *Chronos*** One way that Christians mark the days of Advent is with an Advent Calendar. Another way is to use an Advent Devotion like the one you will find in this Newsletter. To understand the title of the Devotional make plans to spend a few minutes each day to read the Bible reading, read the devotion and pray! This will be our last devotion from the Rev. Jill Duffield, as she will be leaving her post as the editor of the Presbyterian Outlook to serve in Parish Ministry again. I pray that you will make the time to journey to Christmas Eve with her!

**If you would like to share this devotion** with a friend or family member we have extra copies at the office, just give us a call and we’ll mail it to you...or them!

CHRISTMAS EVE



## CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP BY ZOOM

Come for Fellowship at 3:45 p.m.  
The Service begins at 4:00 p.m.  
**EACH PERSON, PLEASE HAVE A CANDLE!**  
*...for the singing of "Silent Night" at the  
end of the service.*

We will share Lessons and Carols in a new way this year. David Blakey will be playing the piano from home. Pastor Becky will be at the church. We will mute ourselves and sing along to favorite Christmas hymns. I am looking for 3 Scripture readers and a family who would like to do the reading for the Advent Wreath candle lighting. If you would like to help lead this service by doing a reading from your home, by Zoom, please contact Pastor Becky before midnight tonight!

After we have worshipped together the service will then be posted on our YouTube Channel, so that others can worship with us at any time, and join us in celebrating the arrival of Jesus into our lives and into our world!

### INVITE YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY TO JOIN US.

This year you may be worshipping apart from family and friends you are usually with on Christmas Eve. This way they can come to worship with you! The ZOOM INVITE will be emailed out December 21st so you can forward it to family and friends so they can join you on the 24th to worship together. Yes, it's different than our usual beloved Christmas Eve Service, and even more important YES, we will worship God together...in a new way!



### December Birthdays

- 2 Steven Ybarra
- 5 Michael Kassehin
- 10 Anna Barrigah  
Carolyn Haines
- 12 Ginny Wruck
- 14 Laura Brown
- 18 Shalom Agbemadon
- 21 Jenni Fields  
Marilyn Baker
- 24 Adele Barrigah  
John Runburg
- 25 Jesus of Nazareth
- 27 Koudzo Apetcho  
Ellie McNeil
- 29 Alex Curry
- 30 Ben Barrigah
- 31 Bev Lubbe



### December Anniversaries

- 27 Brian & Ella Layer



Headache	Skin rashes
Cold/flu	Asthma
Infection	Eye irritation
Small bone fracture	Vomiting/diarrhea
Possible urinary tract infection	
Minor work injury	

- Virtual Care may be used instead of going to a walk-in clinic.
- If you are still unsure where to go, please call me and together we can make a good decision to get the care you need. Please remember wherever you go for care, you will be asked to wear a facemask to protect others.

The primary care physician office staff and hospital staff are tired. Many of the staff are either sick themselves, or are being quarantined from possible exposure to COVID. They are working as hard as they can, but it has been a long 9 months for each of them. They want to care for you the best they can. So if you have to call your doctor's office and repeat your questions, please give them grace.

Please keep our community medical staff in your prayers.  
Please continue to pray for this virus to end.”

From Laura: I pray daily for your safety and health, and that you will find peace and joy in this Christmas season, even though we are apart from family and one another. I cling to the promise that God is with each of us with every breath we take.

**Don't forget that Laura is available "on-call" during the week. You can call her at 309-314-5605.**



UnityPoint Health

**OFFICE HOURS DECEMBER 24TH TO JANUARY 4TH**

**THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED IN OBSERVANCE OF CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24TH AND FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25TH.** Karol will be in the office on Monday, December 28th. She will be on vacation Tuesday and Wednesday, December 29th and 30th. **THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL THEN BE CLOSED AGAIN ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31ST AND FRIDAY, JANUARY 1ST FOR NEW YEAR'S EVE AND NEW YEAR'S DAY.** Karol and Becky will be back in the office on Monday, January 4th.

**Mitten Tree This Year -**

The Mission Commission is letting you know that with everything going on this year, there will not be the push for donations of mittens, hats and underwear as we have done in the past. But if you have been working on or gathering any of these items to donate, *please be assured we will find a school that is open and children who need them.*



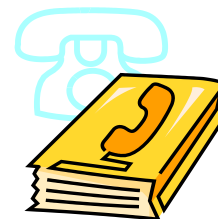
Please just drop off your donation(s) at the Church or reach out to Jennifer Noakes and she can make arrangements to come get them from you. Thank you for your continued support of children in need. The tree will be back next year. —The Mission Commission

**Elders & Musicians —Annual Reports are due in the Office Before the End of the Year.**

Please make sure Karol has yours by January 6th. Thank you!!

**HELP US HELP YOU**

**WITH THE 2021 CHURCH DIRECTORY**



In the coming weeks, please email or call Karol to let her know if you have any changes to your address, phone number or email address. If you would like us to include your cell or work phones, please let Karol know that too. If you have email, you will then receive the new 2021 Directory by email in January. If you do not have email, you will receive your 2021 Directory by regular mail.

## **FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF**

The Rev. Becky Sherwood  
Karol Ellison  
Laura Brown, R.N.  
David Blakey  
Gail Glockhoff-Long  
Linda Miller  
Sarah Lack

Pastor  
Church Secretary  
Parish Nurse  
Choir Director  
Bell Choir Director  
Organist  
Nursery Attendant  
Indoor Custodian  
Outdoor Custodian

### **Please Keep Our Nursing Home and Homebound Members in Your Prayers**

Crosstown: Ramona Zude; Friendship Manor: Marynell Kirkwood, Betty Knollman; The Fountains: Dorothy Horton; Allure of Geneseo: Kay Etzel; Park Vista: Bob & Jan Dravis, Betty Hogue; Kahl Home: Carol Brewer; Personal Residences: Ted Frels, Lloyd Strohm, Bev Warren

***Please remember in your prayers those who serve in the armed forces. May God bring comfort to them and their loved ones, until all are reunited in peace.*** Lance Corporal William (Billy) Betsworth (Bethel's grandson), Junior Kassehin, ROTC, National Guard, Michael Kassehin, Army, Ft. Campbell, KY, Major Kyle Curry, 34<sup>th</sup> Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade, Warrant Officer Dustin Hergert (Dixie Volk's nephew), Marines.

***Please keep our college students in your prayers, that they may know God's love and guidance:***

Junior Kassehin--University of Dubuque; Greg Layer--West Point; Katey Maxwell—Augustana College; Drew Noakes—Black Hawk College; Devin Reynolds—St. Ambrose University; Ellie McNeil—University of Northern Iowa. If you have a college/technical school student to add to this list please call the church office.

**Password for the current newsletter on our webpage  
firstpresbyem.com:**

Username: fpc Password: messenger

## **PARISH NURSE NEWS**

### **Getting the Health Care You Need**

This month's newsletter is written by Steph Rabe, Parish Nurse of Christ Church, and used with her permission. I am thankful for my fellow Faith Community Nurses, and their willingness to share their talents.

"Here is an update on our community medical scene:

The hospitals are full of people with **COVID-19** and other medical problems. If health issues would cause you to need to be admitted, you may not be admitted at this time to UnityPoint or Genesis. You would probably be sent to another hospital that has beds. Iowa City and Peoria are on the brink of being full but are rearranging nursing units as they can to keep beds open for emergency needs. Please know and understand that if you have a life threatening medical emergency you will be taken care of.

**Please DO NOT stay home if you are experiencing  
a life threatening medical emergency.**

If you have a medical need, here is a listing of where to go for care:

1. If you are experiencing a life threatening situation/emergency such as stroke symptoms, heart problems, breathing difficulties, seizures, deep cuts, or a fracture of a large bone, call 911 or go to the ER.
2. Please call your doctor if you are questioning where to go in the case of a non-life threatening medical need. Use your doctor's office for physicals. Also call your doctor's office for medication refills if you have not been instructed to call your pharmacy first.
3. Please use one of the many community walk-in clinics if you are experiencing any of the following symptoms:

Abdominal pain  
Cough  
Sprains  
Minor burns

Back pain  
Fever  
Allergies  
Ear pain



**THANK YOU ELDERS AND DEACONS WHO HAVE COMPLETED THEIR CURRENT TERMS OF MINISTRY!**

Our Church Family is thankful for the good ministry of our Elders Jim Barber & Paul Glockhoff and Deacons Nick Maro, Linda Barber, Margo Murdock, Randy Buss and Jim Buche who have completed their terms of service, having faithfully served their

God and their Church! You have served in the midst of one of the most challenging years in the history of our church, and we are thankful for all you have done this year, and in the years previous. May God bless each of you as you listen for the new ways God is calling you to serve in the future!

I am so very grateful for the love sent my way through cards, calls, and prayers during my bout with COVID. Knowing that so many were remembering me was a real comfort.

I've learned that everyone's journey through this is different and a lot longer than we all hoped. One can never have too many prayers. God Bless you all. Carol Curry



**THE SUNDAY GATHERING  
Come and See your Family of Faith!  
11:00-11:45 A.M. BY ZOOM  
Prayer and Fellowship Weekly**

We will gather by Zoom at 11:00 a.m. Sunday Morning for:

- Passing the Peace of Christ
- Sharing Joys and Concerns and Praying Together
- Communion on 1st Sundays of the Month in real time
- Fellowship Time

Each Friday you will receive a Zoom Invite to the Sunday Gathering in your email inbox. Follow the link and join us at 11:00 a.m. on Sundays. You don't need a computer to join; follow the directions to listen in and talk with us by phone! New to Zoom and want to practice before the Sunday Gathering? During the week, call Laura Brown 309-314-5605 or Suzanne Bailey 563-505-8424 and they will set up a practice Zoom Session with you!

We are really enjoying being together face to face. We've had between 10 and 30 people each week, from 6 year olds to 96 year olds! We've met some cats and dogs with their people too! We heard some good jokes and some almost good jokes :). We are looking forward to being face to face with more of you virtually each week for Prayer, Communion, Fellowship and being together!

**PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS--**  
**CONGREGATIONAL MEETING BY ZOOM,**  
**SUNDAY DEC. 6TH, 11 A.M.**

The purpose of this meeting is to receive the 2021 budget, for all members to vote on the new Elders and Deacons who have said "yes" to serving the church in the coming year, and to Install the Elders and Deacons. There will also be a fellowship time at the end for those who would like to stay after the Meeting.

When our congregation meets we need 20% of our membership there to have a quorum. We will need 27 church members to be at this meeting for us to be able to receive the budget and the new Elders and Deacons.

SO PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW! I look forward to seeing you on December 6th at 11:00 a.m. by Zoom. The Zoom invites will be sent out on Friday. With you in ministry!, Becky

**P.S. CONFIRMATION--**Remember, This is a requirement...bring your parents :)



**Change of Address Only...**



**Komla Djidotor &  
Beatrice Gbadegbe, Ruth & Elom**  
17025 King James Way #302  
Gaithersburg, MD 20877

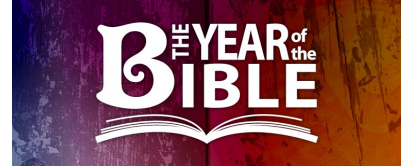
**Betty Knollman**  
Friendship Manor  
1209—21st Ave., B207  
Rock Island, IL 61201

## A NEW ADVENTURE FOR 2021

### JOIN YOUR CHURCH FAMILY IN READING THE BIBLE!

#### **Get your Book THIS MONTH!**

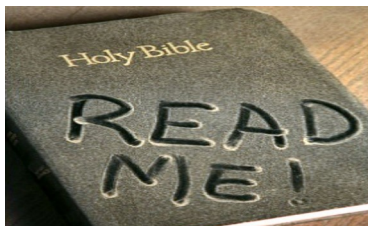
GOD HAS GIVEN US A WONDERFUL GIFT—  
COME EXPLORE THESE LIVING WORDS IN 2021!



This is for you if you have rarely read the Bible outside of church, have read all the way through the Bible many times, or you are somewhere in between. On January 1<sup>st</sup> you are invited to join your church family as we read our way through the Bible during the next year. In this season of spending more time at home with the world pandemic, let's make time to spend the year with God's word! We will be using "The Year of the Bible" program; each day you will read three chapters from the Old and New Testament...by the end of 2021 you will have read the whole Bible! **The book we will use to guide us "The Year of with the Bible" costs \$5.00, and you will be able to order your copy and sign up for the program by calling or emailing the church,** then we will mail you your copy, or you can stop by the church to pick it up. We want everyone to be involved in this program, so please talk to Pastor Becky if you would like scholarship help with the cost of the study book. If you would prefer to listen to the Bible for the year, there are many different products online, or you can listen for free at [Biblegateway.com](http://Biblegateway.com). If you want to read the Louis Segond translation in French, contact Pastor Becky. We did this program 11 years ago in 2009. The study book has changed since then, so please order this new one!

**Once a month we will gather together--initially by Zoom--on the 3rd Tuesday of each month** during the day or in the evening, for a review of what we've read and an introduction to what is coming next. Our First Gathering will be Tuesday, Jan. 19th from 10:00-11:30 a.m., OR 6:30-8:00 p.m.—When you order your book, please sign up for which you think you'll be attending. You can change your preference, this just helps me with planning. In January, come learn a bit about how the Bible was put together over the years, and get an introduction to Genesis, the beginning of Exodus and the Gospel of Matthew.

**Which Translation to Read?** If you want to read what is in our pews, then choose the New Revised Standard Version. The *Contemporary English Version* (what we give our grade schoolers), *Common English Bible*, and the *New International Version* are easy to read. If you would like a very modern translation, then I would consider *The Message Translation*. I would strongly encourage you **NOT** to read the King James Version as your primary text, not only because of language, but because the translation and the scholarship are 400 years old, and so much more has been discovered!



## From the Finance Commission...

You may be wondering what to do with your offering during this time when we will not be worshipping "in person". As you can imagine, there are bills that the church will need to pay, so if you would like to give during this time there are 3 options you can choose from. If you have questions, please contact Don Buss or Pat Tyler.

### **1. Mail your check to the church:**

ATTN Finance  
First Presbyterian Church  
777 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
East Moline, IL 61244

### **2. Give your offering electronically:**

If you have internet access, a quick and easy way to give electronically is by using the "Bill Pay" feature of your bank's website. This simply allows your bank or credit union to write a paper check on your account and send it through the mail to the church. This service is normally provided free of charge both to you (the bank's customer) and to the church. Each bank's website will be slightly different, but here is how the basic process works:

- a.** Log on to your bank or credit union website and click on the link for the "Bill Pay" feature.
- b.** Add the church, First Presbyterian, as a Payee.
- c.** If you want, you can set up a Recurring Payment to be sent to the church on a scheduled basis (weekly, monthly, etc.). Or you can just send a one-time payment.
- d.** Each time you make a gift (either one-time or recurring), the bank will mail a check to the church. This check will be recorded and deposited into the church's bank account just like a regular handwritten check and will also be recorded on your contribution statement just like it normally would if you put the check in the offering plate. The benefit to electronic giving is that you don't pay for postage so if you're worried about making a trip to the post office, you can choose this option instead. Electronic giving is also great if you're out of town.

**3. Wait and bring your full offering to the church when we begin meeting again.** Please do whatever works best for your situation. Take care, everyone!





**Prayer Shawls are Meeting Again...By ZOOM**  
**DECEMBER 12TH, 9:00**

ZOOM invites will be sent out on Thursday Dec. 10th. All knitters, crocheters and crafters

welcome. Plus those who want to join us for good conversation! And a huge thank you for the 30! Prayer Shawls that were dedicated in Worship on Nov. 8th!

**DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO NEEDS A PRAYER SHAWL?**

**WE HAVE PLENTY READY TO COMFORT YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS!!**

If you would like to give someone a prayer shawl...Call the church office, tell us the size of prayer shawl you need, color preferences, and we can put two prayer shawls in a bag out on the front door for you at a time you set. Take the shawl you want, leave the one you don't! It will keep contact to a minimum and still get those reminders of God's love and ours out to those who need a prayer shawl. Help us share God's love with those who need a hug!

**A Note from the Finance Commission:**

October Income	= \$ 18,263
October Expenses	= \$ 12,916
January-October Income	= \$166,750
January-October Expenses	= \$138,147
January-October Budget	= \$154,703

**Sharing in the Ministries of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A...**

**PER CAPITA = \$35.00**

**The Finance Commission invites you to give your per capita gift soon!**

It's that time of year again, when your Finance Commission and your Pastor come to you to talk about per capita giving. Each year, at the beginning of the year, we pay a per capita fee for each of our members, based on the previous year's membership. This per capita giving allows for maintaining the basic operating costs of our Presbytery, the Presbytery of Great Rivers, plus the Synod of Lincoln Trails, and the offices of the General Assembly (the national church's headquarters). Per capita allows each member to share equally in the ministries of the larger church. Being connected like this is one of the gifts of being Presbyterian, we are a connectional church; we care for each other! You can put it in one of the envelopes in the pew racks and mark the outside "Per Capita". If you have questions, please talk to the Finance Commission Elders: Jim Barber & Barb Newburg or Pastor Becky.

You may also choose to look at several translations as this will broaden your understanding of what you're reading. If you would like help ordering a new Bible, I can help you with that!

**Questions?** Give me a call. Then let's get ready to spend the year with God's Word for us! In anticipation!, Pastor Becky

P.S. Make sure you get your book by December 31st, reading starts Jan. 1st!



**A NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH FPCEM AND THE QUAD CITY FOOD FOREST**

**The Session is looking for a few of you to join the planning team!**

"The Quad City Food Forest is a volunteer organization that designs, grows, and maintains publicly accessible fruits & vegies which will produce free food and foster education in our community for decades to come." What this means for us is that they approached us about planting fruit trees, berries, and other long-term plantings in our lot that has the labyrinth in it. Their director, Ali Domino Keenan lives in our neighborhood and saw the potential of our lot! The Session voted on October 22nd to join with them in providing free fruits and vegetables for our neighborhood and the Quad Cities.

The Quad City Food Forest will provide the plants, and with our volunteer help do the initial planting and watering and then together we will help these trees and plants grow and share in the harvest! If you would like to learn more about the Quad City Food Forest they have a Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/QC.FoodForest/> where you can see pictures and read about other plantings and harvests.



**Would you like to join a small team** of our members who will meet with a team from the Quad City Food Forest sometime in 2021 to help choose what will be planted and the design for the planting? This does not obligate you to weed, haul water, or dig deep holes! ;) It means you will get to be at the ground level (so to speak) of creating this new adventure of giving food to hungry people! **If the answer is yes, please contact Pastor Becky before the end of the year** and your name will be added. We already have an elder on the team, and just need 2-3 more people to join up! The Session is excited about this new way that we will be reaching out into our neighborhood and helping to provide fresh fruit and vegetables.

## WEDNESDAYS IN THE SANCTUARY

**Come to the Silence—3:00 to 7:00 p.m.**

On Wednesdays from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. you are welcome to come spend time in the Sanctuary alone, or with people from your household. Masks are required the entire time you are in the building. This is a time to be in silence, to worship and pray, and to be with God. If you would like to have music during your time in the Sanctuary, please remember to bring headphones/earbuds to allow others to spend the time in silence. We ask that you don't sing out loud while you are in the Sanctuary, as this can spread particles up to 5 pews in front of where you are sitting.

When you enter the church, please pick up a copy of the *Sanctuary Visits Page* on the music stand outside the Sanctuary. These will guide you through your time in the Sanctuary and will be available each week at the church.

You'll need these page at the end of your time in the Sanctuary to mark where you sat.

O come let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker!  
(Psalm 95:6)  
Blessings as we continue on this journey of faith,  
The Reopening Team and Pastor Becky

### WHAT TO DO DURING WEDNESDAYS IN THE SANCTUARY!

You may be wondering how to use this time in the sanctuary? Come with prayers of thanksgiving for the ways you've seen God in your life and the lives of those you love. Bring the Prayer Requests List from the Sunday Bulletin and pray for all those people we are walking beside. Come in and let yourself know that God meets you there and just sit with God in the silence. Listen for the words God has for you. Bring your Bible and do some reading. Pick a few Psalms, or one of the Gospels. Bring last Sunday's bulletin and reread the passages for the day and think about what sermon you would like to hear about those words from God. Bring some music and your earbuds/headphones and listen to favorite hymns in the sanctuary. There are many ways to come and worship and pray, these are only a few!



### ATTENTION SNOWBIRDS!!

Do we have your winter address & phone number? If not, and you want to receive your newsletters at your winter address, please let the office know. We are charged \$.63 for each returned newsletter.

## HOW CAN YOU HELP COVID PATIENTS?

Do you feel helpless – can't visit; you can only pray. Here's how YOU CAN make a physical contribution.

If you had a positive test diagnosis, the Red Cross Donation centers in Iowa and the Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center in Illinois are desperately seeking Convalescent Plasma Donors. Simply go online to [bloodcenter.org](http://bloodcenter.org) or [Red-Cross.org](http://Red-Cross.org). You will find a link for a form for care provider and self-referrals. Fill this out and you will be contacted by the centers to set up an appointment.

As someone who had never given blood until our church sponsored drive and now am a regular blood donor, I can say after the initial blood stick, it's a piece of cake. As an added bonus the websites showed a \$25 bonus for Convalescent Plasma plus you have your own personal tv screen, sodas and snacks!

The time commitment for a plasma donation is 45 minutes (less than a platelet donation but longer than a blood donation).

I have a friend in the hospital fighting now. I never tested positive for Covid, but I took the antibody blood test just to see if I could help. I didn't have antibodies, but you may know of someone who tested positive, please encourage them to donate for everyone's sake.

--Ella Layer

### WE ARE LOOKING FOR WORSHIP LEADERS FOR THE NEW YEAR—JANUARY & BEYOND!

As Worship Leader you will lead the Prayer of Confession, the Prayer of Illumination, and one of the scripture lessons; and some of the Communion Liturgy on Communion Sundays. We tape the worship service on Thursdays at 5:30, with the exception of the 4th Thursday when we tape at 5:00. Please arrive 10 minutes before the start time. The bulletin will be sent to you the day before. We all wear our masks throughout the service, except when speaking.

*If you would like to join this ministry of being a Worship Leader contact the church office* and let Karol or me know which Sunday you'd like to help lead worship for the people of God! Thanks in advance, Pastor Becky



## Watertown Food Pantry News

During the month of October we served 55 families consisting of 122 adults and 68 children. We at the Watertown Food Pantry are truly amazed, blessed, and thankful for the continuing financial and food item support of both FPC and the surrounding community.



As this year draws to a close, we thank you all for continuing to donate to the pantry, keeping us in your prayers, and helping out in many untold ways. Special thanks go to Pat Wendt who faithfully goes to Hy-Vee every Tuesday morning to pick up their donated bread, baked goods, and miscellaneous items.

We are in good financial shape but due to some limited availabilities, we can always use canned vegetables, cereal, ramen noodles, 4# bags of sugar, boxed meal mixes, canned fruit, canned tuna/ham/chicken, (frozen) hamburger, mustard, ketchup, jelly, and **empty egg cartons** which allow us to buy the five-dozen boxes of eggs and then repackage them into the cartons. All food items must be within their "fresh date" per Churches United regulations.

Watertown Food Pantry is open on Tuesdays from 12:30 - 4:30 pm. We are also on the list of pantries who will do emergency distributions if needed. (If **anyone** at church needs food assistance please **text** Pat at 309-752-3016 or call at home at 309-523-3973- regardless of where you live or what day it is. **We can help!!**)

As always, please keep those who are just trying to make it through the day in your prayers.

Bless you for your generosity -

Mike & Pat Tyler

## From the Presbytery of Great Rivers!

God is doing great things in Presbyterian churches all around us.

Sign-up for the Presbytery of Great Rivers e-Newsletter at

[www.greatriverspby.org/newsletter](http://www.greatriverspby.org/newsletter)

*P.S. from Pastor Becky, this is a great way to pray for our 91 churches; each week there will be 2 new churches to pray for. Plus lots of news about the ministries we support with our annual per capita gifts.*



Please help us care for each other...

**MASKS ARE REQUIRED**  
**IN THE CHURCH BUILDING**

**AND PLEASE HELP US PRACTICE PHYSICAL DISTANCING IN THE BUILDING, Thank You!**

## A CHANGE IS COMING TO OUR BUILDING

The State of IL Fire Marshall and IL DCFS (Dept. of Child and Family Services) have changed the state law on fire escapes required for Head Start Programs. Without this change to our building the Head Start program would no longer be able to meet in our building. On Nov. 19th your Session approved proposed plans from Head Start to add a fire escape from our building. The entire cost of this project will be paid for by Project Now/Head Start. The fire escape will be through an external door added to our Youth Room, where there is currently a large bulletin board on the west facing wall of the Youth Room. There will be a flight of stairs enclosed in a structure that will extend 12 feet from the building. It will be a west-facing brick structure that will match the brick of our building; it will be roofed with a gable roof and shingles to match our roof and building design. The exterior door of this structure will open to the north, with a sidewalk leading to the alleyway.

Your Property Commission, Session and Pastor have spent the late summer and fall in meetings with Head Start and reviewing plans. This is the most viable of the three plans that were proposed. The Session has voted to approve this Fire Escape to continue our over-20 year relationship with Head Start, and to continue to reach out to the children of our neighborhoods.

If you would like to look at the building plans there are copies of them in the office, or we can email you a scanned copy of the plans. If you have questions feel free to call Pastor Becky or a member of your Session.





YOUTH GROUP, SUNDAY SCHOOL  
AND CONFIRMATION NEWS!



**STARTING IN DECEMBER**  
Youth Group on 2nd Sundays 3-4:30 p.m.  
Sunday School with Darlos-- 3rd Sundays 3-4:00 pm.  
(required for Confirmation)

*You will receive your ZOOM INVITES on Fridays for that week's adventures!*

Sunday Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> **NOTE: THIS IS AN EXTRA REQUIREMENT FOR CONFIRMATION: 11 a.m. Attend Congregational Meeting** you will get a zoom invite, don't forget to bring your parents!  
3:00 p.m. Confirmation--Our Final Class?!

**Dec. 13<sup>th</sup> Youth Group Christmas Party**--Wear you most beautiful Christmas outfit...who can wear the most green & red? Think of an answer to this question before you log-in... if you could give the world a present for Christmas, what would it be?

We'll play some goofy games, check in with each other and prepare to celebrate Christ's birth!

Parents & Youth, I'm going to encourage the youth, for confirmation and Sunday School especially to Zoom from bedrooms, or a place where the conversations won't be overheard if this is possible with your family's computer configuration. There is a lot of life sharing that goes on in Confirmation and Sunday School, and I want to encourage the youth to protect the confidentiality of the other youth by being in a place where the conversations won't be overheard by others. Thanks, Pastor Becky



**For ALL Women of the Church!  
Tues. Dec. 1st,  
1:00 P.M.!!!!!!**



**Presbyterian Women's Bible Study  
"LOVE CARVED IN STONE"--A Fresh Look at the Ten Commandments  
Chapter 2--Words of Love: Don't Trivialize My Name**

After one lesson, COVID interrupted our Bible Study meetings held on the first Tuesday of each month at 1:00 pm in the library.

If you attended our Christmas luncheon last year, you saw a wonderful advertisement conducted by an elf and an attractive lady. This is a study with a NEW LOOK at the Ten Commandments. No one is put on the spot if they haven't read the lesson or if they don't want to talk. It would be a blessing just to see as many faces as possible.

If you are working from home, tired of monitoring student lessons, bored or just curious and would like to touch base with other women in the church, here's the opportunity. Becky has started the Bible study over with Lesson One, using ZOOM and beginning the first Tuesday in November. Sadly, some of you who signed up originally are not able to access Zoom through a computer or Ipad, but you can call in and listen and talk. Call me for details. We hope you can join us because we will miss having you with us.

If you are new to Zoom, it is free. I am more than happy to get you started and practice with you anytime that is convenient for you.

Interested? The cost for a book is \$10. I can order and deliver them to you before our first lesson. Call my home phone 309-203-1135 or e-mail [e.layer@yahoo.com](mailto:e.layer@yahoo.com). Please join us and stay safe! Ella Layer