

ALERT

The Monthly Newsletter of
First Presbyterian Church, Mt Pleasant, Iowa
902 S Walnut St, Mt Pleasant, IA 52641



Ash Wednesday Wake-up Call

Contact Information

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Church Office Hours:

Monday - Friday, 9 AM - 2 PM



Rev. Robert Blezard, editor for the Stewardship of Life Institute and Pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, MD shared the following devotion to help congregations prepare for Lent:

“Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

With these ancient words from Genesis 3:19 and the swipe of an ash covered thumb across our foreheads in the shape of a cross, Ash Wednesday propels us into the season of Lent with the proper context to understand our lives as stewards of all that God entrusts to us. The essential teaching of Ash Wednesday – that we are just mortals, after all – crushes our ego, dispels our pretensions, and drives us deep into God's mysteries. Why are we here? What are our lives all about? What's really important? Pray over these questions and profound insights emerge.

We are dust. Yes, but we are God's dust. Our body consists of trillions of atoms, each one a speck of “dust” created by of God, billions of years ago. God put us together from the very stuff of the universe.

- Therefore, we are quite literally “earthy” beings, made of the same material as air, water, soil and stone. Part of creation, we work to preserve and sustain the health of God's.
- Therefore, we have reverence for our bodies, expressed through healthy.

We are breath. We are “dust,” but not only dust. We are “dust” into which God has “breathed the Holy breath of life” (Genesis 2:7).

- Therefore, every breath we take is holy. Every breath is a prayer that reminds us of God's life force in us.
- Therefore, we look to God to align our lives and ourselves with God's holy reality that arcs towards peace, love, joy, justice and truth.

Our time is brief. Because our “dust” will return to the earth, we live a finite number of minutes on earth.

- Therefore, every hour, every second is sacred. We spend our time wisely, carefully, prayerfully.
- Therefore, we do not cling to our possessions, knowing that we only hold onto them for a little while.
- Therefore, we nourish our lives with world treasures of real value – friendships, trust, love, joy, service, generosity and harmony.

This Lent spend time in prayer, with openness and honesty. See how God will turn your heart and mind, transforming you into the person you were created to be. Reflect each day on Ash Wednesday. *“Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”*

With thanks to Rev. Rob Blezard for sharing a great primer for Lent.

*Blessings to all,
Rev. Trey Hegar*

Treasurer's Report for December 2023

Year to Date Revenue: \$327,263.00 Expenses: \$351,412.00; Cash Increase (Decrease): (\$24,149.00)

DECEMBER 2023	CURRENT MONTH	CURRENT MONTH	YEAR TO DATE	YEAR TO DATE	2023 YEAR
	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>
General Pledges	\$28,235.00	\$20,407.00	\$299,067.00	\$244,886.00	\$244,886.00
From Endowment Fund	\$0.00	\$8,063.00	\$0.00	\$96,752.00	\$96,752.17
Other Revenue	\$647.00	\$133.00	\$28,196.00	\$18,600.00	\$18,600.00
Total Revenue	\$28,882.00	\$28,603.00	\$327,263.00	\$360,238.00	\$360,238.17
EXPENSES					
Pastor	\$10,868.00	\$11,205.00	\$130,396.00	\$133,568.00	\$133,567.44
personnel	\$10,721.00	\$11,974.00	\$119,967.00	\$136,507.00	\$136,507.13
Worship and Music	\$365.00	\$267.00	\$2,606.00	\$4,550.00	\$4,550.00
Adult Christian Education	\$468.00	\$108.00	\$835.00	\$2,300.00	\$2,300.00
YouthChristian Education	\$2,130.00	\$283.00	\$8,398.00	\$10,500.00	\$10,500.00
Stewardship	\$267.00	\$110.00	\$4,210.00	\$4,800.00	\$4,800.00
Building and Grounds	\$4,657.00	\$4,015.00	\$48,329.00	\$31,175.00	\$31,175.00
Operations	\$935.00	\$662.00	\$9,204.00	\$8,050.00	\$8,050.00
Technology	\$0.00	\$358.00	\$365.00	\$4,300.00	\$4,300.00
Mission	\$5,777.00	\$2,181.00	\$27,102.00	\$24,488.00	\$24,488.60
Special Giving	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Expenses	\$36,188.00	\$31,163.00	\$351,412.00	\$360,238.00	\$360,238.17
CASH INCREASE (DECR)	(\$7,306.00)	(\$2,560.00)	(\$24,149.00)	\$0.00	\$0.00

Respectfully submitted, Marvin Bricker, Treasurer

Special thanks to **Ginnie Swarm, Mariah Giberson, Marvin Bricker** and our **financial clerks** for all of their work.

Session Highlights

Session began the new year with a new meeting time, Sunday, January 21 following Worship in Peter's Room. The following item was moved, seconded, and passed:

- to elect Ed Kropa as Clerk for 2024
- to elect Marvin Bricker as Treasurer for 2024

Due to weather delays, the new Elders, **Carol Chesnutt, Bob Mueller, and Erica Redgate**, will be Ordained and Installed during Worship on Sunday, January 28. All Session Elders received Committee Binders, which include essential materials such as committee charters, a master calendar, by laws, and event planning information. Session will meet again on Sunday, February 11 following Worship in Peter's Room.

Tithes and Offerings

We ask that you continue to give to the church, so we can continue to help and support our community programs and offer programs and support to you. You may drop off your checks in the office, mail your checks to 902 S. Walnut St. or give online by copying this link <https://bit.ly/2x46F6L>. **Rev. Trey Hegar**

thank you

Our 19 years at First Presbyterian has been a blessing - wonderful memories and friends! We are moving to Minnesota to be closer to kids and grandkids. Godspeed on all of your endeavors.

Warmly, Carl & Peggy Frank

February Worship Helpers

Sunday Morning Building Assistant:

Matt Lawler

Financial Clerk: **Mike Vincent**

Greeters: **Curt & Ginnie Swarm**

Communion Preparer - 2/4:

Pat Richenberger

Liturgists:

Feb. 4 **Sally Olson** Feb. 11 **Steve Readinger**

Feb. 18 **Kathy Schimm.** Feb. 25 **Kelly Allen**



Presbyterian Women

Thursday, February 1 at 1:30 PM

PW will meet on Thursday of the month, February 1 at 1:30 PM in the Gathering Space. **Bark Parker** will host, **Terri Gordy** will cover the devotions, and **Charlene Hinrichs** will cover Lesson 1. All women are welcome to come.

Building & Grounds

Thursday, February 1, 5 PM Gathering Space

Building & Grounds Committee will meet on Thursday, February 1 at 5 PM in the Gathering Space. If you would like to join the Building & Grounds Committee, please notify the office, or the co-chairs, **Bryce Creager and Chuck Albright.**



Book Group

Thursday, February 8 at 7 PM

Book Group will meet back up on Thursday, February 8 at 7 PM in the Gathering Space. We will be discussing *The Wettest County in the World* by Walt Bondurant. All are welcome to come and join in the book discussion.

Pray for Mission Trippers!

Please be in prayer for folks from Mt. Pleasant who will be traveling to Leland, Mississippi during the week of February 4 - 9 to work at a Presbyterian Disaster Assistance site.



What is this Synod School you speak of?

**Sunday, February 4 after Worship,
Peter's Room**

Stay after worship on Sunday, February 4 to hear what Synod School is all about! We will meet in Peter's Room. Sarah will present about this conference for all-ages in Storm Lake on July 21-26, where you will hear from national PC(USA) speakers and take workshops that range from ballroom dancing to deep theological topics and everything in between. Oh, and did I mention tie dye? Synod School is fun and meaningful and has something for everyone.



Rescheduled Painting Party

February 18, 3-5 PM Fellowship Hall
(10 and up with adult sign-up)

Join us for an afternoon of fun and creativity! Jennifer Coop will walk us step by step through a painting. Please sign up in the Gathering Space to participate in a painting party by Monday, February 12. The cost is \$25 and it includes everything you will need.

Ash Wednesday Service

Wednesday, February 14, 7 PM

Join us on Wednesday, February 14 at 7 PM in the Sanctuary for our Ash Wednesday Service as we step into the Lent Season. All are welcome to come.

Matthew 25 Book Study

All are welcome



Throughout the beginning months of the new year, we will be studying the book, *Bridges Out of Poverty: Strategies for Professionals and Communities*, written by Ruby K. Payne, et al. The book is available for \$30 on Amazon, Audible, and other online sellers. All discussions will take place in the Fellowship Hall following worship.

Reading/Discussion Schedule:

- **February 25 discussion:**
 - Institutional Lens pgs. 115-179
- **March 24 discussion:**
 - Community Lens pgs. 181-223
- **May 5 discussion:**
 - Policy Lens pgs. 225-259

2024 Yearbook Directories

The new year is fast approaching, and with it will be new Yearbook Directories. If you have a change of address, email, phone number, or you wish to be added/taken out of the yearbook, please let the office know asap! Thank you.

Four Presbyterians Attend Historic National Matthew 25 Summit

On January 16-18, **Kelly Allen, Amy Clark, Karen Conrad, and Sarah Hegar** attended the inaugural Matthew 25 Summit with folks from all over the country. They deepened their understanding of this movement and learned more about ways to work towards eradicating systemic poverty, dismantling structural racism, and building congregational vitality. They will be sharing more about their experience in the weeks and months to come as we continue to join in this national movement.

February Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 1 Angie Booton**
- 2 Stacie Baccam**
- 4 Ethan Beauchamp**
- 6 Elizabeth McLaughlin, Heidi Riepe**
- 11 George & Karen Chapman's Anniversary**
- 12 Bailey Andrew**
- 14 Kristen Epperson**
- 15 Adam Creager, Gary Lauger**
- 16 Bob & Sandy Swindell's Anniversary**
- 18 Sherla Arp**
- 20 Collin Baccam, Valerie Willham**
- 21 Logan Lee**
- 22 Merrick Lamm, Ken Madden,
Sam Van De Berg**
- 24 Doug Conrad, Marilyn Vincent**
- 25 Kenton Church**
- 26 Lucas Lee**
- 27 Karen Conrad, Tim Conrad,
MaKenzie Kauffman**
- 28 Ethan Brooks**

PRAYER CONCERNS:

- Sandy Memler, Lois Betz
- Aaron Williamson's dad, Rick
- Matt Lawler's brothers, Joe & Ken
- Liz Wasson's sister, Caryl, niece, Terrill
- Kelly Allen's niece, Marie Crews,
- Susan Farnsworth's brother, Jeff Stanley
- Terri Gordy's nephew, Dallyn Schmidt
- Jack Becker's foster son, Jeremy Kitchen
- Donna Lamm
- Leo Clark's mother, Nancy Aynes
- Lois Roth's brother (Mark Veldhizen),
sister-in-law (Kim Veldhuizen)
- Our shut-ins and those in care centers
- Israel & Palestine; Ukraine

Pastor: Rev. Trey Hegar
Music & Choir Director: Ming Vierra
Bell Choir Director: Adam Creager
Congregational Ministries Director: Rev. Sarah Hegar
AV Technician & Web Coordinator: Leo Clark
Office Assistant: Mariah Giberson
Custodians: Robert Luth

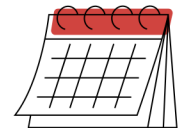
Financial Secretary: Ginnie Swarm
Treasurer: Marvin Bricker
Bookkeeper: Mariah Giberson

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February Events



Presbyterian Women

Thursday, February 1 - 1:30 PM, Gathering Space

Building & Grounds Meeting

Thursday, February 1 - 5 PM, Gathering Space

Children's Moment with Communion

Sunday, February 4 - 9:45 AM, Sanctuary

Synod School Info Session

Sunday, February 4 - 11 AM, Peter's Room

Session

Sunday, February 11 - 11 AM, Peter's Room

Book Group

Thursday, February 8 - 7 PM, Gathering Space

Ash Wednesday Service

Wednesday, February 12 - 7 PM, Sanctuary

Painting Party

Sunday, February 18 - 3-5 PM, Fellowship Hall

March ALERT Deadline

Monday, February 19

Matthew 25 Book Study

Sunday, February 25 - 11 AM, Fellowship Hall

RE:CREATION ALERT

Wednesday after School Program

February 2024

K – 5th Grade with Rev. Sarah Hegar

Re:Creation January Highlights

We had some fun playing Minute to Win it games in early January. We also played with the parachute and had a movie day! In the Bible, we learned about Solomon building a temple and Daniel and the Lions Den. A snow day caused us to cancel on January 10. Super big thanks to **Kathy Schimmelpfennig** for teaching a lesson this month and for Trey and the other rovers covering for Sarah while she was away at a couple conferences. Rovers included **Erica Redgate, Barb Miller, Paula Hoenig, Valerie Willham, Jack Becker, Patty Madden, Becky Siberts, and Martha Wiley.**

Looking forward to February, we will begin a new curriculum that focuses on Celebrating God's Creation! We will learn all about water and the land that sustains us.

**Save the Date for
Vacation Bible School!
July 8-12, 2024**



Children's Moment

First Sunday of the Month at 9:45 AM

Every first Sunday of the month, we will have a special Children's Sermon. Families are invited to attend and participate in this fun, interactive, intergenerational way to be Church! Next Children's Moment will be Sunday, February 4.

PRESS ON YOUTH ALERT

Middle School & High School

February 2024

with Rev. Sarah Hegar and Adult Advisors

Press On Youth Group January Highlights

The youth remain busy and committed to serving and learning about God in new ways. This month, we had a fun time in fellowship at the Bowling Alley. Each week after dinner, we gather in the youth room to talk about our highs and lows of the week. It's a great time to check in with everyone and see how we're all doing. We had to cancel on Wednesday, January 10 because of the snow. Huge thanks to **Erica Redgate and Kelly Allen** who serve as Advisors to the youth group! We also want to thank folks who provided meals during January: **Sarah Hegar, Dan & Gail Heater, and Karen Kauffman.**

In February we look forward to attending the Ash Wednesday service together on February 14.

Senior Scholarships

To our graduating Seniors, scholarship applications will be available during the month of February. This is a chance to receive a little financial help as you begin preparing for whatever comes next.

Scholarship forms must be filled out and returned by April 1. Please talk to Sarah Hegar with any questions.