

Pastor: Rev. Trey Hegar
Organist/Bell Choir Director: Marj Thimmesch
Choir Director: Marlene DePriest
Congregational Ministries Director: Rev. Sarah Hegar
AV Technician & Web Coordinator: Leo Clark
Office Assistant: Mariah Giberson
Custodians: Robert Luth

The mission of the First Presbyterian Church, Mt. Pleasant is to encourage and nurture diverse expressions of the love of Christ in our congregation and community, and to embrace Christ centered ministries around the world.

Financial Secretary: Ginnie Swarm
Treasurer: Marvin Bricker
Bookkeeper: Deborah Sinclair

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
902 SOUTH WALNUT
MOUNT PLEASANT IA 52641

Non-Profit Org.
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Permit #90
Mt. Pleasant, IA 52641

Highlights

9:45 AM Sundays

In-person and YouTube Live

Fellowship Time to follow

Recorded services online - see webpage

Address Service Requested

Ash Wednesday Service & Ice Cream Social

Wednesday, February 22 at 6:30 PM

Super Bowl Snack Sales

Sunday, February 12 after Worship

Monday Meditation & Wednesday Mid-Week Prayer

Mondays & Wednesday, 10 AM – 12 PM



ALERT



First Presbyterian Church 319-986-5851 **Share God's Love**

Mount Pleasant, IA 52641 <http://www.firstpresbyonline.org>

Volume 54 No. 2 firstpresbymtp@gmail.com February 2023

“8 Beatitudes of Jesus and the 8 Fold Path of Buddhism”

Lent is traditionally a time of prayer, contemplation, fasting, and intentionally turning back to following the way of Jesus. These practices refocus our relationship with God. Typically, one would pick a theme from scripture and a spiritual practice, such as gratitude or generosity, to center their Lenten journey. With the guidance of these traditions, we learn to “empty” ourselves of desires, expectations, control issues, and distractions and focus on being present with God and the circumstances of our lives as the really are, instead of how we wish they would be.

This is how I came upon this Sermon Series for Lent. In early January, I spent several days reading through the scriptures and planning out the sermons for the coming weeks and months. Originally, I thought the Lectionary assigned readings from the Sermon on the Mount and the Beatitudes for several Sundays in a row would make a nice sermons series between Epiphany and Lent.

However, during my continuing education time, I spent more time with the upcoming scriptures and sermons. In my studies, I discovered insights about the Beatitudes from Meister Eckhart, a German Catholic theologian, philosopher, and mystic, born c. 1260 – c. 1328. His work influences many Christians and non-Christians alike to this day.

Eckhart describes the Beatitudes as the most concise summary of the spiritual life of humanity. I found his statement confounding because I struggled with the Beatitudes. After all, Jesus says things like, “Blessed are those who mourn and Blessed are the poor in Spirit,” in the Beatitudes. Those don’t sound like blessings to me. But Eckart opened their meaning to me in new ways.

Eckhart says the Beatitudes derive their name from a state of being that is more equivalent today, with words like contentment, inner peace, rising above, transcending, or perfect acceptance. Eckart emphasizes the vocational and relational side of the Beatitudes as living to alleviate the things that cause suffering in the world and in ourselves.

As I studied, I read an article making a correlation between Eckart’s understanding of the 8 Beatitudes and the 8 fold path of Buddhism. I was amazed. The Eightfold Path of Buddhism and the Beatitudes of Jesus both provide a path to spiritual fulfillment. The Eightfold Path is a set of eight guidelines for ethical and mental development. It includes right understanding, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration. The Beatitudes, which are found in Matthew 5, are a set of eight blessings that provide guidance on how to live a life of righteousness and holiness. Both paths emphasize compassion, self-discipline, and non-attachment to material possessions. They also both stress the importance of cultivating inner peace and happiness, and living a life of service to others.

I expanded my original sermon series on the Beatitudes to explore in more depth the connections we might find during Lent between the 8 Fold Path and the 8 Beatitudes. I hope you will enjoy the series.

*Blessings,
Rev. Trey Hegar*

February Worship Helpers

Sunday Morning Building Assistant: **Matt Lawler**

Financial Clerk: **Carl Frank**

Greeters: **Curt & Ginnie Swarm**

Sunday, Feb. 5: Communion Preparer: **Pat Richenberger**

Liturgists:

Feb. 5 Steve Readinger

Feb. 12 Bonnie Kremer

Feb. 19 Kathy Schimm.

Feb. 26 Robyn Willham

Session Highlights

Session met on Monday, January 9. The following discussion/action items were moved, seconded, and passed:

- to release the following from the Music Task Force:
The Music Task Force and Session are very pleased to announce that *Adam Creager* has agreed to serve as bell choir director after *Marj Thimmesch* retires. Adam has a degree in Music Education from Iowa Wesleyan University and is band director for the Mount Pleasant Middle School. He and his wife *Mindy* have been ringing with the bell choir for a number of years. Please welcome Adam to the music leadership of this church.
- for the Scouts to hold their Pinewood Derby on Saturday February 11 from 1 – 7 PM in Fellowship Hall and to use Fellowship Hall for meetings 8:30 to 9:30 AM on March 11 and 18.
- for the Scribblers to continue to meet in the Gathering Space on the third Mondays at 1 PM (unless there are prior commitments).
- to refer a request to incorporate recycling bins to Building and Grounds.
- to approve the following Pulpit Supply: **Sarah Hegar** on January 15 and March 26, and **Dotte Decker** on March 5.
- to approve vacation for **Trey** from March 2 to March 9.

Bell Rehearsal Schedule for February

Below is the Bells rehearsal schedule for February:

Wednesday, February 1, 8, & 15
 5:20 PM **Soul Solo**
 5:40 PM **Soul Notes**
 6:15 PM **Sound Appeal**

Wednesday, February 22
 5:20 PM **Soul Solo**
 5:35 PM **Soul Notes**
 5:55 – 6:25 PM **Sound Appeal**

Treasurer's Report for December 2022

DECEMBER 2022	CURRENT MONTH	CURRENT MONTH	YEAR TO DATE	YEAR TO DATE	2022 YEAR
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	ACTUAL	BUDGET	BUDGET
General Pledges	\$17,971.00	\$21,095.00	\$253,824.00	\$232,043.00	\$235,138.00
From Endowment Fund	\$0.00	\$6,102.00	\$0.00	\$67,117.00	\$73,219.04
Other Revenue	\$417.00	\$262.00	\$24,558.00	\$19,888.00	\$20,150.00
Total Revenue	\$18,388.00	\$27,459.00	\$278,382.00	\$319,048.00	\$328,507.04
EXPENSES					
Pastor	\$10,904.00	\$10,464.00	\$107,578.00	\$114,207.00	\$124,671.82
personnel	\$9,815.00	\$9,788.00	\$99,135.00	\$110,055.00	\$120,222.22
Worship and Music	\$0.00	\$325.00	\$3,011.00	\$3,575.00	\$3,900.00
Adult Christian Education	\$50.00	\$192.00	\$285.00	\$2,108.00	\$2,300.00
Youth Christian Education	\$495.00	\$208.00	\$4,175.00	\$9,792.00	\$10,000.00
Stewardship	\$0.00	\$108.00	\$3,396.00	\$4,092.00	\$4,200.00
Building and Grounds	\$1,847.00	\$1,704.00	\$27,504.00	\$23,996.00	\$27,450.00
Operations	\$424.00	\$642.00	\$7,314.00	\$7,058.00	\$7,700.00
Technology	\$291.00	\$379.00	\$422.00	\$4,171.00	\$4,550.00
Mission	\$2,702.00	\$1,543.00	\$23,784.00	\$21,970.00	\$23,513.00
Special Giving	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Expenses	\$26,528.00	\$25,353.00	\$276,604.00	\$301,024.00	\$328,507.04
CASH INCREASE (DECR)	(\$8,140.00)	\$2,106.00	\$1,778.00	\$18,024.00	\$0.00

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

Jeff Willham, Stewardship Chair

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/2x46F6I>.

Rev. Trey Hegar

Monday Morning Meditation & Wednesday Mid-Week Prayer !

Every Monday & Wednesday morning from 10 AM to Noon, the Sanctuary lights and heat/AC will be on. All are welcome to use this time for prayer, meditation, candle lighting, and card writing. There will also be prayer cards available for you to leave a note to the pastor for specific prayer requests.

Presbyterian Women

Thursday, February 2 at 1:30 PM

PW will meet on Thursday, February 2 at 1:30 PM in the Gathering Space. **Charlene Hinrichs** will host, **Pat Richenberger** will cover the devotions, and **Liz Wasson** will cover Lesson #6. 2023 PW Brochures will also be available at the meeting with the year's schedule. All women are welcome to attend.

Mission Trip

February 5 – February 10

Please keep those attending the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance mission trip in your prayers, including **Pastor Trey Hegar**.

Book Group

Thursday, February 9 at 7 PM

Book Group will meet on Thursday, February 9 at 7 PM in the Gathering Space. Book discussion will be over *The Last Thing He Told Me* by Laura Dave. All are welcome to come join in the discussion and fellowship.

Here is a look at the upcoming books that will be covered:

March: *The Flag, the Cross and the Station Wagon*
by Bill McGibben

April: *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus

May: *Demon Copperhead: A Novel*
by Barbara Kingsolver

June: *Boys and Oils: Growing Up Gay
in a Fractured Land* by Taylor Brorby

Super Bowl Snacks for Sale

On Sunday, February 12, the Press On youth group will be selling snacks and the proceeds will go towards a local area mission of their choosing. They will be available in the Gathering Space that Sunday and in the office the Thursday and Friday before the Super Bowl.

Ash Wednesday Service

Wednesday, February 22 at 6:30 PM

Join us Wednesday, February 22 at 6:30 PM in the Sanctuary for an Ash Wednesday Service.

Shrove Tuesday on Ash Wednesday

Following Service

Wednesday, February 22

Pancake Day, or Shrove Tuesday, is the traditional feast day before the start of Lent on Ash Wednesday. Lent – the 40 days leading up to Easter – is traditionally a time of fasting, reflection and prayer. On Shrove Tuesday, Christians went to confession and were “shriven” (absolved from their sins). On Ash Wednesday, ashes are applied to a person’s forehead in the form of the cross as we say the words: “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” The ashes symbolize the dust from which God made us and the Lenten season of reflection, prayer, and fasting prepares us for Christ’s Resurrection on Easter Sunday. According to one church doctrine Feasting on Ash Wednesday is highly inappropriate.

Well, we are Reformed Protestants. We protest and reform. We celebrate Christ’s resurrection every day. So, we are flipping the script. Instead of pancakes on Tuesday. We will have ice cream social on Ash Wednesday. The Press-On youth group will host all who wish to come following a short devotional service and the placing of Ashes to mark the beginning of Lent. It is truly a somber observance. Yet, we know how the season ends with trumpets sounding as death is trampled under the foot of Christ. And so we will observe the traditional but then we will eat Ice Cream proclaiming victory because God is good!

Confirmation Mentors Needed!

Spring of 2023 will be a confirmation season. We are looking for Adults who would be willing to serve as a Confirmation Mentor. Responsibilities would include attending a weekend retreat (one overnight, 24 hours) with your youth on April 21-22, followed by six months of mentoring along with Pastors Trey and Sarah. We are using a new Confirmation model this year and are very excited about how it will teach young folks what it means to be a member of the church. Please contact **Sarah Hegar** with questions.

Yearbook Directories

2023 Yearbook Directories will be available on the Gathering Space table for those who wish to take one. Any corrections or updates need to notified to the church office. Thank you.

March ALERT Deadline

If you have something you'd like to add to the March ALERT, this note is for you. All newsletter articles, event announcements, notices, thank you's, congratulations, and prayer concerns are due to the office by **Thursday, February 16**. Thank you.

"LIKE and SHARE"

Our Church Events on Facebook and Social Media

As we continue in this digital age of post-COVID, our church is trying to maintain a positive presence on social media and encourage folks to join us for worship on YouTube. Help us spread the word about the good news happening at First Presbyterian by liking and sharing our social media posts!

Sarah Hegar, Director of Congregational Ministries



IowaWINS

Iowa WINS has adapted, and will continue to adapt, to the needs of the immigrant community. It's worth repeating our Vision and our Mission:

OUR VISION: Our communities will be inclusive and hospitable, welcoming people from across the world who chose to live, work, study and seek happiness here.

The purpose of IowaWINS is to establish a connection between immigrant families and other Mount Pleasant and Southeast Iowa neighbors.

In order to achieve that vision, the MISSION of IowaWINS is to:

- Develop relationships and partnerships within our communities and beyond to develop and implement solutions to common problems that immigrant residents face.
- Support the self-development of people in the immigrant community through connecting groups seeking to take initiative with resources.
- Build inclusive and hospitable relationships, providing educational, cultural, and service opportunities for all members of the community.
- Support children and people who came to the US as children in seeking to establish legal status in the US through assistance with application and legal fees to the degree possible with resources available.
- Advocate on behalf of immigrant rights to Iowa residents, government officials, office seekers and those developing public policy.

IowaWINS looks forward to continuing our work in the community and maintaining the flexibility to respond to new challenges.

Remember Meals by Nutrimos

Meals by Nutrimos offers a variety of freezer meals to purchase in order to help support the IowaWINS food pantry. You can order these meals three different ways:

1) By Phone

If you want to place an order by phone, please call the church office at **319-986-5851**. Note that office hours are 9 AM – 2 PM, Monday through Friday.

2) In-Person

You can place and pick up orders Monday through Friday, 9 AM – 2 PM in the church office. Orders are also accepted on the first and third Sunday after service (10:45 – 11:15 AM and Wednesdays from 3 – 6 PM in the Fellowship Hall (option of hot meal is currently not available). These times do not change unless an announcement is made.

3) Online

Meals by Nutrimos has a website in which you can place orders. Just visit iowawins.net/meals-by-nutrimos and scroll down to the menu items to select your meals. Note that orders online must be paid with online payment (credit/debit card, Paypal).

Meals by Nutrimos would like to thank its customers and volunteers for their continuous support of our meal ministry!

Make sure you keep up to date on all the things happening at Meals by Nutrimos by liking our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/mealsbynutrimos>.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Are you able to help prepare Nutrimos meals that support the food pantry? We need 1-2 people to work Wednesday afternoons for two or more hours between 2-6 PM. Volunteers are requested to work at least once a month. If you are interested in becoming a Meals by Nutrimos volunteer, please contact the church office.

thank you

We would like to thank **Barb Parker** for cake, **Terri Gordy, Patty Madden, Kathy Schimmelpfenning, Liz Wasson and Barb Welander** for salads which they provided for the **Ron Fye** family luncheon. Thanks also to **Sherla Arp and Becky Siberts** for the help they provided for the **Dave McCoid** reception. Appetizers were provided by **Sherla Arp, Dee Benge, Susan Farnsworth, Pat Richenberger and Liz Wasson**. Cookies were provided by **Char Hinrichs, Betty Lowe, Barb Miller and Becky Siberts**. Thanks to everyone who participated.

Charlene Hinrichs and Claudia Streeter,
Co-Chairs of the Funeral Courtesy Committee

PRAYER CONCERNS:

- **Jean Church, Sandy Memler**
- **Kelly Allen's niece, Marie Crews, who was diagnosed with breast cancer**
- **Susan Farnsworth's brother, Jeff Stanley**
- **Kent Bennett, Jennifer Dorothy, Andrew Rauenbuehler, Mia Gray**
- **Everly Kirkbride, a 3-year old recently diagnosed with rhabdomyosarcoma soft tissue cancer**
- **Leo Clark's mother, Nancy Aynes**
- **Lois Roth's brother (Mark Veldhizen) & sister-in-law (Kim Velduizen)**
- **Our shut-ins and those in care centers**
- **Our nation/world, as they and we deal with COVID-19**

If you have a prayer concern that you would like shared with our Pastors, our Presbyterian Prayer Chain, and/or our Congregation, please notify the office or fill out an orange prayer card found in the Gathering Space and in the church pews. Thank you.

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**
- 18 Sherla Arp**

- 20 Collin Baccam, Valerie Willham**
- 21 Logan Lee**
- 22 Merrick Lamm, Ken Madden,
Sam Van De Berg**
- 23 Allen & Jennifer Dorothy's Anniversary**
- 24 Doug Conrad, Marilyn Vincent**
- 25 Kenton Church**

- 26 Lucas Lee**
- 27 Karen Conrad, Tim Conrad,
MaKenzie Kauffman**
- 28 Ethan Brooks**

We'd like to celebrate your birthday and anniversary!
If you have a birthday and/or anniversary you'd like included in
our Newsletter, please notify the office.