

ALERT

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



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Monday - Friday, 9 AM - 2 PM



As we head into 2024, there is one constant we are all facing. That constant is uncertainty. What's going to happen in our personal lives with health or family transitions? What about our community? Will our businesses have new opportunities to boost our local economy? Will WWII start in 2024 with Russia, China, and the U.S. using nuclear warheads?

We face uncertainty heading into the New Year. There are a few things we can know with confidence: We will all grow tired of the Presidential election cycle commercials and debates. We know we can plan on natural disasters, superstorms, and unexpected family emergencies.

Our anticipatory dread about what might occur—next month or by this time next year — has ignited a contagion of worry. It is like a low-grade fever of fear festering inside of every person I know. We are staring headlong into the fog of the unknown future. We have near zero visibility. We can't see past today, and today's news stories do bode well for the forecast.

The Roman philosopher Seneca is credited with saying, "Luck happens when preparation meets opportunity." Yet, all of this uncertainty makes it very difficult to live into Seneca's wisdom to make future preparations. How can we know what opportunities to prepare for in the future while living with such uncertainty about our world?

Waking, living, working, relating, and sleeping in a shroud of shared apprehension— an intuitively, instinctually, feeling that a social catastrophe is ready to implode— is proving to be an adaptive challenge that none of us really knows how to navigate, let alone lead. Yet, as the church, we are called to do just that, lead.

In the business world, a piece of wisdom is offered about how to starting a successful business: Find a problem and offer a solution. The world suffers from uncertainty. That is a problem. The solution to uncertainty is not certainty. That type of overconfidence often exacerbates the dilemma: The opposite of uncertainty is Hope!

Jeremiah 29:11 says, "For I know the plans that I have for you," declares the Lord, 'plans for your welfare and not for calamity, plans to give you a future and hope.'"

Hope gives us the courage to move forward toward a better day. Hope casts a vision of what the good life embodies. Hope motivates, inspires, and gives direction in times of uncertainty. Hope gives the promise of a better day with Peace as the concrete goal, and Love is the catalyst that drives our efforts to lead with Joy proclaiming the Way of Jesus in a world of uncertainty.

Happy New Year!
Rev. Trey Hegar

Treasurer's Report for November 2023

Year to Date Revenue: \$298,382.00 Expenses: \$315,224.00; Cash Increase (Decrease): (\$16,842.00)

NOVEMBER 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	\$19,966.00	\$20,407.00	\$270,832.00	\$224,489.00	\$244,886.00
From Endowment Fund	\$0.00	\$8,063.00	\$0.00	\$88,689.00	\$96,752.17
Other Revenue	\$601.00	\$133.00	\$27,550.00	\$18,466.00	\$18,600.00
Total Revenue	\$20,567.00	\$28,603.00	\$298,382.00	\$331,644.00	\$360,238.17
<u>EXPENSES</u>					
Pastor	\$12,946.00	\$11,056.00	\$119,527.00	\$122,362.00	\$133,567.44
personnel	\$10,056.00	\$11,294.00	\$109,246.00	\$124,533.00	\$136,507.13
Worship and Music	\$141.00	\$267.00	\$2,241.00	\$4,283.00	\$4,550.00
Adult Christian Education	\$3.00	\$108.00	\$367.00	\$2,192.00	\$2,300.00
YouthChristian Education	\$706.00	\$283.00	\$6,268.00	\$10,217.00	\$10,500.00
Stewardship	\$116.00	\$110.00	\$3,944.00	\$4,690.00	\$4,800.00
Building and Grounds	\$1,901.00	\$1,890.00	\$43,672.00	\$27,160.00	\$31,175.00
Operations	\$852.00	\$663.00	\$8,269.00	\$7,371.00	\$8,050.00
Technology	\$0.00	\$358.00	\$365.00	\$3,942.00	\$4,300.00
Mission	\$310.00	\$1,437.00	\$21,325.00	\$22,307.00	\$24,488.60
Special Giving	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Expenses	\$27,031.00	\$27,466.00	\$315,224.00	\$329,057.00	\$360,238.17
<u>CASH INCREASE (DECR)</u>	(\$6,464.00)	\$1,137.00	(\$16,842.00)	\$2,587.00	\$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.

Jeff Willham, Stewardship Chair

Session Highlights

Session closed out the year with a gathering on Monday, December 11. The following item was moved, seconded, and passed:

- to approve the new Charter of the Parish Life Committee
- to table final approval of the 2024 budget until the 2024 expected pledge income is determined, which is also needed to determine Mission's budget
- to approve vacation for Trey on January 8 – 12
- to ask Endowment to allocate the Tithe to the 2023 income in order to cover the Building & Grounds deficit (beam repairs project)
- to proceed starting the front entry repair after Christmas
- for **Bob Mueller**, Elder Liaison for Mission; **Carol Chesnutt**, Elder Liaison for Stewardship; **Erica Redgate**, Elder Liaison for Christian Ed

Session will be moving to a new time in 2024; Session will meet on the second Sundays of the month following Worship in Peter's Room. The first meeting will be Sunday, January 14.

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

Annual Reports are due to the Office by Monday, January 8. If you have any questions, please contact the office.

January Worship Helpers

Sunday Morning Building Assistant:

Bryce Creager

Financial Clerk: **Deb Sinclair**

Greeters: **Curt & Ginnie Swarm**

Communion Preparer - 1/7:

Pat Richenberger

Liturgists:

Jan. 7 **Pat Heusmann** Jan. 14 **Matt Lawler**

Jan. 21 **Mike Tometich** Jan. 28 **Mike Vincent**



Presbyterian Women

Thursday, January 4 at 1:30 PM

PW will resume its regular meeting on the first Thursday of the month, January 4 at 1:30 PM in the Gathering Space. All women are welcome to come.



Book Group

Thursday, January 11 at 7 PM

Book Group will meet back up on Thursday, January 11 at 7 PM in the Gathering Space. We will be discussing *The Covenant of Water* by Abraham Verghese. The book for February is *The Wettest County in the World* by Walt Bondurant. All are welcome to come and join in the book discussion. Looking forward to seeing everyone in 2024!

Congregational Meeting with Annual Report

Sunday, January 28 after Worship

Join us for our Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 28 at the end of Worship. Our 2023 Annual Report and 2024 Budget will be presented. Reports will be available in the Gathering Space the Sunday before.



Painting Party with Annie Guldberg

January 21, 2-4 PM Fellowship Hall

(10 and up with adult sign-up)

Join us for an afternoon of fun and creativity! Annie will walk us step by step through a painting. All materials will be provided including a 14x18 canvas, which you will get to take home at the end of the class. \$25 per person, payable day of, cash or check. You must sign up by Monday, January 15 with the office or in the Gathering Space.

Upcoming Committee Meetings

Deacons

Monday, January 15, 4 PM, Gathering Space

Deacons will meet on Monday, January 15 at 4 PM in the Gathering Space. Please send agenda items to Tim Olson or the office by Friday, January 12.

Christian Education

Sunday, January 21, following Worship

Christian Education Committee will meet on Sunday, January 21 following Worship in Peter's Room.

Worship

Tuesday, January 23, 5:45 PM Gathering Space

Worship Committee will meet Tuesday, January 23 at 5:45 PM in the Gathering Space. Please send any agenda items to the office by Monday, January 22.

Parish Life

Tuesday, January 30, 5:30 PM Gathering Space

Parish Life Committee will meet Tuesday, January 30 at 5:30 PM in the Gathering Space. Please send any agenda items to the office by Monday, January 29.

Matthew 25 Book Study Begins in January

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. If cost is a concern, please talk to Sarah and we will be happy to order a book for you. There will be a sign-up for books in the Gathering Space. All discussions will take place in the Fellowship Hall following worship.

Reading/Discussion Schedule:

- **January 28 discussion:**
 - Individual Lens pgs. 1-113
- **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 Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Trip Leland, Mississippi February 4-10, 2024

The Presbytery of North Central Iowa's 2024 PDA mission trip will be to Leland, Mississippi, to help with rebuilding after the area was hit by an F-4 tornado on March 24, 2023. The cost will be \$225 per person for the full week or \$125 for half week. Participants will also be responsible for the cost of their travel and lodging to Leland and back.

We will be staying at Leland Presbyterian Church, arriving February 4 and departing February 10. The church can accommodate up to 30 volunteers (20 beds provided plus more on air mattresses). More information on the host site can be found on the Presbyterian Mission Trip page on our website. For those that do not wish to stay in a dormitory-style setting, there are numerous hotels in nearby Greenville, about 15 minutes from Leland.

Repair work is being coordinated by the Community Foundation of Washington County and several other faith-based non-profit organizations and will be in the Rolling Fork, MS area.

Completed registration forms should be emailed to Jeannie@presbyteries.org or mailed with your registration fee to Jeannie at the Presbytery Office (address on form). Applications must be received by January 3, 2024. Registration will not be considered complete without paid registration fee and all completed forms. Registration forms can be found on the church website under "Presbyterian Mission Trip." For more information or questions, please contact Pastor Trey.

Synod School Information Meeting

Sunday, February 4 after Worship, Peter's Room
(Synod School is July 21-26, Storm Lake, Iowa)

Have you heard folks talk about Synod School? What is it? When is it? Who is it for? How much does it cost? Plan to stay after worship to have your questions answered! You are guaranteed to hear more about this wonderful event for all ages.

College Students!

We need your address!

This semester the Press On Youth Group will be creating care packages for our college students. In order to receive one, we need your address! **Please email the office or Sarah before January 15.** Blessings on your studies!

January Birthdays & Anniversaries

3 Elaina Liechty

4 Gail Heater

12 Jordon Ashton

**13 Hailie Baccam, Sandy Breazeale,
Ann Corrigan, Karen Kauffman**

14 Stephanie Conrad, Annie Mills

15 Michaela Mathews, Marj Thimmesch

17 Kathy Schimmelpfennig

18 Paula Mohrfeld

19 Duane Wiley, Berdette Davis

22 Kathy Wiley

26 Mary Beth Young

27 Liz Wasson

29 Jennifer Roederer

31 Bob Breazeale

PRAYER CONCERNS:

- Sandy Memler, Maggie Epperson, 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 Velduizen)
- Our shut-ins and those in care centers
- Israel & Palestine; Ukraine

thank you

To My Friends Here at the Presbyterian Church,

I want to thank everyone who has stepped up to the plate for the Bayev family. I have to admit that I was out of my comfort zone when I took a leap of faith and became a sponsor. But you have all gone above and beyond with donating not only material things, but time as well, and have made everything go smoothly. I thank you each and every one, and may God richly bless you now and in the years ahead.

Gratefully, *Lea Bradley*

To Our Wonderful Church Family,

We cannot thank you enough for the outpouring of love you have given us. We do so appreciate all of the wonderful baby gifts, as well as the gift cards and monetary support. God bless you all.

Gratefully, *Nastasiia & Ivan Bayev and boys*

Thank you everyone for the congratulations and cards on our retirement. They are very much appreciated.

Bryce & Jane Creager

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.

Deadline for Yearbook corrections is Monday, January 22. Thank you.

February ALERT Deadline

If you have something you'd like to add to the February ALERT, this note is for you. All articles, thank you's, event announcements, notices, prayer concerns, and congratulations are **due to the office by Monday, January 22, 2024.**

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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January Events

Office Closed

Monday, January 1

Presbyterian Women

Thursday, January 4 - 1:30 PM, Gathering Space

Children's Moment with Communion

Sunday, January 7 - 9:45 AM, Sanctuary

Annual Reports Due to Office

Monday, January 8

Ordination & Installation of Elders & Deacons

Sunday, January 14 - 9:45 AM, Sanctuary

Session

Sunday, January 14 - 11 AM, Peter's Room

Deacons Meeting

Monday, January 15 - 4 PM, Gathering Space

Christian Education Meeting

Sunday, January 21 - 11 AM, Peter's Room

Painting Party

Sunday, January 21, 2-4 PM, Fellowship Hall

February ALERT & 2024 Yearbook Deadline

Monday, January 22

Worship Committee Meeting

Tuesday, January 23 - 5:45 PM, Gathering Space

Congregational Meeting with Annual Reports

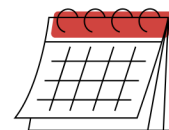
Sunday, January 28 - following Worship

Matthew 25 Book Study

Sunday, January 28 - 11 AM, Fellowship Hall

Parish Life Committee Meeting

Tuesday, January 30 - 5:30 PM, Gathering Space



RE:CREATION ALERT

Wednesday after School Program

January 2024

K – 5th Grade with Rev. Sarah Hegar



Re:Creation THANK YOU!

A big THANK YOU to all the adults and parents who work so closely with our children and youth programs. It has been an absolutely wonderful year. Thank you to all the Wednesday Re:Creation Rovers for December: **Ken & Patty Madden, Barb Miller, Erica and Scott Redgate, Suzi Morrison, Paula Hoenig, Linda Albright, Martha Wiley.** Special thanks to **Terri Gordy** for helping each week with supper and picking up pizzas when needed.

We also want to thank the Rec Center for allowing us to use their facilities for the pool and pizza party on December 20. We had so much fun wrapping up 2023! We made Christmas crafts and learned all about the birth of Christ.

In January, we look forward to more fun and learning as well as a movie day on January 24!

Re:Creation & Press On will not meet on December 27. We will resume on January 3.

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, January 7.

PRESS ON YOUTH ALERT

Middle School & High School

January 2024

with Rev. Sarah Hegar and Adult Advisors



Press On Youth Group Thanks!

We are very grateful each week for the folks who provide us with a meal. For December, we give thanks for the **Martin Family**, the **Kremer Family**, and the **Beauchamp's**. We also give thanks for **Erica Redgate** for providing hot cocoa for us to enjoy as we drove through the Festival of Lights. Sarah continues to be so grateful for **Erica Redgate** and **Kelly Allen** who serve as Advisors every week. The youth group is growing and it's because there is such great support!

Sign-up to Provide a Press On Youth Group Meal

A new sign-up sheet is on the Gathering Space table for the new year. This is a fun way to get to know some of the youth. They enjoy pizza, mac & cheese, tacos, breakfast for supper, hot dogs... You will serve about 15-20 people including adults. There is one vegetarian and a couple nut allergies. Talk to Sarah if you're interested or have more questions!

More THANK YOU'S!

Thank you so much to everyone who participated in the Christmas Pageant! It was so fun to see everything come together. This church is blessed to have many people who give their time, energy, and talents so freely.