

# Midtown Manna



First  
Presbyterian  
Church of Omaha

## Food For Thought

September 2019

### Thrive

The original Middle English meaning of the word thrive was “to grow or increase”. Our modern-day understanding is “to flourish or prosper”.

Are you thriving? Not only in the sense of prospering, but are you ...

Growing?  
Increasing?  
Flourishing?

Isn't it hard to measure your life? How does one measure their level of growth when it comes to your own life? Life is more than any sort of quantifiable base. You cannot measure your satisfaction in life, nor can you measure relationships with people.

Psalm 92:12-13 tells us “The righteous flourish like the palm tree, and grow like a cedar in Lebanon. They are planted in the house of the Lord; they flourish in the courts of our God.”

I think what the psalmist was talking about when they wrote about flourishing in the courts of our God has to do with our overall living. Not flourishing in terms of money, or possessions, but flourishing like a strong cedar tree. If you talk to a farmer, they will tell you that cedars are a problem because they grow so easily, and so fast they can overtake things quickly. We are called to be like cedars, growing so wildly that we can hardly keep up with things. Excitement abounding in our lives. Growing in our daily walk with Jesus Christ, and growing closer together as His creation.

Let's do a life checkup. Do you feel like you are thriving in your life? If not, what would it look like if you were?

So... are you thriving?  
Is your faith growing?  
Is your satisfaction in life increasing?  
Are your relationships with people flourishing?

If any of our answers are less than “absolutely and I love it!”, then there may be some work for us to do, surrounding faith and friendships. God desires for us to thrive, and if we are not, it is time to stop doing what was holding us back, and begin living our lives as people who are thriving in our life for God!

In Him,  
Pastor Jon

*Manna is the name of the food which was eaten by the Israelites during their travels in the desert during the Exodus from Egypt. God provided the Israelites with Manna from Heaven each day, sustaining them throughout their journey in the wilderness until they reached the Promised Land.*

## *Pantry News*

Pantry volunteers are always needed and appreciated to set up and serve every Thursday from 3:15-5:30 & to unload the truck the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month at 8:30.

This is a wonderful outreach opportunity and a great way for students to stay connected during the summer. The next pantry truck to unload is scheduled for Thursday, September 19 at 8:30 a.m. **Please call Judy Money for more information. 402-557-8674.**

## *September Mission Focus Kellom School*

It was early May before the end of the school year when we were delivering fruit and yogurt cups to the 65 teachers and staff at Kellom School, a treat for those last grueling days before summer vacation. It was just as the bell rang: we were hanging in the office as the Principal fired up the microphone (telephone) for morning announcements.

"Good Morning Kellom All-Stars!" She opened with, followed by everyone reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. All of us in the office faced the flag with hand over heart and recited along with the 425 kids and staff in the building at once. I thought of this clean, orderly building, the warm and dedicated staff finishing up another year of accomplishment. A student, probably 10 years old, then took the phone and made further announcements. Then the day began. My eyes teared up as I thought of the great commitment everyone in that building was making to be sure that they were delivering and receiving their best.

First Presbyterian Church has long had a relationship with Kellom Public School. Over the years we have provided backpacks and school supplies, dinners and treats for the teachers and staff. We hope that we too contribute to making Kellom a great place to teach, support, and learn.

This year with the building of the new "Gifford Park" school, half of the Kellom student population, with teachers and staff have been moved to the new site. There are new principals at both schools. We will have a new contact person at Kellom, and not sure when. The Mission team is deciding if we can serve both Kellom and Gifford Park in the coming years.

Fortunately, we met with Rochelle, our long time Kellom contact, at the end of the school year to map out how and when we can support Kellom for 2019-2020. We have plans. Even though we will be encountering lots of change in the coming school year, our mission remains clear and strong: donuts and coffee, pizza on Parent Teacher nights, backpacks, underwear, warm winter coats, mittens, hats and prayers. We thank our congregation for generously participating along with us in this endeavor. We are proud to be in the constellation of the Kellom "All-Stars".

**FUN FACT:** Alumni of Kellom include Fred Astaire, Roger and Gale Sayers, Bob Gibson, Dr. Catherine Pope, and Brenda Council.

## *Upcoming Crossroads Connection Dates for 2019*

The next Sunday evening that we will be leading worship and providing meals at Crossroads Prison ministry is on September 15<sup>th</sup>.

If you would like to help with this ministry, please talk to Kathy Stockham. We will also be serving on November 3.

## *Neighbors United*

At the end of June Neighbors United Community meals has closed its door after over ten years.

Thank you to all who have supported this vital ministry to our neighbors over the years.

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## Prayer Shawl Ministry

All are invited to join in our prayer shawl ministry as we knit or crochet together and pray over our creations to be given to those in need of prayer or comfort.

Our next meeting will be on September 17. If you know of someone in need of a prayer shawl, please contact Melissa Davis or Phyllis Phillips.



Have you recently experienced the loss of a loved one? Are you having a difficult time dealing with your grief? It may be hard for you to feel optimistic about the future right now. If you've lost a spouse, child, family member, or friend, you've probably found there are not many people who understand the deep hurt you feel. GriefShare may be just what you need. GriefShare is a special seminar and support group for people grieving loss of someone

close.

We are seeking to once again offer this 13-week GriefShare support group. The time and date of this group will be set according to the schedule of our participants. If you or someone you know would like to be a part of this support group please talk with Pastor Jenni, Leanne Johnson or call the church office.



## Learn, Grow, and Serve by Becoming a Stephen Minister

*For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Luke 11:10 (NRSV)*

Do you have gifts for caring, encouragement, and listening? If so, please prayerfully consider becoming a Stephen Minister. *We are looking to* train another class of Stephen Ministers this Fall and would love to have YOU join the team. Stephen Ministers provide emotional and spiritual support and care to people who are going through a difficult time, such as divorce, grief, hospitalization, unemployment, terminal illness, relocation, chronic illness, or loneliness. To find out more about becoming a Stephen Minister or how you or someone you know could be matched with a Stephen Minister, talk with one of our Stephen Ministers today: *Leanne Johnson, Sherri Krivanek, Leanne White or Pastor Jenni.*

## Music Notes

**Music at First Presbyterian** Now that summer is drawing to a close, it is time for all of the musical ensembles of the church to return and take their place in supporting and enriching Sunday worship.

**Chancel Choir** will again rehearse at 7:15 every Wednesday night, beginning rehearsals on Wednesday, August 28th, and sing in worship every Sunday, starting on September 8th.

**Adonai Singers** will rehearse at 8:15 on Wednesday nights, with the exception of the Wednesday night that precedes the third Sunday of the month, and will sing in worship on the second and fourth Sundays of the month.

**Handbells** will rehearse at 8:15 on the Wednesday night that precedes the third Sunday of the month, and will play in worship on the third Sunday of the month.

On September 15th, all of the music ensembles of the church, Chancel Choir, Adonai Singers, Children's Choir, and Handbells, will contribute their musical gifts in worship as we observe Music Dedication Sunday. It will be an exciting year of music at First Presbyterian Church of Omaha when everyone who has a heart for worshiping God through song steps forward and contributes their energy, talent, and ability to making a celebration statement through music in worship. I'm looking forward to hearing you make a joyful noise!

Tim Houfek, Music Director  
thoufek@fpcomaha.org

THRIVE  
WATER  
GROW  
GRACE



There is a song by Casting Crowns that has been playing in my mind on repeat for a while now. The words are this,

*"So living water flowing through God we thirst for more of You. Fill our hearts and flood our souls with one desire. Just to know You and to make You known we lift Your name on High. Shine like the sun made darkness run and hide. We know we were made for so much more than ordinary lives. It's time for us to more than just survive. We were made to thrive!"*

We were made to Thrive! To flourish! To prosper!

Our theme for this program year is *Thrive!*

I love the image that word conjures... especially when it comes to our life of faith. We are to *Thrive* in our relationship with God as we grow in our faith. We are to *Thrive* in our relationship with others as we live in community. We are to *Thrive* in the ways that we serve. We are to *Thrive* in our worship!

Here are just a few ways that you can *Thrive* this year:

**Grow:**

•**Sunday Morning:** Sunday classes begin at 9:00am and we offer something for everyone from the youngest to the oldest.

•**Midweek @ Midtown:** Beginning at 4:30 in Jenks lounge we will be offering an 8 week Adult Bible study class reading through the Bible. The Chapel will be available for a time of prayer and meditation from 4:30-6:30. Dinner @ 5:45 followed by Youth Group, Midweek Kids and an Adult study class.

•**New Discipleship small groups** are starting in soon! This is a great opportunity to *Thrive* in your faith as we journey through life together.

**Community:**

•Seek out opportunities to join with others in fellowship through one of our **PUFF** (Presbyterian United for Fun) trips

•Join with others once a month on a Tuesday evening with our **Prayer Shawl Ministry.**

•Invite new friends to join you for **lunch after church**...everyone needs to eat!

**Serve:**

•Opportunities are endless for serving our community every Thursday at the **Hand-up Food Pantry.**

- Become a part of our **Prayer team** – either by email or phone tree – and lift up others in prayer.
- Consider becoming a **Stephen Minister** and serving those who are hurting in our community.
- Or perhaps there is a project that is near and dear to your heart... **invite others to serve** alongside you.

**Worship:**

- Consider lending your talents to enhance our worship by joining the **choir** or **hand bell ensemble**.
- **Invite friends or co-workers** to join you as you come to worship on Sunday
- Consider being a part of our **Welcome Team**.

So, how are you going to Thrive this year? How will you Thrive as you serve? How will you Thrive in your faith? How will you Thrive in community? How will you Thrive in Worship? I am looking forward to all this year holds as we seek to *Thrive* together! I hope you will join in this adventure and see how you can flourish.

Blessings,  
Pastor Jenni

*The righteous thrive like a palm tree and grow like a cedar tree in Lebanon.  
Planted in the house of the LORD, they thrive in the courts of our God.  
They will still bear fruit in old age, healthy and green  
Psalm 92:12-14 (HCSB)*

***Sunday Morning Schedule: Begins September 8***

8:45 am – 11:45 am	Nursery Care Provided
9:00 am – 10:00 am	Christian Education Hour for all ages in Millard Hall
Adult Class	<u>The Present Word</u> , led by Amy Rodie
Children & Youth Classes	
	Preschool
	Kindergarten – 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade
	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade – 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade
	9 <sup>th</sup> Grade – 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade
10:30 am -Worship	Godly Play following Children’s Message (1 <sup>st</sup> grade & younger)

***Midweek @ Midtown: Begins September 11***

4:30 pm	Adult Bible study
5:45 pm	Dinner
6:30 pm	Midweek Kids
	Youth Group
	Adult Study

***Nursery Ministry***



Our nursery provides childcare in a loving, nurturing environment for infants through three-year-olds. Nursery care is provided Sunday morning during Sunday school (9am-10am) and Worship (10:30am) from 8:45 am until 15 minutes after the completion of Worship approximately 11:45 am. On Wednesday nights, childcare is provided from 6:00pm until 7:30pm during Midweek @ Midtown.

Our goal is to provide a safe and nurturing environment for each and every child. If you have any questions about FPC’s childcare, please call Pastor Jenni 402.345.5383.



FALL 2019  
RESPONDING TO GOD'S GRACE

## Adult Discipleship Sunday Morning— The Present Word

"Responding to God's Grace"

The Fall quarter will focus on God's gift of faith and how we respond to it both personally and communally. Together we will discover how the Bible shows us how God's grace affects the lives of all believers, as demonstrated in obedience, gratitude, and holy living.

**This Sunday morning class meets in Millard Hall at 9:00am beginning September 8.**



## CHILDREN & YOUTH DISCIPLESHIP

*Godly Play: age 7 & younger*

All children are invited to participate in worship each Sunday morning.

Younger children, following the children's message, may exit to Millard Hall to participate in Godly Play. What is Godly Play? Children have an innate sense of the presence of God. The Godly Play approach helps them to explore their faith through story, to gain religious language and to enhance their spiritual experience through wonder and play.



## Sunday Morning Kids

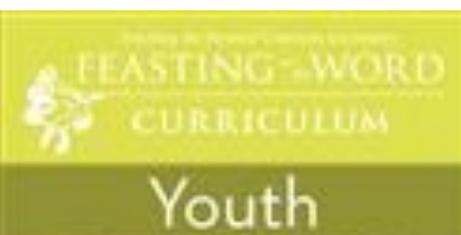
All of us here at First Presbyterian hope you had a wonderful summer, but we are thrilled to have you back and ready to experience God. Our first day back is Sunday September 8<sup>th</sup>. For those of you who don't know, our morning together will begin at 9:00am in the Temple as we gather, worship and head off on our adventures for the day. Each week we will experience the Bible story in a new ways like Art, Science, Drama, Technology, and so much more. See you there!



Every Sunday following Sunday School we will end our time together by making a joyful noise for the Lord! New this year from 10:00-10:20 we will have our children's choir. This choir will perform every 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday during service and at other special services such as Palm Sunday. In order for this program to flourish it is critical for the youth to attend as many rehearsals as possible to ensure they feel comfortable with the material. I can't wait to sing with you! AJ Baratta

## 6-8th Grade Sunday School

Brand new this year we have our 6-8 grade bible study taught by Susan Smith! This is a new program that hopes to help familiarize our youth with the bible itself. Even as adults it is easy to get intimidated by the bible, but by taking an in depth look at how and why it was written we hope to use the bible as a tool for understanding and faith formation.



Sunday morning our Youth will be studying God's word using Feasting on the Word. Together we will explore our personal and communal identity in Jesus Christ through meaningful community-building experiences, engaging Bible study, and relevant learning activities. Biblical stories will come alive in new and creative ways.

In response to God's amazing, unconditional love, youth will be challenged to put their faith into action as they grow to understand themselves as Christ's disciples.

# MidWeek @ MidTown

**DINNER** | **ADULT**  
**CLASSES** | **YOUTH**  
**ACTIVITIES**

Join us September 11 as Midweek @ Midtown kicks off! Dinner will be served from 5:45pm-6:15pm. After dinner, at 6:30, our children, youth and adult programs begin.

If you will be planning to join us for dinner don't forget to RSVP by signing up on the bulletin board on Sunday morning or calling the church office by Tuesday afternoon.

This will help us to be better stewards of our resources as we prepare and serve meals.



## 4:30 Bible Study

Join us Wednesday afternoons in Jenk's lounge for an 8-week Bible study on The Writings.

*The Books of the Bible* presents the books of the Bible in a fresh yet ancient arrangement that helps you see the unfolding drama of Scripture more easily. Many distractions have also been eliminated so readers can experience Scripture the way its original authors intended. There are no chapter and verse numbers, no study notes, no cross references or footnotes, and no red letters. In NIV, *The Books of the Bible: The Writings* we will find wisdom in stories, poetry, and songs as we read (Psalms, Lamentations, Song of Songs, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Job, Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah, Esther, and Daniel)

**Wednesdays @ 4:30 in Jenk's lounge beginning September 11.**

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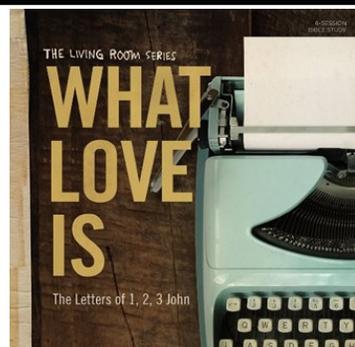
— ON —  
**THE REFUGEE  
CRISIS**

## 6:30 Adult Study

Refugees in America. It's a tough topic, both at a local community level and from a national policy perspective. Through this study we will seek to bring perspective and meaningful conversations around this topic through eight unique perspectives from experienced authors from renowned organizations such as World Relief and Church World Service that provide insight into refugee stories and experiences.

*The Dialogues On: The Refugee Crisis* offers us differing dialogues on today's situation for refugees in America, helping unpack the issue and drive conversations. Join in the conversation for this nine-week discussion to turn conflict into community.

**Wednesdays @ 6:30 in Jenk's lounge beginning September 11.**



## Women's Bible Study

The Letters of 1, 2 & 3 John were written to encourage followers of Jesus to remain faithful to the truth. As believers we are challenged to look at contrasting themes such as walking in the light instead of darkness, truth versus lies and deception, loving God more than loving the world, and the meaning of true fellowship and community rather than shallowness. This 7-session study not only reveals the heart of John but also the heart of Jesus.

**Tuesdays @ 10:30 in Jenk's lounge beginning September 10**

**midweek**  
**KIDS**

Our midweek kids program is kicking back off September 11<sup>th</sup>. Join us each week from 6:20-7:30 in Millard Hall for a different way to learn about and interact with God. We will experience his presence through games, craft, food, and so much more!



## Discipleship Small Groups

Are you interested in developing a deeper relationship with Christ? Would you like to be a part of a discipleship small group? We are getting ready to launch new discipleship groups for the 2019-2020 school year and would love to have you join us.

Please talk with Pastor Jenni to find out more, or if you would like to be involved.



## Rally Sunday!!!!

With Labor Day comes the official end of summer which can mean only one thing...our programs here at First Presbyterian Church are back in full swing with something for EVERYONE!

Sunday September 8<sup>th</sup>, is Rally Sunday and the perfect opportunity for you to see firsthand all the opportunities we have to *Thrive!* Throughout Calvin Hall we will have information about areas of ministry where you can use your talents and

get involved, whether that is Stephen Ministry, choir, Presbyterian Women, or joining one of many ministry teams that serve our church and community.

Rally Sunday also includes a luncheon and carnival on the front lawn following worship. You won't want to miss this annual event and wonderful time of fun, fellowship and food!

Be sure to check it out all the ways we can *Thrive* during Rally Sunday, **September 8!**



## Faith & Film

September 17 @ 6 pm

dinner, movie & a conversation

Join us for an evening of faith and film as we watch *End of the Spear* followed by a time of conversation about the film and our faith. Dinner will be provided but RSVP's are needed.



## First Presbyterian Church of Omaha Women's Retreat

*Oh! May the God of green hope fill you up with joy,  
fill you up with peace, so that your believing lives,  
filled with the life-giving energy of the Holy Spirit,  
will brim over with hope!*

## \* September 20-22, 2019 at Camp Calvin Crest

*Joy-full | Peace-full | Hope-full*

Sometimes we find ourselves with nothing but an empty cup. Various circumstances have drained all that once filled it. So now we are trying to drink from an empty cup!

Come away for the weekend and be refreshed and refilled to overflowing.

**\*See registration form included in this newsletter for more information**



Did you know that God is a foodie? All throughout the pages of scripture we see the savory beauty of God's creation and provision.

Join Joy Heller for this 6+ week course where we will truly *Taste & See* as we make a connection between scripture and the culinary art of cooking.

Reserve your spot today!

See you around the table!

**Mondays @ 6:30 pm in the Kitchen beginning September 16**



### *Senior Youth Mission Trip Report*

Thank you so much for your support of our youth this past July. We had an incredible time in Nashville acting as the hands and feet of Christ. From serving food to cleaning and organizing to spending an entire day working with some incredible children, we have all been truly blessed by this opportunity. Thank you again for making it happen!

AJ Baratta

### *Triennium Report*



With my first triennium under my belt I can now see why everyone who has attended has fallen in love. There is nothing quite like seeing 5000 passionate youth living the words of Christ. Sean and I feel incredibly humbled to represent our church at this conference. I invite everyone to ask Sean and I about our experiences so we can share that incredible growth with all of you personally!

AJ Baratta

### *Middle School Girl's Bible Study*

Last spring a group of middle school ladies were wanting more, so we here at Frist Presbyterian are happy to provide. I am happy to share we are continuing our study looking for lovely. This incredible study helps empower our women of tomorrow. By offering the guidance of Christ in this time of growth and discovery we hope to make Jesus a focal point in their lives. We hope to see you there!

### *Calling all kids 4<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grade!*

[4:12]

After an incredible **second** year 4:12 Tweens is back and ready for more. This unique group is 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders. We will meet on the third Sunday of the month at 4:12 in the afternoon for fun, food, and other festivities.

See you **Sunday September 15<sup>th</sup> @ 4:12pm - 6:30pm!**

\*4:12 Tweens comes from 1 Timothy 4:12 which says, "Don't let anyone put you down because you're young. Teach believers with your life: by word, by demeanor, by love, by faith, by integrity."

# COMMUNITY



nightLIGHT in Midtown is an open-house of sorts.

The Outreach and Evangelism team would like to invite everyone to be a part of the moment as we open our Sanctuary on Friday evening, August 30 from 6:00-8:00 pm.

As the Night Market is taking place in Turner Park that evening, it is our desire to provide a quiet place for people in our community to come, relax, pray, and explore.

Come join in a night of Light in Midtown.



It has been so much fun getting to know the young people at our church this summer! Even though summer maybe over our fun certainly isn't. On September 20 at 7:00 pm I hope you can join us as we attempt to steal an incredibly large diamond from a quirky collector.

If you would like to join in that Escape Room adventure, please reach out to AJ Baratta at [ajbaratta@fpcomaha.org](mailto:ajbaratta@fpcomaha.org) for more information.



## *College Age Fellowship Opportunities*

Even though school maybe back in session there are plenty of college-age young adults still around! This month I hope you will join us on September 20 at 7 PM at craft axe throwing. It is a great way to destress and have some fun.

I hope to see you there!

## *Hearing Amplifiers*

Hearing amplifiers are available in a basket in the South Narthex.

The Welcome Team will put them out before each service.

If you have any questions, please contact Phyllis Phillips or a member of the Welcome Team.

## *PUFF (Presbyterians United For Fun) Trips for September*

On Saturday, **September 7<sup>th</sup>**, we will visit Lee Simmons Wildlife Safari, have lunch at Parkers Smokehouse, shop in Ashland and stop at Bakers Candies in Greenwood. We will meet in the church parking lot at 9:00 am. A sign-up sheet will be available on the bulletin board in Calvin Hall.

Our next outing will be on Saturday, **September 28<sup>th</sup>** to attend the Coca Cola Days in Atlantic, Iowa. We will have lunch there and then stop and shop in Walnut, Iowa's Antique city. We will meet in the church parking lot at 8:30 am.

A sign-up sheet is available on the bulletin board in Calvin Hall.

### *September Anniversaries*

Michael & April Jewell	September 2
Ted & Julie Symens	September 10
Greg & Arlis Dowding	September 14
Jim & Mary Wilson	September 19
Jeff & Michaela Kanoski	September 22
Jim & Susan Kawamoto	September 23
Dennis & Bonnie Brown	September 25

If we missed your birthday or anniversary, please let us know! Contact Sherri at [spetersen@fpcmaha.org](mailto:spetersen@fpcmaha.org) or call 402-345-5383.

### *September Birthdays*

Jan Jackson	September 5
Jerry Mahoney	September 5
Bonnie Jensen	September 6
Pat Rock	September 6
Trudy Darling	September 9
Ryan Grauf	September 10
Declan Shockey	September 10
Lori Justman	September 12
Ashley Keenan	September 12
Charlotte Goodwin	September 13
Lukas Heidebrecht	September 13
Ann Henningsen	September 14
Kaitlynn Johnson	September 14
Kathy Heidebrecht	September 15
Leanne Johnson	September 15
Gary Kastrick	September 15
Salome Majeres	September 15
Karen Morrison	September 15
Brad Davis	September 16
Nick Krivanek	September 16
Megan Black	September 17
Jeff Hogue	September 17
Susan Bay	September 18
Barb Kastrick	September 19
Arthur Smith	September 19
Doug Walters	September 19
Braden Nelson	September 20
Betty Sender	September 20
Nancy Girmus	September 21
Bonnie Brown	September 22
Tyler Keenan	September 22
Lisa Boyd	September 23
Ken Justman	September 24
Kathy Cowles	September 25
Angie Beutel	September 29

### *Trustees Flooring Project*

The Trustees are continuing a Fundraising Drive to cover the cost of replacing the tile in the hall and office on the East Entry. The cost is almost \$19,000.00, which converts to around \$5.00 per board.

We are asking you to become a "Board" member by making a donation to help cover the cost of the new floor. Donations can be directed to the Church office.

Thank you for your support in this effort and all else you do.  
Gary Kastrick

## *Bottom Page Thoughts*

### **“Finding God in a Rock”** by Sherri Petersen

We recently went on a Petersen Family Vacation; a tradition which began nearly 20 years ago when the whole Petersen clan, 12 in number at that time, rented an RV and traveled to Atlanta, Georgia. The trip was scheduled to coincide with a graduation celebration for the daughter of a long-time minister friend of the family. The joke was that after being trapped in a 36-foot RV for ten days, we would either kill each other or develop extremely close bonds...luckily it was the latter. At a KOA camp in Tennessee, we arrived in the middle of the night and were told to check in later. I waited for the office to open the next morning, and was greeted by a clerk who didn't look up from her paperwork as I answered questions. She asked my name, address and then how many adults in our party. "Six," I answered. "How many kids?" Again I said six. Only then did she look up, with an expression of shock on her face and in a thick southern drawl asked, "Y'all have **12 people** in that thing?"

Since then, every year we travel to various places (not in an RV...we have long outgrown one of those!) We try to stay close enough to home in order to travel by car, although one year we did fly to California and Las Vegas. In Vegas we squeezed 12 into a minivan for a trip to Hoover Dam, but that is a whole other story!

This year, we took our fourth trip to Colorado. We love the low-humidity and the beautiful scenery as well as the many outdoor activities. I knew that we would be limited with Keith in a wheelchair, but had hoped we could take advantage of handicap accessible areas. Frisco is a bit higher in altitude than the other places we have visited and unfortunately it hit Keith pretty hard. He seemed fine at first, then started to suffer from confusion and became very weak. A trip to the ER resulted in six hours of tests, antibiotics for an infection and 24/7 oxygen. The doc said that they treat a minimum of 10 people every day there for altitude sickness and it affects people of all ages and conditions. The oxygen helped, but his general weakness meant that we spent most of the vacation in the rental house, big enough for all 23 of us to stay. Some days the reality of his condition hit me pretty hard. Keith and I were always the "get-up-and-get-moving" people on vacations. We never sat around for long and were always eager to get out exploring and pushing the others to rise and shine looking for the next adventure. This year we were so thankful to be surrounded by the whole family, but it was vastly different from other trips. We decided to take our pup Caly with us, which turned out to be a wonderful decision, as she was a welcome distraction during the quiet times when the rest of the family was out and during the wearisome nights when it seemed almost impossible to keep my eyes closed and mind turned off.

After one especially long and sleepless night, I took Caly outside. Suffering from exhaustion, fear and sadness I realized I was having trouble finding God, even while in the middle of His glorious creation. I experienced His blessings in my kids and grandkids who make everyday special. I saw His power in the mountains. I sensed His tenderness in the birds of the trees and a family of foxes living under the back porch; I felt His gentleness in the light, cool breeze which smelled so fresh; yet my heart was longing for His presence in what seemed to be an very empty space. I found myself talking to God through the mountains and thought about David in Psalm 121 crying out "I lift up my eyes to the hills-- where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of Heaven and earth. indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep."

When things don't go as planned: I cry out to God.

When disappointments loom: I cry out to God.

When fear overwhelms me: I cry out to God.

When tears blind me: I cry out to God.

When too much hurt fills my heart: I cry out to God.

When it all happens at once: I cry, I scream, I beg...and I doubt.

As I continued to walk around the yard, not wanting to go back inside until I could control the tears, my eyes were drawn downward to a bright flower and next to it was a rock, shaped like a heart. Like the promise in Isaiah 41:10: "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand," I imagined God saying, "The mountains may be too vast for you to grasp, the wind may be too illusive for you to hold onto, but know that you are a part of me and you are always in My heart, even when you can't feel Me in yours."

I realize there will be tougher days ahead, but He is always with me, on vacation and every day. If I can't find him in the majesty of the mountainside, He will show Himself in the simplicity of a rock on the ground.



# WORSHIP

## *Shares and Prayers*

**Prayer is such a powerful thing, and when we gather together as the Body of Christ to lift our voices in prayer, God can do amazing things.**

**Please keep the following in your thoughts and prayers throughout the month.**

**New:** Scott Darling \* Keith Petersen \* Mary Buford \* Diggins family on the arrival of Emma Rae Diggins, August 15<sup>th</sup> \* Larry Brennan (Amy Smith's grandfather) died August 8

**For Peace and Comfort to the Families of Those who Died:** James Kindig (Melissa McBride's father) \* Marva Reese (Sondra's Mother-in-law) Elmer Reynolds (Cindy Wolf's father) \* RH Fanders \* Anona Trutna (Tim Houfek's sister) \* Jill Oestmann \* Bill Hudson and Family \* Lois Ellwanger \* Anne Swanson

**For Healing & Strength/Blessing & Guidance:** Jane Adams \* Natalie Bauerkemper \* Bill Beatty \* Doris Buford \* Pat Carsner \* Christine \* John Davis \* Donald \* Arlis Dowding \* Steven Durant \* Keith Gustafson \* Heather \* Larry Heidebrecht \* Loretta Heidorn \* Maryellen Johnson \* Jennifer Kneibler \* Larry MacDonald \* Peggy McDonald \* Paula Peek \* Diana Simons \* Pam Smith \* Louise Rodriguez \* Stryker \* Leanne Malecha White \* Kathy Wilson \* Wayne Woodard

**For Those On-Going Special Prayers of Care:** Don Brewer \* Ann Brietenbauch \* Jean Carter \* Esther Dye \* Gwen Elsasser \* Betty Fulton \* Lois Goss \* JoAnn Haafke-Anderson \* Shirley Hancock \* Martha Helligso \* Jeff Hogue \* Carol Hunter \* Emily Irwin \* Jon \* Pauline Kawamoto \* Tyler Keenan \* Connie Krause \* Ralph Kroupa \* Bee Lowrey \* Linda Lynch \* Lyndsay MacDonald \* Doug Marr \* Kathy McDonald \* Lindsey McKee \* Mary McLendon \* Karen Morrison \* Verlyn Olsen \* Grace Perleberg \* people of Boyd County \* Pat Rock \* Danny Simms \* Dolly Wilson

**For Those with Cancer:** Alex Barrett \* April Clark \* Debbie Donahoo \* Steven Durant \* Dee Engelbert \* Sally G \* Phyllis Gentry \* Emily Irwin \* Michelle Kirkpatrick \* Michelle Miles \* Linda Nelson \* Norma Olsen \* Leona Post \* Michelle Sheets \* Kim Shillito \* Heather Sjodin \* Bill Spransy \* Chae Starks \* Terry \* Velvet \* Teri Viseck \* Michelle Williamson \* Isaac Wolff

**\*The prayer requests we receive will be published on this prayer list for one month's time. We would be glad to renew the request, simply let us know.**

**Prayer Requests can be emailed to [spetersen@fpcmaha.org](mailto:spetersen@fpcmaha.org)**

*The FPC Sunday sermons are now available on-line.*

The sermons can be streamed directly from the First Presbyterian Church website ([fpcmaha.com](http://fpcmaha.com)) or downloaded for portability.

To see a list of sermons ready to stream, please follow this link:  
<http://www.fpcmaha.org/media/>

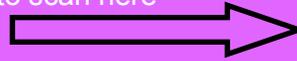


# MISCELLANEOUS

*E-Giving:  
E-asy  
E-fficient  
E-ssential*

Want to give electronically to First Presbyterian Church?

You can by visiting the website([www.fpcomaha.org](http://www.fpcomaha.org)) or use your smart device to scan here



## *Parking /Building Reminders*

The refrigerators throughout the buildings will be cleaned out on the first Tuesday of every month. Please mark anything you want to keep. Also, for the safety of all, please park in designated areas only. The alley can be used for immediate loading and unloading only. Vehicles must not be left unattended. Thank you for your cooperation.

## *Church Van Info*

The van drivers are more than happy to pick people up and bring them to church, and to return people to their homes, but due to insurance concerns, the church van drivers are not permitted to make stops for errands or lunch breaks.

## *Pictures, Please!*

If you have pictures of church events from 2019, please share them! You can email pictures to [pictures@fpcomaha.org](mailto:pictures@fpcomaha.org). Pictures may be used before church and/or at the annual meeting. Thanks!

## *Church Web Site [fpcomaha.org](http://fpcomaha.org)*

Our goal is to keep our website fresh and full of the latest information pertaining to news and events here at FPC. Contact Pastor Jenni if you would like to make a submission.

## *2019 Per Capita: \$39.55*

Per Capita is per member dollar amount that each church pays to our Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly. This is to help cover the costs of having resources available to us from these higher governing bodies. These resources appear in the form of staff members, (like an Executive Presbyter or Stated Clerk), Call Process help when calling a pastor (like the Church Leadership Connection national database), our regular Presbytery and Synod meetings, and national General Assemblies, as well as various educational resources for all Presbyterians.

Many church members have made a decision to pay their own per capita, which helps First Presbyterian Church greatly. If this is something you would do to help, simply indicate on a check, or on an envelope that you would like that payment to go towards your per capita. Thank you!

## *Reminder*

Anyone who enters the building is asked to advise the staff of your arrival and departure. Due to safety concerns it is important that the staff is aware of those working in the building.

## *Directory Updates*

*Did you know that First Presbyterian Church has an on-line church directory? Anyone with an email listed in the directory can access it.*

*Go to [InstantChurchDirectory.com](http://InstantChurchDirectory.com) and follow the instructions to sign in.*

*Please let Us Know...*Occasionally throughout the year we are required to complete congregational reports which ask about the ethnicity of the congregation. If you identify yourself as being a part of a particular ethnic group and wish to be considered such for the sake of statistics, please let us know! Thanks.

*SCRIP NEWS...*SCRIP is handy to have for Birthdays, weddings get well gifts, vacations and year-round fun! Order through Pastor Jon or check with Sherri to see what is on-hand. Your order means money back to FPC!

**Welcome Team News:** In order to prevent duplication of services throughout the church, Session approved the combining of the Usher Team and the Greeter Team. The Welcome Team will now greet those entering the church, present them with a bulletin and be available to answer questions and provide directions. More volunteers are always appreciated. If you would like to become part of the Welcome Team, please inform the church office. Each team is responsible for a month or two scheduled within the year. Your Welcome Team for this month: Nancy Girmus, Ted Symens, Janene Wilson, Dave Keister, & Rodney Halverson

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>Sep 1</b> 10:30am Communion 10:30am Worship 12:30pm Grace of Unity Church	<b>2</b> Grace of Unity Church Labor Day: Office Closed 6:00pm GPPP Group	<b>3</b> 5:00pm Mission Ministry 6:45pm Fellowship /Hospitality 7:00pm Boy Scouts	<b>4</b> 1:30pm Staff Meeting 7:15pm Chancel 8:15 Adonai	<b>5</b> 3:30pm Pantry 6:00pm Outreach & Evangelism 6:15pm Personnel	<b>6</b> 10:00am PW Coordinating	<b>7</b> No Activities: Set up Rally Day 9:00am PUFF Trip 10:00am Grace of Unity Prayer Meeting
<b>8</b> Rally Sunday 10:30am Worship 12:30pm Grace of Unity Church	<b>9</b> 6:00pm GPPP Group	<b>10</b> 10:30am Adult Bible Study 5:30pm Finance Mtg 7:00pm Boy Scouts	<b>11</b> 1:30pm Staff Meeting 4:30pm Bible Study 5:45pm M@M Dinner 6:30pm Bible Studies/Youth 7:15pm Chancel 8:15 Bells	<b>12</b> 3:30pm Pantry 5:30pm CLW Meeting 6:30pm Session Mtg	<b>13</b> 6:30pm Castelar Kids	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> Newsletter Deadline 10:30am Worship: Music 12:30pm Grace of Unity 4:12pm 4:12 Tweens 5:00pm Van for Crossroads 6:00pm Crossroads	<b>16</b> 6:00pm GPPP Group 6:00pm Stephen Ministries 6:30pm Taste & See Study (Kitchen)	<b>17</b> 10:30am Adult Bible Study 5:00pm Prayer Shawl Ministry 6:00pm Faith and Film 7:00pm Boy Scouts	<b>18</b> 1:30pm Staff Meeting 4:30pm Bible Study 5:45pm M@M Dinner 6:30pm Bible Studies/Youth 7:15pm Chancel 8:15 Adonai	<b>19</b> 8:30am Pantry Truck Unloading 3:30pm Pantry 6:30pm Deacons Mtg 6:30pm Trustees Mtg	<b>20</b> Women's Retreat at Calvin Crest	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> Women's Retreat at Calvin Cres 10:30am Worship 12:30pm Grace of Unity Church	<b>23</b> 11:45am Mutual Prayer 6:00pm GPPP Group 6:30pm Taste & See Study (Kitchen)	<b>24</b> 10:30am Adult Bible Study 6:00pm Mariners Mtg 7:00pm Boy Scouts	<b>25</b> 1:30pm Staff Meeting 4:30pm Bible Study 5:45pm M@M Dinner 6:30pm Bible Studies/Youth 7:15pm Chancel 8:15 Adonai	<b>26</b> 3:30pm Pantry 6:30pm Youth Ministry Mtg	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> 10:30am PUFF Atlantic Iowa
<b>29</b> 10:30am Worship 12:30pm Grace of Unity Church	<b>30</b> 6:00pm GPPP Group 6:30pm Taste & See Study (Kitchen)	<b>Oct 1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

*First Presbyterian Church of Omaha*  
*"Keeping Christ Central"*  
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### *First Presbyterian Church Staff*

Senior Pastor: Dr. Jonathan Sloan [jsloan@fpcomaha.org](mailto:jsloan@fpcomaha.org)

Associate Pastor: Dr. Jennifer Blake [jblake@fpcomaha.org](mailto:jblake@fpcomaha.org)

Music Director: Timothy Houfek [thoufek@fpcomaha.org](mailto:thoufek@fpcomaha.org)

Organist & Pianist: Alex Barrett

Director of Next Generation Ministry: AJ Baratta [ajbaratta@fpcomaha.org](mailto:ajbaratta@fpcomaha.org)

Admin. Assistant: Sherri Petersen [spetersen@fpcomaha.org](mailto:spetersen@fpcomaha.org)

Building/Finance Manager: Sondra Reese [sreese@fpcomaha.org](mailto:sreese@fpcomaha.org)

Part-Time Office Staff: Phil Franco [pfranco@fpcomaha.org](mailto:pfranco@fpcomaha.org)

Judy Boswell [jboswell@fpcomaha.org](mailto:jboswell@fpcomaha.org)

Building Specialist: Greg Lincoln

Custodian: Rick Murray

(Please contact Sondra to reach Greg or Rick.)

Newsletter Editor: Sherri Petersen [spetersen@fpcomaha.org](mailto:spetersen@fpcomaha.org)

#### ***FPC Ministry Team Chairs***

Budget, Stewardship & Memorials: Mark Lynch

Youth Ministry: Merryllen Towey Schulz

Adult Discipleship: Scott Darling

Mission Ministry: Kathy Stockham

Church Life & Worship: Brad Davis

Fellowship & Hospitality: Michaela Kanoski

Outreach & Evangelism: David McBride

Music: Alan Reinarz

Personnel: Bonnie Brown

Security & Safety Team: Mark Lynch

Presbytery: Bonnie Brown

Nominating Representative: Scott Darling

Clerk of Session: Leanne Johnson



**OFFICE HOURS**  
Monday-Friday  
8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Phone: 402-345-5383  
Fax: 402-345-5227  
Website: [www.fpcomaha.org](http://www.fpcomaha.org)