

# THE VOICE

A PUBLICATION OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF WILLMAR



First Presbyterian Church is a caring and compassionate community of God's children in the heart of the city, welcoming all people and striving to work together to be Christ's hands and feet, spreading the good news of God's love throughout the world.

## PASTORS NOTE

July 21, 2020

Church Family,

You may have noticed a whole slew of businesses who have mandated the wearing of masks while inside their stores in recent weeks with Wal-Mart being the most prominent of the recent announcements. I wanted to let you know that I wear a mask whenever I'm in a public place of business like a supermarket, all while working to maintain social distance. I believe that my Christian faith is a basis for making this decision. Here's why:

**We are Called to Love Sacrificially:** Jesus said in John 15: 13, "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." If that is the sort of love we're called to, I can certainly inconvenience myself for 20 minutes while inside a store for the sake of my neighbor. It is a small sacrifice to make. Speaking of which...

**It is the Neighborly Thing to Do:** Jesus taught us to, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22: 39). Anyone who has been at a four-way stop intersection in a small Minnesota town knows that we Minnesotans get this concept. We know what it takes to be neighborly. For the sake of the health and well-being of my neighbors and my community, I'm willing to work together with them to keep us all safe. Which leads me to my next point...

**We are Called to Look out for the Least of These:** I don't know who is vulnerable to this virus. I don't know who has diabetes, or is battling cancer, or who has a heart condition, or high blood pressure. Just by looking at them, you may never know. And yet I know that I walk past many of these people every day in the supermarket or hardware store while sharing public space with them. Jesus taught, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me" (Matthew 25: 40). If my wearing a mask can help to protect a vulnerable community member from unwitting transmission, sign me up.

**We Value Those Who Serve:** Jesus taught this unequivocally, "The greatest among you will be your servant. All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted" (Matthew 23: 11). So, when I think about employees who are called to work 8-12 hour shifts in our local businesses, who may have a health condition which makes them vulnerable, who have to then go home to places where they may have infants, or other family with health conditions, I then recognize that they are doing a great service to their community. I will do what I can to keep them healthy and well so that they do not bring an illness home to their loved ones. If my wearing a mask will help keep them safe, I will do it.

**Presbyterians Are not Suspicious of Sound Medicine and Science:** Presbyterians have helped launch rockets and walked on the moon. Presbyterians have helped create vaccines, performed lifesaving surgeries, and helped explore the mysteries of the universe. A host of Presbyterians are scientists, doctors, and engineers. Our faith is not threatened by the unfolding of facts about the natural world. We believe that when, "God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them" (Genesis 1: 27), God endowed us with intellect and creative imagination to approach the unfolding of

science and medicine as the very unfolding of the mysteries of God's creation. The consensus of doctors across the world is that social distancing, hand washing, and mask wearing are the few simple things that we can do to help stop this pandemic. If you have questions about wearing masks, I ask you, have you talked to your primary care physician about the issue? What does he/she say about the topic? And speaking of physicians, I wonder where the Great Physician is in the midst of this?

**What Would Jesus Do (WWJD)?** If I were to do a thought experiment about how Jesus would conduct himself with the mask issue, while looking at the topics outlined above, I truly believe that Jesus would don a mask. Not necessarily because he feared getting sick, but because he would want to set a proper example for us to follow. Because...

**It is the Loving Thing to Do:** John wrote, "18 There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear" (1 John 4: 18). Do not confuse the Christian motivation for wearing a mask as being done in fear – for all the reasons outlined above - it is clearly being done in love.

At the end of the day, these are just one Christian's ruminations on why I believe it is the Christian thing to wear a mask in public places. I hope these points are useful to you in thinking about this issue for yourself and your family. Above all, I pray for your health and well being. May God guard you in heart, mind, spirit, and body and keep you safe.

Grace and Peace,  
Pastor Scott

## **COVID-19 Update:**

**We are Resuming Face to Face Worship:  
August 16, 2020**

**First Presbyterian Church will be resuming face to face worship on August 16, 2020. Your safety is our priority! So, if you do not feel like you are ready to return, please do not feel obligated to do so. We will continue to broadcast worship on Facebook Live and send out manuscripts for those who would like to receive them by mail. Please know that we will be taking extra precautions with cleaning and social distancing, and attendance is limited to 50% capacity. You will be required to wear a mask in the church building; if you do not have a mask, one will be provided to you. We appreciate your willingness to take these extra steps to make it possible for us to safely be together again.**

**Congregants can help maintain the safety of First Presbyterian Church by:**

- Staying home if you or a household member have symptoms of COVID-19. Symptoms can include fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, headache, muscle pain, sore throat, or loss of taste or smell. Other less common symptoms include gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.
- Staying home if they are in a high-risk category for COVID-19.
- Completing the Guest Health Screening Form upon arrival at First Presbyterian Church.
- Regularly washing and/or sanitizing hands.
- Wearing face masks in public spaces and with non-household groups.
- Refraining from singing.
- Maintaining a distance of at least 6 feet from people not in the same household at all times.
- Reducing group size to state or CDC guidelines (currently 50% of total occupancy).

## **Facebook Live Worship & Midday Prayer**

This is a reminder that you can join us for Facebook Live Worship (Sundays, 10am) and Midday Prayer (Wednesdays, NOON). You do not need a facebook account to watch the video recording of those services. A link to the recording is sent out in the Monday email, and is included on the home page of our website. If you prefer, we would be happy to send you a printed manuscript of the worship service and sermon. Contact Shara to be added to the mailing list!

## Virtual Communion

first Sunday of the month

Christ is made present to us in the breaking of the bread and the sharing of the cup by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not confined to a particular building, place, or time. Because we believe that sharing Communion is an act of faith, and because we need the nourishment that comes from sharing Christ's feast, we will be celebrating Communion *virtually* for the month of May. What does that mean?

- Pastor Scott and Pastor Leanne will lead us through the traditional and familiar words and actions of communion. They will break bread, pour the cup, and speak the words of institution, inviting Christ to be present with us wherever we are.
- You will supply your own bread and cup. There are no strict rules about this. The bread represents the common food of common people. It can be any variety of bread, crackers, rice cakes, or tortillas – whatever you have available to you. The cup, likewise, was the common beverage of the day. Traditionally, that would have been wine. In our worship service we use grape juice. You may use either of these, or whatever juice or beverage you have available. Remember, the bread and cup are symbols, the presence of Christ is made real in them by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Please let us know that you shared in this wider offering of God's gracious feast by commenting on the Facebook worship video feed or sending a message (text or email) to the pastors.



8/7 Bennett Goldenstein  
8/8 Earl Knutson  
8/9 Areaya Tatge  
8/10 Kris Samuelson  
8/12 Kelly Kienholz  
8/12 Kali Jensen  
8/12 Abigail Thompson  
8/15 Dr. Steve Bell  
8/15 Sydney Anderson  
8/18 Carol Dillabough  
8/18 Kyla Holland  
8/19 Trey McBride  
8/19 Keana Goldenstein  
8/21 Anders Kullhem  
8/21 Blake Schoolmeester  
8/21 Caleb Woltjer  
8/21 Harlee Luberts  
8/24 Deb Grunwald  
8/24 Lisa Kaenel  
8/24 Chris Magnuson  
8/25 Davie Lee  
8/25 Abby Samuelson  
8/26 Linda Jans  
8/27 Hannah Roelofs  
8/28 Tom Phillips  
8/29 Bridget Lemke  
8/29 Jaymi Magnuson  
8/30 Rosa Eddy  
8/30 Megan Baker  
8/31 Khloe Woltjer

# Church Prayer Requests

## Prayers for Healing & Comfort:

- Chuck Stern
- Seth Tebben
- Jeff Tebben
- Mike Bakke
- Carol Lange (Richard Lange's Mother)
- Ried Arnold
- Linda Thomas
- Norman Berglund
- Mark Chamberlain
- Elaine and Kent Boyd
- John Carver
- Fanchon Ellwood
- Steve and Bette Ourada
- Arlen Sjerven
- Norm Tempel
- Jill Berglund (Norm & Mary Berglund's Daughter)
- Keith Ergen (Mary Berglund's Grandson-in-law)
- Lori Peterson (Beci Eliason's Mother)
- Merle Stiles (Sister of Connie Spartz)

## Prayers for those Serving Elsewhere:

- Tristian Woitaszewski (Terry Woitaszewski's Nephew) Navy, Pensacola, FL
- Perry Bishop (Bruce and Pam Quimby's Grandson-in-law) Army, Fort Riley, KS
- Matthew Sjerven (Grandson of Arlen and Sheila Sjerven) Fort Gordon, GA
- Noah Prout, (Barb Little's Nephew) Air Force, Afghanistan
- Chandler ad Hayley D'Incau (Bob and Rita's Grandson and wife) Beale AFB, Marysville, CA
- Rob Grunwald, Coast Guard, Saugerties, New York;

## Prayers for the Church Here and Abroad:

- The People of Occidente Presbytery, Guatemala;
- Minnesota Valleys Presbytery– Union Presbyterian Church, St. Peter, MN;
- Bdecan Presbyterian Church, Spirit Lake Reservation, ND.

## Take a moment & pray for these as well:

- Prayers for all the essential people working on the front lines.
- Prayers for our leaders to guide our country through this pandemic.
- Prayers that the people of our country to stay safe by abiding by the rules put upon us to control this virus and we "stay safe at home".
- Prayers for all people to have faith in God during this time.
- God will carry us through this time of turbulence. "God is Good"!

## August Small Group Schedule

*These will take place over Zoom or **Facebook LIVE**. If you would like to participate, please contact the pastors to receive the phone number/email link to join the Zoom gathering.*

### Men's Bible Study

Tuesdays at 7am

Contact: [scott.fpcwillmar@gmail.com](mailto:scott.fpcwillmar@gmail.com)

### Women's Bible Study

Wednesdays at 7am

Contact: [leanne.fpcwillmar@gmail.com](mailto:leanne.fpcwillmar@gmail.com)

### Jr. High Youth Group

Will resume again in the Fall.

### Sr. High Youth Group

Will resume again in the Fall.

### Midday Prayer

Wednesdays at noon on Facebook

# MISSION OF THE MONTH



## United Campus Ministry at Ridgewater College

To the wonderful people at First Presbyterian Church,

Thank you for your years of faithful support. This is my eighth year at the Center as chaplain for United Campus Ministry and I want to share a few highlights, as well as some updates.

Welcome Day is my opportunity to get on campus and meet as many students as possible during the first week on campus. We handed out 125 gift bags containing bibles, toilet paper, trash bags, schedules, and contact information. It is always our major springboard into the year.

We also were on campus for a fall festival, which happened to be during the week of Halloween. Rather than dress up in costume, we decided to have a light themed table and allowed all students to fill out thank you notes to professors, friends, and family. We gave out a lot of them that day, which was exciting.

Our major service continued to be our meal ministry. Some weeks we would see 225-250 students twice a week, other weeks it would be 125-150 students twice a week. It all depended on field trips and events on campus. Regardless, it remained our best way to serve the students and create community. It also shows students that the local faith community is invested in them. First Presbyterian has been great at helping us serve in this capacity.

Those bigger numbers had us talking about building an expansion, going so far as contacting a few companies for estimates and really begin dreaming.....and then COVID-19 started happening. We are not sure where that puts us for that, but let's talk about what that means for how we serve.

Ridgewater will be at a smaller physical attendance for the following semester, and the Lutheran Campus Chaplain and I will be meeting and discussing how to best serve a smaller population, while still trying to connect with students who are taking classes online. Ridgewater has been a great partner to work with in this area, and have allowed us to serve and help them in ways that are really making an impact for future students here.

Our biggest need remains prayer and continued support. Having churches support what we're doing out here helps put wind in our sails to keep doing it during times like this when everything seems uncertain and our plans keep changing. Our other big need is a board member. We are still needing people to help oversee the ministry, hold me accountable, and dream for our future. If you are interested, let me know!

Thank you again for the support, I wish I could include more stories. There were students we helped with pregnancy, parenthood, benevolence, abusive situations, mental health support, and so many more areas.....and it all starts with the connections we make through the meals that are supported by churches like yours.

God bless you all and thank you!  
Jeff Schmitz  
United Campus Ministry  
320-905-0345



# **TREASURER/BUDGET AND STEWARDSHIP**

## **COMMITTEE REPORT**

Even though this is anything but a normal summer, we are seeing a normal pattern in our General Fund and budget, with an increase in the deficit. However, it is not a serious shortfall, and we continue to see donations coming in the mail, on line and we want to know we appreciate your efforts. Even though we are operating in a new way, the expenses do not change much. We are happy that we are keeping up with bill payments as they come due.

Per capita payments continue to come in. If you have made your payment, thank you! If you have not yet paid your per capita, please pay any or all of it whenever you can. Per capita is \$42 per confirmed member for 2020. Our total obligation is \$ 9,783 this year.

Extra giving to date is \$733. Extra giving helps to reduce the end of year deficit so that we can minimize our end of year appeal for help in balancing the budget. Some of our smaller sources of income are not happening when we are not worshipping together—there is no loose offering. There is no fellowship coffee. The extra giving continues to help toward reducing any end of year appeal.

ONLINE GIVING IS WORKING! We see giving to many different funds with new people trying it. Deb has had to learn some new techniques in including the figures in the church records. The transfer from the Foundation to our bank account is an automatic process at the end of the month.

We have paid the Presbytery loan for the renovations of Westminster Hall for Family Promise Day Center, and we have repaid the internal loan for our heating renovation. We are debt free!

ABOVE ALL, STAY SAFE AND HEALTHY. We look forward to the day we can join together in worship and fellowship.

### **PER CAPITA**

The 2020 per capita is \$42 per confirmed member. First Presbyterian Church, and every Presbyterian church in this Presbytery pays per capita for each confirmed member. Our share of the total is \$9,783 and your share is \$42.

#### **2020 Per Capita Expense**

\$9,783

#### **2020 Per Capita Received**

\$5,136.00

#### **General Fund through June 30, 2020**

##### **General Fund Revenue:**

\$ 114,664.00

##### **Per Capita Giving:**

\$ 5,136.00

##### **Total General Fund Receipts:**

\$ 119,800 .00

##### **Expenses:**

\$112,696 .00

##### **Per Capita Payment:**

\$9,783.00

##### **Total General Fund Expenses:**

\$122,479.00

##### **Expenses in excess of Revenues:**

\$2,679.00

##### **Building and Remodeling Fund Balance:**

\$88,534.00

##### **Internal Loan:**

REPAID



# Youth and Children Announcements

## Vacation Bible School Care Packages

(VBS care packages have been sent to nearly 30 families!)



## Church Announcements

### PROJECTIONIST NEEDED

Do you want to get more involved with the church?? Do you want to get more involved with the worship side of things?? Are you stuck at where to start deciding?? Give being a projectionist a try!! It would just be once per month or less and there will be training available this Fall!!

If this sounds like something you would like to do, let Shara know in the office! Thank you so much in advance!!



The First Presbyterian Church of Willmar would like to give a big warm congratulations shout out to Elizabeth Carlson on her Graduation from Austin High School. She is the daughter of Richard and Laura Carlson and sister to Emily. She is planning on attending Purdue University in the fall!

Dear Church Family,

Thank you so much for your gifts of food, flowers, cards, phone calls, pies, crock pot meals, messages, friendship, and prayers during my 3 months of illness and recovery. I appreciate your love, care, and compassion.

Gratefully,  
Linda Thomas





UNSAVE THE DATE

*Well, Shoot!*

IN LIGHT OF A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

(SERIOUSLY, WHO SAW THAT COMING?)

OUR SPECIAL DAY WILL LOOK  
DIFFERENT THAN ORIGINALLY PLANNED.

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THANK YOU FOR THE SUPPORT, ENCOURAGEMENT, MEMORIES, LOVE, + LAUGHTER YOU  
HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO OUR LIVES.

WE WOULD LOVE NOTHING MORE THEN TO SHARE OUR SPECIAL DAY  
WITH ALL OF YOU, HOWEVER DUE TO COVID-19 WE HAVE BEEN  
FORCED TO MAKE SOME VERY HARD CHOICES. WE ARE MOVING  
FORWARD WITH OUR WEDDING DAY BUT HAVE DRAMATICALLY  
REDUCED THE INVITES TO ENSURE EVERYONE'S SAFETY.

**WE WILL MISS YOU AND WISH THAT YOU COULD BE THERE.  
WE WILL PROVIDE A LIVESTREAM OF OUR CEREMONY AND PARTS OF  
THE RECEPTION ON FACEBOOK. WE PLAN TO HAVE A PORTION OF THE  
RECEPTION OPEN TO A DRIVE BY SO YOU CAN COME SEE US IF YOU  
ARE ABLE!**

*Love,  
Spenser & Letitia  
10-10-2020 ~ #SimplyShalicky*



**REMINDER:**  
**We have an ONLINE giving option.**

Go to our church website homepage at [www.fpchurchwillmar.org](http://www.fpchurchwillmar.org)  
and click on "GIVE NOW"

**OR**

click the button below

GIVE NOW

You can still give in the traditional ways. This does not replace offerings by cash  
or check dropped in the offering plate or sent to the church.

If that is how you prefer to give, please continue to do so.

This is simply another option.



# 150th Anniversary

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2020 marks the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary year for First Presbyterian Church, Willmar, MN. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Anniversary Celebration will be postponed to 2021. Our year of celebration will kickoff with the Advent Festival on December 6, 2020. Watch this space for coming events, important updates, and anecdotes from our history.

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## The Train and Car Parade July 11, 2020



## **150TH PHOTO DIRECTORY UPDATE**

The Photo Directory Committee is now waiting for our 2nd proof to be returned to us. There were quite a few errors on the 1st proof so we decided to request a 2nd proof to ensure all of the corrections had been made. We should receive the 2nd proof within a couple of weeks. After we return the 2nd proof, printing can begin but no ETA on a date for that yet.



### **2 Sunday**

10:00am: Worship via Facebook Live with Virtual Communion

### **4 Tuesday**

7:00am: Men's Bible Study via Zoom

### **5 Wednesday**

7:00am: Women's Bible Study via Zoom

12:00pm: Mid-day prayer on Facebook

### **9 Sunday**

8:45am: Nurture and Fellowship via email

10:00am: Worship via Facebook Live

### **11 Tuesday**

6:30pm: CEYM via Zoom, Mission via Zoom

### **12 Wednesday**

6:30pm: Building & Grounds via Zoom

### **15 Saturday**

**VOICE Deadline**

### **16 Sunday**

10:00am: Worship via Facebook Live/in church

### **18 Tuesday**

7:00am- Men's Bible Study via Zoom

### **19 Wednesday**

7:00am: Women's Bible Study via Zoom

12:00pm: Mid-day Prayer on Facebook

### **20 Thursday**

**COMMITTEE MINUTES DUE**

### **23 Sunday**

10:00am: Worship via Facebook Live/in church

### **25 Tuesday**

7:00am- Men's Bible Study via Zoom

### **26 Wednesday**

7:00am: Women's Bible Study via Zoom

12:00pm: Mid-day Prayer on Facebook

### **27 Thursday**

6:30pm: Session via Zoom

### **30 Sunday**

10:00am: Worship via Facebook Live/in church

## **Did You Know??**

**The church website is another great tool to stay connected to the church!**

**Shara makes changes on there as soon as something comes up or changes!!**

**Take some time today, this week, or this month and click on the link labeled "visit our website"**

**or go to [www.fpchurchurchwillmar.org](http://www.fpchurchurchwillmar.org) to check it out.**

Visit our website

## **CHURCH CONTACTS**

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Co-Pastor**

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320-403-0509

**Rev. Leanne Thompson  
Co-Pastor**

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**Shara Goldenstein  
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**Jill Boeyink  
CEYM Director/  
Music Team Director**

**Deb Lang  
Financial Secretary**

**Jerry & Sue Schiro  
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