

First Things First

September 2020

*“On my heart and on my house the blessing of God.
In my coming and in my going, the peace of God.
In my life and my seeking, the love of God.
At my end and new beginning, the love of God
to welcome me and to bring me home.”
A Celtic Prayer*

I have been your Pastor now for just about two months. We have been having “in person” worship now for just over a month. The Session and I have been pleased to see not only how many people have attended worship, but most particularly how each worshipper has “stepped up”, used the hand sanitizer upon entering, found their physically distant seat, and wore their mask. **Thank you for being so considerate of others.** We have not yet returned to the singing of hymns nor had the lovely voice of Brianne lifting us up in worship. We hope to have the Bell Choir and have Brianne’s voice back soon.

This is a strange time we are living through. A time in which the old ways are dying and the new normal has not quite appeared. It is a holy time. A time of transition. We, as a church, a country, the world, are in a time of dying and rising to new life. Except we are still in between (like we are in the tomb with Jesus) not exactly sure what this new life will look like. What we do know is that God is with us even though we may not perceive it.

As I said in one of my August Sermons Matthew 14: 22-33

(The disciples) find themselves in a storm. Over the years, there have been lots of storms in which the church has found itself. Lots of storms in our own personal lives too: Divorce, addictions, domestic violence, the onset of mental illness, the unexpected deaths of loved ones—especially the young, the loss of a job, or societal upheavals that catch us unawares.

In the midst of the storm, Jesus comes. Please note: Jesus did not cause the storm. Nor does Jesus say “Be still, storm, so I can talk to my disciples.” No, Jesus comes to us in the midst of our storms and simply says, “Take Heart; I AM.” The divine Jesus addresses us, addresses the storm-tossed church, and simply says, “Courage. I AM.” Jesus is with us in our storms. God is here. Present. Now.

The Session is working hard to discover what is next for this church of ours. For, as you know, we are in transition. That is why I am here. I am a Bridge Pastor. Not a “Bridge to Nowhere” Pastor, but a “Bridge to Somewhere” Pastor. More importantly, I am a “Bridge to Someone” Pastor. That someone is God. We will discover what God has in store for us together, after stepping ourselves in prayer together. The Spirit will speak to us and show us the way.

This is not going to be easy. There will be grief that we cannot remain the church of yesteryear. We will, at times, want a light to see our way forward into the future. God does not offer us a light so that we can go out into the darkness by ourselves. What God offers us is God’s hand so that God might walk with us-God’s hand which is “better than light and safer than the known way.”

I am so glad to be among you at this time. As we journey together through this time of transition, may we all wait in expectant hope, anticipating where God will lead this church next.

Blessings.
~Peace, Pastor Glen





September Calendar

SEPTEMBER 6

10:00 AM Communion Sunday
Sanctuary

SEPTEMBER 7

Labor Day Observed

Office Closed

6:30 PM Session Meeting
Via Zoom



SEPTEMBER 9

6:30 PM Deacons' Meeting
Oak Room

SEPTEMBER 13

10:00 AM Worship
Commissioning of the Teacher*
Blessing of the Backpacks*
Sanctuary

SEPTEMBER 17

8:00 AM Men's Breakfast
Dady-Oh's

SEPTEMBER 20

10:00 AM Worship
Sanctuary

SEPTEMBER 27

10:00 AM Worship
Sanctuary

SEPTEMBER 29

TBA Presbytery Meeting*
Apostle Presbyterian Church

SEPTEMBER 30

10:00 AM Worship
Sanctuary

*see article

September Birthdays

- 9/4 Turner Dittrich
- 9/5 Kaitlyn Lucht
- 9/14 Arlene Burdick
- 9/18 JoRae Schultz
- 9/23 Judie Berthelsen
- 9/23 Quentin Schultz
- 9/26 Lora Collins



Have something for the **October** newsletter?
Please send it to:

presby1@sbcglobal.net

or drop it in Therese's mailbox by **Wednesday, September 16** to have it included. Any items received after the 16th might not make it into the October newsletter.

**Church office hours are
Monday through Thursday,
8:30 AM to 1:00 PM.
Office Closed September 7**

2020 Per Capita

Per Capita for 2020 in the Presbytery of Milwaukee remains at \$38.25. Please consider contributing your per capita so that First Presbyterian can use your share elsewhere. Please note "per capita" in the memo line. Thank you!

Blessing of Backpacks and Commissioning of the Teacher

Blessing of Backpacks: As we return to the school year rhythm of worship, **Sunday, September 13, during worship service**, we want to send our students into the year with a blessing. From Day Care to Graduate School, all students are invited to bring backpacks for us to bless.



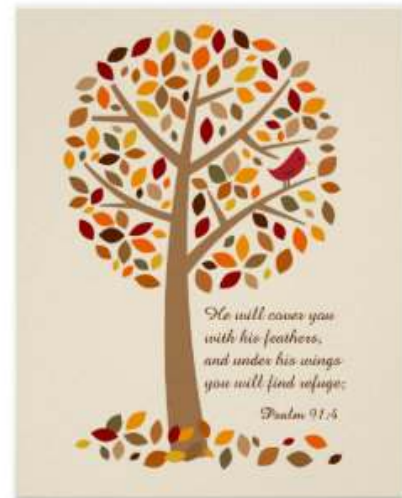
We will also commission our preschool Sunday school teacher, **Linda Volmar** and honor all the teachers among us.

Volunteers are needed! Are you looking for a volunteer opportunity? Our meal program is sponsored by **The Caring Place Adult Day Center in Waukesha**. I am looking for a few new drivers for our **Meals-on-Wheels Program**. Some of my drivers have retired. You would need to be available between 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. We deliver Mon-Fri.

Meals are picked up at Waukesha Memorial Hospital. You use your own vehicle. We deliver meals in the City of Waukesha. Many of our drivers take their children or grandchildren along when they are off school. It is a wonderful experience to see how good it feels to help others in need.

We help the disabled, convalescent and elderly individuals unable to prepare their own meals any longer. Our program helps our clients stay in their home and live independently as long as possible. If you have a day of the week that works for you, it would be greatly appreciated.

If interested, please **contact Laurie Ellenson at (262) 928-2314** for more information. Thank you!!!



Peace & Global Witness Offering

A gift to the Peace & Global Witness Offering enables the church to promote the Peace of Christ by addressing systems of injustice across the world. Our congregation uses up to 25% of this Offering to connect with the global witness of Christ's peace. Mid councils, like presbyteries and synods, retain an additional 25% for ministries of peace and reconciliation. The remaining 50% is used by the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate for peace and justice in cultures of violence, including our own, through collaborative projects of education and Christian witness.

This offering is one of the four PC(USA) offerings collected throughout the year for work by the whole denomination. **The Peace and Global Witness Offering will run from September 6 through October 4 and will be collected on World Communion Sunday, October 4.**

Next Presbytery Meeting

Tuesday, September 29, 2020

Time: TBA

**Location: Apostle Presbyterian Church
1509 South 76th Street
West Allis, WI 53214**

*Details of the meeting are not available at this time and will be provided as soon as we have the information.

Session Recap

The Session continued to meet over the summer with Glen moderating the July meeting. The main topic of conversation was resuming worship services at FPCW. We decided to minimize the elements of the service and implement other measures to reduce the risk of spreading the virus. The decision to resume communion and singing will be made at future meetings.

There was an online Presbytery Meeting in June which Andrew Byshenk attended. Mark Fraley was examined as a candidate for ministry was approved. Several pastors were commissioned to represent the Milwaukee Presbytery at the 224th general assembly of the PCUSA.

The Friday Night Love events scheduled for June, July and August were cancelled. These events coincided with Friday Night Live concerts in downtown Waukesha. It was our understanding the concerts were also cancelled.

The Endowment Committee currently has a vacancy. Russ Volmar is forming a nominating committee for this purpose. This process will not likely start until fall.

Two of the Confirmation Class attendees requested to join the congregation. Quentin Schultz and Callan Schultz presented their statements of faith and were interviewed by the Session. Both were accepted into membership with FPCW.

The church required some maintenance over the summer. This includes masonry work on several areas around the building. The gutters and downspouts also require some work, but the repairs have not been scheduled. There have been ongoing conversations about repairing the floor in the Dining Room. The Caring Place is working on a grant to help share in the costs.

The church has continued to receive offering in line with our budget. With Glen starting June 24th, the church has resumed distributions from the Endowment fund. The fund has performed well after the initial shock due to the virus.

As we continue to discern the future of FPCW, there are several downtime congregations that are under consideration for a merger. Several of these churches were visited and reported on in the past. The process will continue in earnest once services resume.



Custodians Corner

Summertime is quickly coming to a close but First Presbyterian Church is OPEN for everyone to come and enjoy once more! YAY! 👍

I'm sure that all of you are now getting used to our NEW seating arrangement and limited space availability. Hopefully, we will be able to enjoy coffee and treats with everyone in the not to distant future and also the GREAT Christian Fellowship and camaraderie that fills the Oak Room every Sunday. I know that everyone has gotten pretty tired of the stay at home routine so if you haven't done so yet come and see us at FPC because we love to see your face and family!.....and to top that off you can now come and listen to OUR NEW INSPIRING MINISTER.....Pastor Glen Reichelderfer! 🙌

Pastor Glen has been visiting with a lot of you over the past few months and I'm sure that all of you have been testing his Church knowhow and also his easy going style that makes for a comfortable adjustment during these difficult times. Pastor Glen has tremendous people skills and a wealth of life experiences that I know all of you are going to enjoy talking to him about.

Right now our time together on Sundays is being kept short purposely, but as time moves on and the virus numbers decrease I know that we can all look forward to Session opening the Church wider with more participation and involvement expected.

Pastor Glen knows that we're all a little confused by this NEW NORMAL that's limiting our daily living and our expectations of returning to what once was. Have we reached a dead end without any possible way to turn around? You know that's not true because as Christians we know that God has a plan for all of us that believe in him. It is hard to understand why we are facing the challenge that has been put in front of us but rest assured we will discover a new direction that God has planned and Pastor Glen will direct us in the days ahead.

In the mean time, while you ponder what you're going to do, why not consider doing what you have wanted to do for so long but just never took the time to do? Take some time to start and finish a household project. Make that special recipe that your friend gave you and share it with a neighbor.....but test it first just to make sure just in case! Take a walk around the neighborhood and check out what's going on a few blocks away. Sit down and email a friend or relative that you haven't heard from in a long long time. How about going to the Bookstore and finding an interesting book that you would like to read. And speaking of books.....why not pick up the greatest book ever written and spend some time figuring out the meaning of what it is they want you to understand.....WOW....if that was me that alone could keep me occupied for quite some time! I'm glad we have Pastor Glen to explain it for us!

Anyway.....it's really great to have our ANTIQUE CHURCH open again and it's exciting to know that the SESSION has put in place a New Minister for us in Pastor Glen. He's a great guy. A fine communicator, and he can sing too!.....Maybe some day the Pulpit will be in the Choir Loft? I guess maybe we will let Brianne and Karen figure that out.

See you in the PEWS!
Bob Pugh





end of summer musings

“There shall be eternal summer in the grateful heart.” ~*Celia Thaxter*

“August has passed, and yet summer continues by force to grow days. They sprout secretly between the chapters of the year, covertly included between its pages.”
~*Jonathan Safran Foer*”

“The morning had dawned clear and cold, with a crispness that hinted at the end of summer.” ~*George R.R. Martin*

“Summer is a promissory note signed in June, its long days spent and gone before you know it, and due to be repaid next January.” ~*Hal Borland*

“When summer opens, I see how fast it matures, and fear it will be short; but after the heats of July and August, I am reconciled, like one who has had his swing, to the cool of autumn.” ~*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

“September tries its best to have us forget summer.” ~*Bern Williams*

“Summer may soon be ending, but everything you want in life is coming. So relax and let the universe pick the timing.” ~*Unknown*

“In the depth of winter I found that within me lies an invincible summer.” ~*Albert Camus*

“Summer is leaving silently. Much like a traveler approaching the end of an amazing journey.” ~*Darnell Lamont Walker*

“Between summer and autumn, greenery and gold, and the heat and rising wind that is once again readying itself to rush it all away in a climactic symphony of color and scent is - in my opinion, one of the best parts about living on earth” ~*Victoria Erickson*

“Don't cry because it's over; smile because it happened.” ~*Dr. Suess*