

News at First

Our Mission: *To make known the love of God through Jesus Christ.*

Our Vision: *We are empowered to live out our faith in daily life.*

A Year That Whispers Jesus



For author Nancy Tichy, a small holiday gift once sparked big-picture thoughts about Christian living. One December she received a kitchen towel with the message “I want a Christmas that whispers JESUS.” That prompted thoughts of what it’s like to have an entire year that whispers Jesus.

For starters, that involves daily quiet time, devotion and prayer. “Sometimes I wake with the thought of a person on my mind,” writes Tichy. “I’m quiet with this impression, interceding for the family member or friend until it has lifted. Could this be a whisper from our Savior?”

Many other daily occurrences are “worthy of [Jesus’] whispered response of love,” Tichy points out. That’s true whether we’re distracted by tasks and troubling thoughts or buoyed by encounters with contentment and joy. “For me,” she writes, “whispering is part of intimacy, and that is what I want to make a hallmark of the coming year. I want closeness with our Savior that enables me to hear from him, even when he whispers.”

Pastor's {Ponderings}

We begin a new year, with new hopes and dreams. Wouldn't it great if I could spend more time with family and friends? Wouldn't it be good if I could lose some weight or exercise more regularly? Wouldn't it be nice if I could invest some of my time in things that made a difference in people's lives or the community?

There are lots of ways to make a difference by involving ourselves in organizations and causes that work to 'make life better for others'. The Austin Smith playground is one of those things. You can see how the community came together to make that accessible playground a reality. The Food Pantry is another. Community members from 10 area churches take time to volunteer over the course of the year to help hand out food. Others volunteer to help stock the pantry. While others give money to support it.

Thanks for all the ways you help support those things that make a difference.

You can help make a difference here in your own church, too. There are many different jobs that have to be done for the church, well to be the church, by caring for our members and the community.

We need your help.

- * The Building Committee and Don could use your help with the up keep of the building. The further we move away from the reconstruction after the fire in 2013, the more things need cared for.
- * The Christian Education Committee not only keeps our children and youth programs going, but also makes sure there is money for Camp Bear Creek scholarships.
- * The Memorial Committee works with the Session to provide for needs of our church.
- * The Membership/Stewardship Committee promotes new members joining and remaining active as church members and encourages the giving necessary to support the budget.
- * The Personnel Committee support the church staff.
- * The Worship Committee makes sure each week that all the different parts that need to happen for worship to function take place.
- * The Funeral Committee provides hospitality and organizes lunches for funerals.
- * The Scholarship Committee reviews applications, awards scholarships, and insures checks and letters go out.

All of our committees do good things, and all of their work is meaningful, but white your help, we can do great things! If you are looking for a place to plug in as you live into this new year, talk to me and let me help you find the place where you can help.

Wishing you all a New Year filled with an abundance of God's blessings!

Pastor Bill

Many Thanks!

Donna and I want to express our thanks for the many cards, gifts, expressions of good wishes and Christmas blessings that we received at Christmas. We feel blessed to be a part of this community.

Pastor Bill and Donna Warhover

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

211 W 1st St Monticello, IA 52310

Worship Sundays 10:00am | Sunday school 8:30am (resuming 1/7) | Fellowship 9:30am

Facebook: @MonticelloFPC

Pastor
Bill Warhover

cell 319-202-4977

pastor@fpcmonticello.org

Office Administrator
Mackenzie Kahler

office 319-465-3393

office@fpcmonticello.org

Treasurer
Dan Saunders



PLEASE NOTE

The office will be closed **Monday, December 25 through Monday, January 1**. If you have a pastoral emergency, please contact Pastor Bill at 319-202-4977.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING



**Our Congregation's Annual Meeting will be held on
Sunday, January 21, 2024
at 11:00 am, following worship.**

******Please submit reports by Monday, January 15th
for the Annual Report. Thank you!**

As we approach the winter weather season, watch for winter weather related announcements. A decision will be made whether to hold Sunday morning worship, ideally by 6 am. If it is decided to cancel worship, announcements will be made to KGAN, KWWL, and KCRG, as well as on our Facebook page: @MonticelloFPC.





First Presbyterian Church is responsible for staffing the Food Pantry in the **month of January**. It is important to have *two volunteers staffed each shift*. Weekly times are:

Mondays, 5 - 7 pm | | Fridays, 2 - 4 pm

Please call the church office at 319-465-3393 to sign up for a shift and help us fill the month of January. Many hands make for light work. Thank you!

Current needs: toilet paper, paper towels, body wash, shampoo, dry soup mixes, jams, and jellies.

Thanks for helping out! *Food Pantry*

It takes all of us pitching in to make the church not only work, but work in the way it was intended.

"Each person is given something to do that shows who God is: Everyone gets in on it, everyone benefits. All kinds of things are handed out by the Spirit, and to all kinds of people!" 1Cor 12:7 The Message

January is our turn to volunteer to help at the food pantry.

The food pantry operates out of the back of the building to the east of the church. The church is used to have people to sign in and make choices about what they want from the pantry. Those needing food then wait their turns to go into the pantry itself. The volunteers at the food pantry assist with getting the food items and quantities requested as they are available and helping to suggest options if not. Regular volunteers, like Marilyn Schneiderman, will be here to check folks in and help volunteers with questions.

Volunteers are needed to staff the Food Pantry in January on Mondays from 5-7 and Fridays from 2-4. Volunteers are asked to come 15 minutes early to get oriented on what is available. While getting people the food they need is important, a serving of kindness and hospitality is also appreciated. Thanks for helping out!



If you would like to request a pastoral visit due to being homebound, or recovering from an ailment at home, in the hospital or a rehabilitation facility (and you are able to have visitors according to facility policy), please contact the church office to arrange a visit. Oftentimes the pastor is not aware that a visit is desired until after the opportunity has passed. Call Pastor Bill at 319-202-4977, or the church office at 319-465-3393, to request your pastoral care visit.

Monticello Ministerial Association (MMA)

First Presbyterian Church is a part of the Monticello Ministerial Association, through the dues we pay and the active participation of our pastor. MMA is an association of area churches that come together to provide compassionate support to our community.

The thing MMA does, through a lot of volunteers, that most of us know about is the Food Pantry. We might, too, have heard that MMA will do a joint Vacation Bible School again in July. What we might not know is a lot of other things that MMA does.

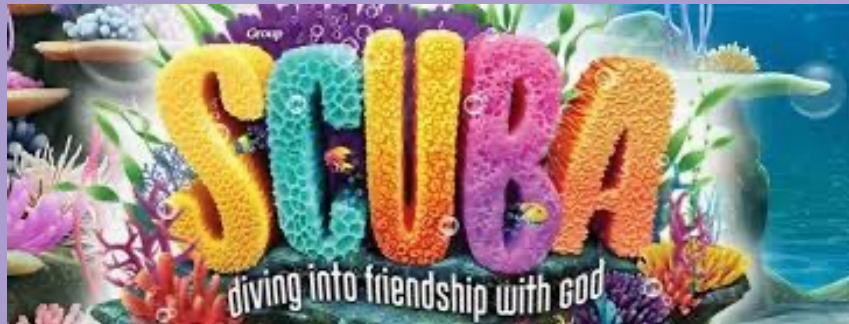
Through it's Neighbor Helping Neighbor program, MMA is able to provide vouchers for help with gasoline, help with utilities or rent assistance. MMA works with mental health providers to get people the support they need, or can reimburse a one night emergency hotel stay. All this happens through a network of area agencies: Jones County - HACAP, Jones County Community Services, Monticello Police Department, and the Monticello Counseling agencies.

In 2023, MMA, through it's Neighbor Helping Neighbor program, expended \$5,200.00. Programs like this and the Food Pantry can only happen through donations from community members and churches. If you would like to support any of the MMA programs you can make your check to:

MMA
PO Box 62
Monticello, IA52310

Please indicate if you wish your gift to be used for a particular ministry (Food Pantry, Neighbor Helping Neighbor, General Fund)

Thank you!
Pastor Bill



VBS 2024 is Announced!

July 29th-August 2nd, 2024

Parents-if your students loved the MMA VBS in 2023 at the Youth Development Center or if you missed the deadline for last year's VBS-

Please Mark Your Calendar for 2024 VBS!

Registration starts May 6, 2024

It will again be online registration. More information to come!



Per Capita 2024 is \$42.17 Per Member

WHAT IS PER CAPITA **Per Capita** is the primary source of funding for the Presbytery, as well as the Synod and GA, and is **how Presbyterians mutually and equitably share the costs** of coming together to perceive the Spirit's leading for the future.

- **It is how Presbyterians are trained** to become better ruling elders, teaching elders and deacons, and ministers.
- **It is how Presbyterians are helped** to discern God's call in their lives.
- **It is how Presbyterians participate** in the life of the wider church **by serving committees and commissions**, regardless of distance or financial resources.
- **It is how Presbyterians participate** in the life of the Church universal as we commit ourselves to work and live **in fellowship with "all persons in every nation"**

PER CAPITA has been part of our funding history for over 150 years. When Presbyteries, Synods, and the General Assembly meet, they are conducting the legislative and judicial business of the church and incur necessary expenses. There are also some necessary administrative expenses involved which enable these ecclesiastical, legislative, and judicial functions to be performed.

Importantly, per capita funding enables governing councils to make decisions regarding distribution of mission dollars without itself being funded by those same dollars. The whole church shares in these expenses since everyone who is a member shares in the benefits of this system of church government.

Paying per capita is similar to: • **contributing one's dish to a potluck meal** • **paying to be connected to the internet** • **paying for the benefit of utilities, such as electricity, gas, water** • **pitching in with others to pay for gasoline on a road trip.**

WHERE DO LOCAL PER CAPITA DOLLARS GO? The per capita apportionment in the Presbytery of East Iowa is based on the operating expenses of the Presbytery. This would include administration expenses and some salaries, detailed in each annual budget approved by the Presbytery, including managing Presbytery office and expenses, salaries to cover the office of the Presbyter and Stated Clerk, salaries of the Financial Secretary and Office Manager, insurance coverage, legal counsel, annual audit, and costs for committees.

OBSERVE PER CAPITA SUNDAY. Jan. 21, 2024 has been set aside as Per Capita Sunday, a day to celebrate being a connectional church.

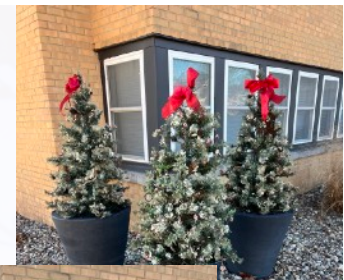
Thank you for your continued support of the Presbyterian Pie Committee!

To place your order or check freezer stock, call:

Pam (319-480-7700) or Kris (319-480-1538).



Thank you to Judy Mettler for her generous donation of artificial trees for our outside planters. Thank you to Jan Takes and Pam Recker for helping her set up the display.



Thanks to all who were able to come and carol! Your presence brought a lot of joy to those we visited. Thanks to Larry and Kathy Lamont for the gift of pizza.



Each week, we'd like to include a couple of church families on our **Family Prayer** list. For the month of January, please remember to include in your prayers each week our January families:

January 7: Ann & Randy Argall and John, Sarah & Matthew Beal

January 14: Roger & Anita Benedict and Christopher, Sarah, Brooklyn & Kennedy Bone

January 21: Erin Bone and Jim & Vickie Bone

January 28: Mark Bone and Pat Bonjour

Thoughts & Prayers

Betty Lambert
Doug Mettler

Monticello Nursing & Rehab, Monticello
Marj Stubbe

Pennington Square, Monticello
Lorraine Haag
Frank Smith

Pinicon Place, Anamosa
Barb Null



\$42.17

204 Per Capita



Week of:	Worship:	SS:
December 3	54	12
December 10	95	9
December 17	48	-



- The Deacons wish to thank you for your generous financial donations to the **Care and Share** program. This year, we sponsored five families with eight children. Your gifts and financial support were truly a gift for these three families!

- You are invited to stay after worship and help **take down decorations after worship**

Sunday, January 7.

Many hands make for light work!



Session Meeting Summary - December

- * Session approved for Holy Communion to be observed on the 1st Sunday of each month and on Easter Sunday.
- * Session approved for the Denominational Offerings, One Great Hour of Sharing and Christmas Joy Offering, to be received in 2024.
- * Session approved the 2024 budget. (Details will be in Annual Report.)
- * Anita Benedict will serve as Stated Clerk and Dan Saunders as Treasurer in 2024.



OFFERING & FINANCIALS

Thank you for your giving and generous contributions to the church. Your contribution allows us to continue to do God's work!

November 2023 Contributions \$10,600.16
 (November 2022 \$13,553.00)
 November 2023 Expenditures \$16,205.37
 (November 2022 \$10,202.76)