

# FIRST PRESS

The monthly newsletter of  
Estherville First  
Presbyterian Church

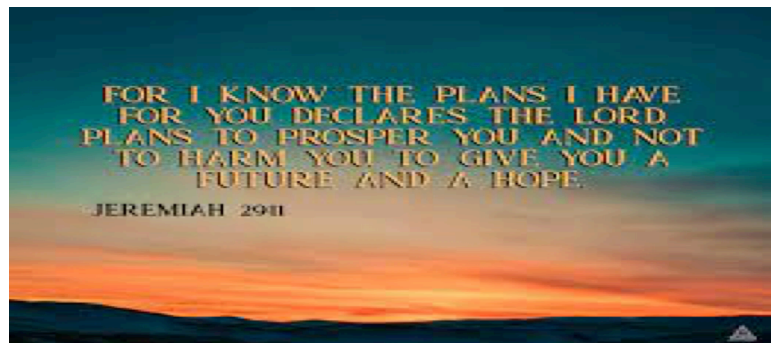


July 2021

## *In this issue...*

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## Pastor's Ponderings



We were able to conduct the Congregational Study with two groups that met twice each. We had some very good exchanges and a good round of thoughts and ideas have begun to come out of them. I will share the responses I recorded during the sessions, although we have too many for this newsletter, so I will share just the first part of the responses. It is also important that we continue to collect responses and ideas that can be sent or dropped off at the office, or delivered to me via email. I found the Tuesday sessions to be the most enjoyable as we had more time to consider the questions together and enjoy one another's responses.



*Did you know you can make automatic contributions to the church? Never worry about writing a check or missing the offering plate! Go to [www.esthervillepresbyterian.com](http://www.esthervillepresbyterian.com) and click on "make a donation" to give a one-time gift or to set up regular*

## Pastor's Ponderings Cont.

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I think the most telling question to begin with was, "What do you think our congregation will look like in 20 years if we continue the pattern of the last 20 years without operating differently?" The responses were unanimous, the church will be: empty; it won't be here; many said it will be closed.

That seems a very clear mandate to me. I don't accept that it is God's will and purpose for this congregation to end its ministry and close the church, and that can only mean that we need to do some things differently in the way we do ministry.

As we turn to scripture, we can read in Jeremiah 29:11-12, "*For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.*"<sup>12</sup> *Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you.*"<sup>13</sup> *You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.*"

God has a plan and a purpose for His people as individuals and for this church as we bond together as a worshipping community. Here are some of the first responses to the questions in the Congregational Study

**What are some of the things you like best about this church?** Many said the stained-glass windows and that this is a beautiful church. Many also mentioned the people, who enjoy each other, the fellowship we have, the friendliness of people. We have good people, very caring and willing to volunteer. We have had great music- choir, bell choir; singing. The Pastor was also mentioned.

**What are the greatest strengths of this congregation?** Some said our committees; leaders; friendships. Our people are good to volunteer for projects. Our media outreach is a major strength, especially video during Covid Our radio broadcast has been a great blessing for many years and the local cable as well as the livestreaming. The ministry of the Deacons is an important strength that helps us to connect with people. Many are naturally caring about others and are often asking about how family members are doing. We care about the community. Internet and email communications have been helpful to mobilize prayer and share news. Music is an important strength of our congregation.

The Session has been responsive to our need to make some changes in how we do things. We have received a grant from the Presbytery that has kick-started the process of upgrading the audio and visual aspects of our worship. This includes several components:

1) Adding speakers on each side of the sanctuary to supplement the sound from the main speaker in the ceiling. Also, adding microphones for the choir/special music; a boom mike to use with the piano, and mixing in general sound from the congregation for our broadcasts.

2) A new camera that will connect through a computer using a better (lower) angle than our current cable feed and incorporating the live streaming into one. This will use a worship program on computer that will enable us to present a higher quality (visual and audio) to the cable and online community.

3) An additional component that will be a part of improving what we broadcast as well as adding to our worship experience in the sanctuary will be the addition of two video monitors, one on each side of the sanctuary. This will enable us to include the responsive readings, unison prayers and music on the monitors as well as add other components to enhance our worship, such as: video clips, visual illustrations and emphasis for the sermons, we will be able to have presentations from missionaries and leaders from the

## Pastor's Ponderings Cont.

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larger church like the presbytery and General Assembly level.

Those are a few of the possibilities and there are many more. Last week many of the Pastor's in the Ministerial Association gathered to say farewell to Father Sharad and I took the opportunity to ask how many were using projections in their worship and I was surprised to discover that every one of them were already using them except at the Catholic Church and they are exploring how they might add it as well. Two were looking at upgrading from projection screens to monitors.

30 years ago I presented the idea to the congregation in Algona and we began using a projection screen (they have since moved on to using monitors). I was surprised to discover that the older generation appreciated it the most. Our purpose had been to be more attractive to younger families, but it was a pleasant discovery that the elder worshippers really appreciated reading from large print on screen instead of holding a hymnal,

The Session is desiring to utilize technology that is available to congregations as the world changes around us, but also wants the members of the congregation to be aware of what we are exploring. I think that is one of the greatest strengths of our congregation. We are willing to work together and explore possibilities as we try to keep pace with trying to reach out and bring blessing to more people than we have been and fit within the rapidly shifting society around us.

I will continue sharing these responses in the August newsletter.

Yours in Christ,

*Pastor Dave Ullom* <\*}}}><

# Confirmation

*Confirmation Class Statements of Faith that they read when they were received into membership on Sunday, June 20, 2021.*

### **Hillary Ruschy**

God is 3 in 1: God the father, God the son, and the God the Holy Spirit. He creates the Heavens and the earth. When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, it brought sin into the world. He then sent His son, Jesus to die on the cross and save us from our sins. The Holy Spirit is within us and guides us through our lives.

The Bible was written for us to learn about the stories in the past. It guides us and helps us learn more about God and His creations. By reading the Bible and going to church, we show our respect to God and how much He has given us.

I believe that there would be no church without the people. The people make up the church. People gather in fellowship to learn about Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior and to worship and serve Him. God created us to be with Him here on earth and forever in heaven.

### **Kate Ruschy**

I believe Jesus Christ, our lord and savior died on the cross for us, to provide a way of salvation. We can repent our sins by believing in our Christian faith and asking for forgiveness for the ways we disobey God. Sin began on Earth when people disobeyed God and the Bible was written so we could learn from both positive and negative examples.

The Bible is inspired and breathed out by God. He put the thoughts and scriptures into the minds of those who wrote the individual books. The way of salvation is believing in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

I believe in eternal life in heaven that God has prepared for us, and our spiritual life of faith here on earth prepares us for continuing life there.

# Confirmation

***Liam Brown***

I believe in God because no matter the situation you're in He is always by your side and will get you through the thick and thin of things. God has a path for everyone, and that path might reach some very, very low points but that's means God will bring you to a very, very high point in the future, so you just have to believe and follow God along this path.

I believe God breathed out the Bible for use to read and understand that He is amazing and all of the good He can do to you as long as you believe. God created heaven where everything is great everything good happens like you catch a fish with every cast, you never miss a duck when you are hunting, nothing wrong happens to your car so you don't have to buy the parts and fix it.

That's why I believe in God.

***Jessica Sabwa***

I believe that the Bible is a guidebook that leads us to God like a treasure map that leads us to salvation. Jesus died for our sins so that we could be saved. I believe that when we ask for forgiveness we are forgiven and our sins are wiped away but not forgotten. The point of asking for forgiveness is to repent from the wrong you've been doing. I believe on the day of judgment we will be judged for all our actions even the ones we have been forgiven for. It's not just about forgiveness it's what we have done.

I believe that God speaks to those who have accepted Him into their hearts as Lord and Savior. We push His voice out or break our bond with Him when we ignore the scriptures and do what we want and not let God take control of our lives.

We grow in our faith together as we listen to each other's stories and encourage and pray for each other along the way. Our fellowship in the church leads us to the joy of being together in heaven with our family. We will be able to ask questions about all the things we don't understand and find the answers that only God can give.



## Something to celebrate at First Presbyterian Church

*If you have something to celebrate, let us know so we can share it with our family of faith in next month's newsletter!*

### Birthday Wishes

01 - Kacie Brechwald  
01 - Isaac Hanson  
02 - Katie Hanson  
04 - Molly Jo Anderson  
05 - Beth Carrico  
16 - Dave Ullom  
20 - Ciara Minion  
26 - Amber Hall  
28 - David Egeland  
30 - Alice Jensen  
30 - Kevin Sander

### Anniversary Congratulations

13 - Tom & Stephanie Egeland  
24 - Dave & Rebecca Johnson  
24 - Kevin & Marcie Sander

### Way to Go...

*\* Thank you to those who help members in our community through their Meet the Needs donations.*

*\* Thank you to those who continue to help support our Radio Broadcasts and our church through your donations and pledges during this time!*



# Committee Happenings

**Building & Grounds** – Aaron reports that the chair lift inspection will be any time. Stan, from A.V.I. sent a quote regarding the audio and sound system. Dave will also get a quote from his son, Josh, for the integration part of the estimate to save on the final costs. Session will wait to vote on any proposal until the congregation is in favor of and all estimates are in.

The next meeting is scheduled for Sunday, July 4<sup>th</sup>, at 11:30am. –Aaron Ruschy, Chairperson

**Christian Education** – Confirmation class will be confirmed on June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

The next meeting is TBA. – Chairperson

**Congregational Life/ Outreach** – There was a celebration for the confirmation class on Sunday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, following worship service. Ice Cream Social will be Thursday, August 26<sup>th</sup>. Please let CL/O

The next meeting is TBD. –Molly Jo Anderson, Chairperson

**Deacons** – No Notes.

Next meeting will be Monday, September 13th, at 5:30pm. –Lavonne Ruschy, Moderator

**Finance** – No Notes.

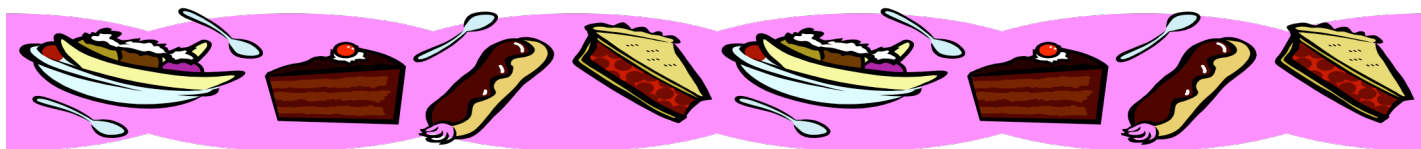
The next meeting is TBA. –Kevin Sander, Chairperson

**Generosity Team** – No Notes.

The next meeting is TBD – Craig White & Beth Carrico, Co-Chairpersons

**Worship** – Will continue to use the communion cups at this time.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 6<sup>th</sup>, at 5:30pm –Lori Donovan, Chairperson



**SIGN UP SHEET FOR  
ICE CREAM SOCIAL AUGUST 26, 2021**

Our Ice Cream Social Fund Raiser is scheduled for  
Thursday, August 26, 2021 from 5 to 6:30pm in the church basement.

*Menu will include:*

Sloppy Joes, Baked Beans, Chips, Pie, Homemade Ice Cream, & Drink. Free will offering.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

I will donate pie \_\_\_\_\_

(please indicate the number of pies)

I will donate bag of ice \_\_\_\_\_

(please indicate the number of bags)

I will donate potato chips \_\_\_\_\_

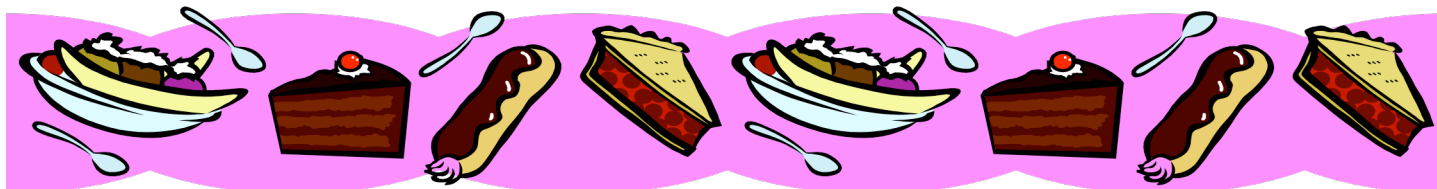
(please indicate the number of potato chips)

I will donate money \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I will help work the night of the event (Thursday, August 26<sup>th</sup>)

Before \_\_\_\_\_ During \_\_\_\_\_ After \_\_\_\_\_

*You may drop off this form in the offering plate or at the church office. Any questions call the church office  
362-4772.*



# Class of 2021

*Thank you to everyone who helped with and joined me at my graduation party at the church! I truly appreciate all the church and the members have done for me!*

*Thank you!  
Kendyl Ruschy*

## Thank you!

As my last day draws near (July 31<sup>st</sup>) and a new chapter unfolds in my life, I wanted to reach out and Thank You for being such an incredible Congregation to work with these past 4 years. There are so many people and memories I will take with me as I go. A big Thank You to the Session Members, Finance Committee and Pastor Dave for your help and guidance along the way!

I will carry you with me as I begin my full-time teaching career as the Title 1 Reading teacher for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

Sincerely,  
Amber Hall

## USHERS

July

Georgia Whitehouse  
Rebecca & Grace Johnson  
Paula Beaver  
Lori Donovan



## Meet the Need

Meet the Need will break for June and July and resume again in August with a school supply donation.

Have a great Summer!



## Summer Office Hours

Beginning May 31<sup>st</sup>, the office will be open from 9:30am - 12:30pm Monday-Thursday through summer.

## By the numbers...

### Average Worship Attendance

June 2019 – 54

June 2020 – 33

June 2021 – 46

### General Budget

**2021 General Budget:** \$ 80,000.00

**Last Week Giving:** \$ 1,150.00

**Yearly Total:** \$ 51,833.84

Weekly Amount Needed to Meet Budget: \$1,548.08

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4 Worship, 10:30am Building & Grounds Meeting, 11:30am	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 Worship, 10:30am	12	13	14	15	16	17
18 Worship, 10:30am	19	20 Session Meeting, 7:00pm	21	22	23	24
25 Worship, 10:30am	26	27	28	29	30	31

**Ruling Elders** – Brad Hermanson, Beth Carrico, Kelly Claude, Molly Jo Anderson, Aaron Ruschy, Lori Donovan, Paul Moffitt and Walt Jensen

**Deacons** – Jan Greig, Cheryl Klingbeil, Mavis Evans, Georgia Whitehouse, Lavonne Ruschy (Moderator), Kevin Streng, John Klingbeil, Mary Clabaugh and Pat Johnson

**Building & Grounds** – Aaron Ruschy (Chair), Jack Bixby, Walt Jensen, Larry Harsin, Kevin Streng

**Christian Education** - Liz Bixby, Natalie Brown, Katie Hanson, Heidi Origer, & Bobbi Jo Ruschy

**Congregational Life/Outreach** – Molly Jo Anderson (Chair), Lisa & Brad Hermanson, Paul, Shirley & Chelsea Moffitt, & Lavonne Ruschy

**Finance/Personnel**– George Shadle, John Klingbeil, Lavonne Ruschy & Paul Moffitt

**Generosity Team** – Beth Carrico (Co-Chair), Craig White (Co-Chair), Janet Anderson, Lisa Hermanson, Judy Ullom

**Prayer Chain** - Belva Henrickson, Velma White, Dee Zinnel

**Worship** – Lori Donovan (Chair), Paula Beaver, Beth Carrico, Paul Moffitt, Evy Streng, Kelly Claude

**Pastors and Staff** –Rev. Dr. Dave Ullom, Pastor; Amber Hall, Administrative Assistant/Treasurer; Craig Kesler, Custodian

## First Presbyterian Church

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