

## DISCOVERING WATER



A close friend and church member gave me a book entitled, *“More Beautiful Than Before: How Suffering Transforms Us.”* In this book, author Steve Leder shares an aphorism from a Canadian philosopher, Marshall McLuhan. *“We don’t know who discovered water, but it wasn’t the fish.”*

What he meant was that we are so close to our own lives, so

immersed in our own reality, that we actually have the least perspective on it.

Leder explains, *“Only when it’s hooked, thrashing in a net, gills gasping, and flailing for breath, only then does a fish discover water. So too with us – only when pain suddenly jerks us out of our otherwise ordinary life do we discover something powerful and true about ourselves. Pain shocks us and propels us from where we thought we were - who we thought we were - to something far more real and true.”*

From a Biblical perspective, my mind is drawn to the story of the Apostle Paul. Paul was once Saul, a persecutor of Christians. Acts 9:1 states, *“Meanwhile, Saul was breathing out murderous threats against the Lord’s disciples.”* Continue reading in the chapter and you’ll discover Saul’s blinding encounter with Jesus on the road to Emmaus – for three days Saul was blind and did not eat or drink anything (Acts 9:9).

I wonder what was going through Saul’s mind. Was he frightened and anxious? Did he think he would ever see again? Did he picture himself reliant upon the

compassion of others, gathering at the Beautiful Gate to beg for mercy and coin? (See Luke 18:35-43). Did he think his life was over? What about his understanding of his self-worth?

Later in Saul’s story, we read about his transformation. God sends Ananias to pray over Saul and give him the message that he will be filled with the Holy Spirit and will be God’s messenger to the Gentiles.

The scales fell from Saul’s eyes, and he regained his strength. His experience on the Emmaus Road changed him. No longer was he Saul, the persecutor. He was given a new name Paul – and he would now proclaim Jesus as the Messiah.

God worked through Paul’s trial and hardship to transform him. His non-existent faith became unwavering and strong. The one least likely to become a follower of Christ (let alone a leader), was given the charge to carry Jesus’ message to the Gentiles.

I think somewhere along the way, much like McLuhan’s example, Paul discovered water. He discovered something so significant and vital that it transformed his life and his path. He would go on now devoted to helping people find the joy and abundance that he himself discovered in Jesus.

Heading into the upcoming season of Lent, I have taken on a new perspective of life and faith. In some ways I feel that I’ve been pulled from the water – and experience the presence of Christ with me in a way that is deeper than before.

**Pastor Nathan Esser**



## ENTERING THE SEASON OF LENT



Beginning with Ash Wednesday (February 22<sup>nd</sup> this year) the Church enters into the season of Lent. Lent lasts for forty days, excluding Sundays, and ends with Holy Saturday, the day before Easter Sunday. The season of Lent reminds us of times of wilderness and wandering and reminds us that God has always called people

out of their safe, comfortable lives and led them into uncomfortable places as God reveals to us paths we would have never chosen. We as God's people are called to walk a path of humility, justice, and peace. The forty days of Lent provide us the opportunity to imagine what our life's journey looks like as we remember what it means to follow and learn from Jesus.

**Ash Wednesday Worship Service, February 22, at 7:00pm** – We will enter into the season of Lent as we come together to worship. We will celebrate Holy Communion and we will receive ashes as a way to begin this season with humility and repentance. The forty days of Lent offer us the opportunity to deepen the inner work we each need to do in order to go out into the world to seek and serve all others with compassion, love, and hope.

**LOOKING FORWARD** (watch for more details in the coming months):

**Holy Week** does not arrive until the first week of April but I want you to prepare and look forward to the culmination of our Lenten season.

**Maundy Thursday, April 6, beginning at 5:30pm** we will come together for a potluck meal in the Covenant Center. Due to Covid we have missed this opportunity to fellowship together and share conversations and a wide variety of food. The Lord's Supper will be shared this evening around our tables.

**Good Friday Worship Service, April 7, at 7:00pm.** This holy day will be marked by a service of music. The combined choirs of First Presbyterian Church and Spirit of Peace will present "The Seven Last Words of Christ" by Theodore Dubois. This evening of sacred music will be accompanied by a chamber orchestra and soloists. Please plan to join us for the sacred time of worship.

**Easter Sunday, April 9, at 9:30am.**

May this season of Lent be a time of imagination and hope as together we live into our identity as followers of Jesus.

*On this journey with you!*  
**Pastor Pat**

## ADULT EDUCATION

### February 5, 12: **Native Spirituality Through Art and Ceremony**

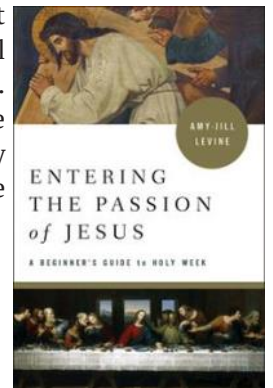
Jerry Fogg is a Sioux Falls artist who will share insights on native spirituality through his art as well as some special ceremonies. He is an enrolled member of the Ihanktowan Nakota Oyate: Yankton Sioux Tribe.

### February 19: **Liturgical Calendar 101**

The liturgical year follows a set calendar that encapsulates the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Two easily recognized seasons are Lent and Advent. But did you know that each week of the year falls into a broader season complete with its own color? Rev. Mike McCallum will help us unravel the mysteries of why we have a set calendar and how it can be a positive influence in our worship.

### February 26 – April 2: **Entering the Passion of Jesus**

In every good story there is history that shapes the story and the characters who populate the story. In "Entering the Passion of Jesus: A Beginner's Guide to Holy Week" we will view videos by professor and biblical scholar Amy-Jill Levine as she delves into the history and literature surrounding the last week of Jesus' life. From Jesus' Palm Sunday entrance into Jerusalem to his agonizing prayer in Gethsemane we will look at aspects and details of these events to look at how these events address our ethical and spiritual concerns for life today. Rev. Skip Mulock will facilitate discussion. Please bring your own copy or books will be available for purchase at a reasonable price.



**The Adult Education class Lenten Study Book: "Entering the Passion of Jesus" by Amy Levine is now available in the church office for \$5.00.**

## JANUARY SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The Session welcomed Jacob Forstein, Director of Facilities, to the Church staff. Jacob updated Session on snow removal after the early January storm, the suitability of the current equipment for the task, and the advisability of relying on contractors for timely snow removal.

The safety and security review continued, led by Elder Christy Nicolaisen. Elder Suzannah Spencer reported on security arrangements at several other local congregations. Session voted to buy several two-way radios for rapid intrabuilding communication and to have staff undergo de-escalation training. A comprehensive re-keying of the building is under consideration following the installation of the security system upgrades in February.

Elder John Ulmer reported on the transition to Eide Bailly for financial operations. Accounts payable is being migrated this month, and Ministry Teams should have

Eide Bailly-generated financial statements by the end of the month. Elder Gary Hoekman agreed to serve with John Ulmer on the Finance Team. If any congregation members have an interest in joining this team, please contact John or Gary.

The stewardship drive has received a total of 127 pledges, either by pledge cards or an unchanged ACH withdrawal form, for approximately \$552,000.

Session reviewed the comments and questions it received from the congregation at the January 5 Town Hall meeting and is working on implementing some of the suggestions.

Session will revive the practice of having Elders attend Ministry Team meetings in the coming months.

**Eric Wells,**  
Clerk of Session

## PERKINS FUND REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Session is eager to consider requests from teams and/or individuals about how to spend portions of the Perkins fund. The Session plans to consider these requests every six months until the funds are expended, beginning in April of 2023.

Proposals should give a brief description (not more than 2 pages) of the project and a budget. Proposals should address the primary question: How does this project further the mission of First Presbyterian Church?

The description might also include consideration of the following topics and questions:

- To what extent does the project overlap, enhance, or support existing FPC activities or programs?
- Are there operational costs of the project beyond the initial funding?

- Will the project require attention from FPC staff? If so, please describe which staff and in what capacity the staff will be required.
- If the project will require volunteer support, please describe the level of commitment to the project, or the plans to recruit sufficient volunteer effort to fulfill the project needs.

If you have questions, please contact a member of Session or one of the Pastors. For a proposal to be considered at the April Session meeting, materials should be received at the church office or sent to Chandra Isackson ([chandraisackson@fpcsiouxfalls.org](mailto:chandraisackson@fpcsiouxfalls.org)) by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to the relevant Session meeting, i.e., March 15 for the April meeting and September 15 for the October meeting.

## MEMBERSHIP MINISTRY TEAM

*"Give us this day our daily bread"* is the fourth of the seven petitions in the Lord's prayer. It is recorded in the Gospels according to Matthew and Luke. But what is my daily bread? According to Elizabeth Knox it is the following:

Enough grace for the moment

Enough attention for the job at hand

Enough humor to roll with the punches

Enough dependance on God to love people He puts into my life to love with His love.

A beautiful thought for February.



**Judy Rops and the Membership Ministry Team of  
Andrea Boerigter, Hilda Bosch, Arla Peterson, and Carol Raker**

## KIDS ON WEDNESDAY NIGHTS

**Service Learning Project: January 11– February 22, 6:30-7:30 pm**

A group of 11 kids has begun working together to plan a service project. After reflecting on community and helping others, our students have agreed to find a way to help kids who are in the hospital. Over the next two weeks, our students will learn more about the needs of kids who are ill and explore ways they might make a difference. They will be inviting experts to come and speak to our group before deciding on a plan of action. Stay tuned to see what this compassionate group of FPC students will do!

## SAVE THE DATES

**Summer Music Camp**  
(completed grades 3-8)  
June 5-9

**Vacation Bible School**  
(3-years-old through completed  
5th grade)  
July 10-14 from 9-noon



*Follow me! Follow me! Kids followed the star around the sanctuary as it pointed to Jesus during an Epiphany-themed Children's Sermon.*

## TALK WITH THE TEACHERS

Our elementary Sunday School students have been learning the story of young Jesus talking with the teachers in the temple from Luke 2:39-52. During the unit, a favorite lesson involved making several different edible "scrolls." Students are learning that Jesus matured in wisdom and years and with the favor of God and people.

In January, Lisa Tunge returned as the primary teacher for the 1st and 2nd grade class. The class recently showed their appreciation by singing Happy Birthday the week of her birthday.



## HONDURAS MISSION TRIP SUMMARY AND COFFEE SALE

You've been waiting a long time and it's finally here!

The team that recently returned from Honduras brought back some of the most delicious coffee ever grown, and YOU can have some! On February 12, during worship, a couple of members of the team will give a brief report on their experience. Then after worship, coffee will be for sale in the narthex for \$20 a pound. Proceeds from the sale support the next trip.



Our Mission Team visited coffee fields in Honduras this month.

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT-LORI RICKENBAUGH

It all began with a bracelet!



In January, 2018, Lori Rickenbaugh had experienced the loss of her father. Soon after, Lori received a gift from a friend—a bracelet. What was special about the bracelet was that it was created from the funeral folder of her father's service. Wearing the bracelet helped her feel close

to her Dad. It helped in the grief process.

Fast forward and one day Lori decides to try to recreate a similar bracelet for someone else, a grieving friend.

Being a person who has tinkered in making jewelry, making a memorial bracelet became a process through time, trial and error. Eventually Lori was satisfied with the finished product.

In creating bracelets, Lori uses a small paper cutter to slice the obituary program into long, triangle strips. She uses a toothpick and a glue stick to roll the slices of paper. She strings the paper beads through a bendable jewelry wire held between two wine bottles. She brushes on Mod Podge to clear coat them (twice). After they have dried, she strings the beads created from the paper slices, black beads and a silver heart on a stretch cord to form a bracelet and ties them off securely. Each bracelet takes from one to two hours to make.

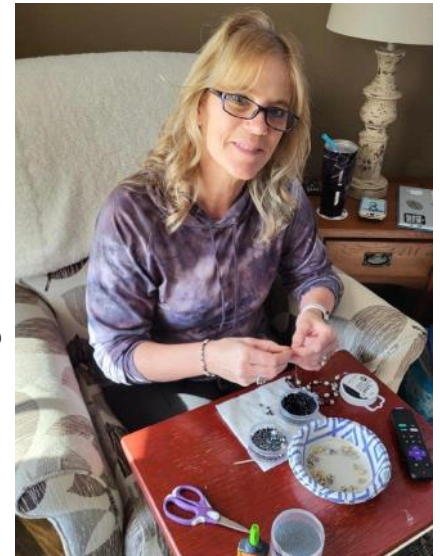
Lori has created many bracelets (30-40) since beginning,

and their popularity has spread through word of mouth. She has even had reorders! Lori has also conducted a class, teaching others how to make the memorial bracelets.

Lori said, "I enjoy seeing how unique the beads turn out based on the colors of each different obituary program. But more importantly, my heart overflows with the overwhelming heartfelt reaction that I see on their faces after receiving a memorial bracelet. Their messages, emails, and thank you cards touch my heart dearly."

I was the recipient of two of those bracelets and yes, I reordered. "It is a beautiful bracelet and I just love it. I wear it all the time and so many have asked me about it and then I tell them Lori's story of how the memorial bracelets came to be."

There is so much more I could write about Lori and the wonderful stories she has since beginning this ministry. She would love to share them with you and answer your questions. Lori is a FPC member you may want to know better.



**Judy Rops, Membership Ministry Team**

## ADAMS SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

Presbyterian Women of FPC is now accepting applications for the Adams Scholarship. This scholarship is awarded each spring to men and women who are pursuing roles in Christian Service—ministry, mission work, church music, etc. Initial consideration is given to FPC members, and thereafter to outside applicants.

The Adams Scholarship originated in 1966 to honor Dr. and Mrs. Clarence Adams. Dr. Adams was senior pastor at FPC from 1939-1966. Presbyterian Women created the scholarship in 1966 and have continued to support it through annual fundraising events. Memorials, bequests, and individual contributions are also welcomed as ongoing opportunities to support our future Christian leaders.

## WOMEN OF THE CHURCH

Save the Date! Please mark your calendar for the PW Guest Day on March 25, 2023! Watch for more details in the weeks to come.

The PW Christmas Gathering, "Let's Celebrate Christmas!", was held on December 20, 2022 in the church lounge. Despite the cold snowy night, there was a great turnout. Lori Walsh delighted the audience with her wonderful talk and left us wondering, "What has become of the little 'Christmas Mouse' that took up residency in her car?" Holiday music throughout the evening put everyone in a festive mood. Lisa Tunge started the evening with "A Christmas Medley for Piano." The Christmas Bells rang out carols with their handbell magic. This bell quartet featured Mary Kay Fausch, Ruth Parry, Ann Weflen, and Kathie Douma. Guests enjoyed Christmas cookies and

Checks or donations can be directed to PW—Adams Scholarship.

Scholarship forms are available on the FPC website [www.fpcsiouxfalls.org](http://www.fpcsiouxfalls.org). Go to Quick Link and click on forms. Applications are also available in the church office. Completed applications are due April 30<sup>th</sup>. Any questions may be directed to Mary Tidwell [mtidwell@sio.midco.net](mailto:mtidwell@sio.midco.net).

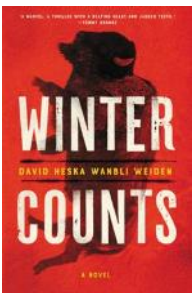
### Adams Scholarship Committee

Mary Tidwell, Judy Regan, Ruth Metcalf



beverages while seated at tables beautifully set by Anita Braunschmidt, Bobbi Lower, Ruth Parry, Connie Tucker, and Lisa Tunge. Jo Erickson and Sue Hanneld presented Sally Kulm with the PW Honorary Life Membership. It was a joy to see the surprised look on Sally's face when her name was announced. She is most deserving of this honor acknowledging the service she has given throughout the years!

## FPC LIBRARY



### FIRST PRESBYTERIAN READERS

February 9, 2023—"Winter Counts" by David Heska Wanbli Weiden  
(One Book Siouxfalls Selection for April 2022)

#### RUMMAGE/BOOK SALE LAST WEEKEND IN APRIL

**SAVE YOUR ITEMS TO DROP OFF WEEK OF SALE. MORE INFO WILL FOLLOW!**

Did You Know...

- There is a library cart in the hall outside the library containing various paperbacks and magazines. Take what you want.
- If you want a book on a particular subject or author, just leave a note at the desk. We will try to help.
- Volunteers for projects are always welcome. Talk to Linda Hubbard or Sue Harsh.

## PEACEWORKS REPORT

As with many programs, storms and bad roads denied Peaceworks members to come to the church to sew, but that didn't stop the seamstresses. The team continues to make monthly items for the Glory House Recovery program coordinated by the Deacons. So, there is a regular need to make pillowcases, remote control holders, kitchen half towels, microwave bowls, potato bags, wash cloths, hot pads, personal care purses, shopping bags, placemats, and coasters. On top of that, Peaceworks' sewers made forty bibs and burp rags sets for the family needs at Teddy Bear Den downtown, an urgent resource need for young families with new babies. There were five fidget blankets made for those with memory loss or children's attention needs. The women also provided thirty pillowcase bags for the children in foster care to carry their clothes to their new home. Peaceworks continues to make loom and fleece hats for those in need, as well as fleece blankets and hats. If any of this would be of interest to you, we welcome you to join us on Tuesday afternoons from 1 to 4 pm or Wednesday evenings from 6-8 pm.

The big focus this month is the breast cancer blankets project for survivors receiving treatments at Sanford Hospital. Material for twenty-five fleece blankets was given to Peaceworks to cut and tie, but the need is greater than the Peaceworkers can do by themselves. YOU can join us for **The Blanket Cutting and Tying Project** on



**Saturday, February 18 from 1-4 pm at Peaceworks** (room 212) to assist with this worthwhile project. If you can't cut, you surely can tie. If not able to come that day, we'll have blankets you can pick up and return to the church office after being tied.

Also, remember that all products made by Peaceworks are displayed in the Giving Room, next to the Chapel and are there for members of the congregation to pick up and share with those you know that are in need. Please share with others.

**Judy Mulock and Pat Boelman**

## OFFERINGS

### PER CAPITA

Per capita is a set amount of money (apportionment) per member that congregations pay to the larger Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Said another way, it is a Presbyterian Covenant Community Fund — part of the glue that holds Presbyterians together. Because every Presbyterian shares in the benefit of the PC(USA)'s system of government, the expenses associated with coordinating and performing the functions of that system should be shared by everyone as well. The first-known mention of per capita dates back to 1734 in a letter to ministers!

If you are able, the church would greatly appreciate each member reimbursing the church for this amount. We willingly budget to cover per capita expense in the budget, but every dollar reimbursed by our members is a dollar freed up for other uses. Thank you!

**Per capita for 2023 is \$38.00.**

### CHILDREN'S OFFERING

During the month of February, the Children's Offering will purchase stoves for Ukraine. Pastors Vasily and Oleg build and distribute stoves to people in need. Each stove costs \$150 for materials, and they give away 70 stoves each month for families in need.



## BIRTHDAYS OVER 90

**Audrey Rinder** celebrates 92 years on 2/5.

**Lois Merritt** celebrates 95 years on 2/21.

## THANK YOU

On behalf of Feeding South Dakota, I would like to thank you for your generous donation of 446 pounds of food given in the month of December.

Feeding South Dakota provides on-going hunger relief to South Dakotans through our Distribution Centers, Food Pantries, Mobile Distributions, Childhood Hunger Programs, and a network with hundreds of agency partners across the state. With the network we are able to feed nearly 100,000 children, adults, and seniors annually.

Thanks to your continuing partnership, we provided over 12.8 million meals to families in need last year.

Thank you again for your gift,  
Sincerely,  
Lori Dykstra, CEO Feeding South Dakota

## DEACON DOINGS

•Congregational Care Team has discontinued the Wednesday walking and devotional group at the Western Mall. Thank you to all who have attended.

•Huge thanks to the congregation and everyone who helped make this year's Angel Tree and Food Basket program a huge success! Through your generosity, we were able to support 40 families and 184 people, including 129 children. Thanks to all who purchased gifts for Angels, or helped deliver presents and food on delivery day. We continue to be blown away by your generosity, and the impact your love and compassion for the families we served cannot be understated.

•A Christmas party was hosted at the church for our local Ukrainian community congregation. FPC provided a meal and gifts for the families, including many who have come to Sioux Falls since the start of the war last spring. It was a warm and uplifting gathering, featuring food, fellowship, and sharing Christmas carols in multiple languages.

•We have many events in the works for later this spring that we are excited to share with you all- keep your eyes open for more info to come!



## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Karleigh Sudenga	02/01	Carol Woltjer	02/16
Tom Nicholson	02/02	Florence Opp	02/17
Weston Gulden	02/04	Stefanie Wieme	02/17
Paul Gillaspey	02/05	Tami Dickmeyer	02/18
Richard Newman	02/05	Jeremy Hove	02/19
Audrey Rinder	02/05	Jonathan Tilk	02/19
Charlotte McGrath	02/06	Charley King	02/21
Garry Papke	02/06	Lois Merritt	02/21
Randy Bartunek	02/07	Judy Regan	02/21
Joseph Henkin	02/07	Katy Burggraff	02/22
Brad Hruby	02/07	Fay Justice	02/22
Harriet Pietz	02/07	Becky Wartner	02/22
Lee Brandt	02/10	Warren DeCou	02/23
Britton Anderson	02/12	Pat Hammond	02/24
Andrew Draeger	02/12	Annie Cochran	02/25
Hank Hight	02/14	Bill Waggoner	02/27
Julie Thomas	02/14	Harper Tilk	02/28
Linda Hart	02/15	Douglas Loudon	02/29
Rodger Horr	02/16		

## CONTACT INFORMATION & LINKS

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### Phone

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### Mailing List

[Sign up for mailing list](#)

### To Donate

<https://www.fpcsiouxfalls.org/give>