
The Burning Bush

December 2021

Greetings Colleagues in Ministry!

I hope that you all had a great Thanksgiving with your loved one! I know I did. I got to see most of my family. I went to the Illini basketball game with my family. I really enjoyed the time with loved ones. Now that Thanksgiving is over, if you joined us for worship last week, you would have noticed that Advent has officially begun. We lit the candle of hope. We sang Advent hymns. I am really looking forward to this Advent and Christmas season. It has been a difficult year and we could all use some merriment.

This Advent season, there are going to be several ways for you to engage with our congregation. Each week, we will have our Advent worship services at the usual time. We will be ordering poinsettias again this year. If you would like to donate a poinsettia in honor or memory of someone, we have forms in the back of the sanctuary you can fill out. You can also email me at revandysonneborn@gmail.com or you can call me at 217-994-8588. We ask that you do this by December 5. Tadd Swanson is working hard on developing another children's program video this year. Also, the week leading up to Christmas, we will have several opportunities for worship and activities. On December 21, we will have our Longest Night service at 6:30pm. This worship service is designed to help people who struggle with sadness or anxiety or loss during the Christmas season. All are welcome to attend this service. On December 22, we will have an open house from 5-8pm. The sanctuary will be open and the decorations will be lit up. All are welcome to drop in for a time of prayer and contemplation. On December 24, we will have our Christmas Eve service at 6:30pm. I am excited for all of these opportunities. I hope he will be a blessing for you and your family this year.

Finally I would like to mention that we will be having a congregational meeting on December 12 to elect officers for 2022. We need everyone to prayerfully consider serving a term as a Deacon or Elder. Our officers help make this congregation function. Many hands make light work. I want to thank all of our nominating committee for their hard work this year. I hope you have a great holiday season.

God bless you

Pastor Andy

SNIPPETS

by Pat

Snippets from the November 9 Session Meeting:

TREASURER- Kathy Welch (financial expertise) went over the reports. She also presented the 2022 Budget in its final form, barring any changes requested by the Session. She is planning for it to be approved at the December Session Meeting. The Team worked hard on the Budget, cutting costs where it seemed feasible to do so. They also added Pastoral 2% Presbytery mandated raise and 25% increases to Utilities and Insurance as they have been warned that both are likely going up for 2022.

CLERK'S REPORT –

○ **Email/Text Votes:**

- Email sent November 5 from Liz Johnson requesting use of the CE Building on Saturday, November 13 from 12-4pm for a Seint makeup party. Elders approved.
- Text/(Email to Michelle) sent November 3 from Kathy Welch requesting use of CE Building on Friday, November 5 from 4:30-7:30pm. She is planning a dinner for Blanche and her friends. Elders approved.
- Email sent October 27 from Jodi Phillips for use of the CE Building on Sunday, November 21 from noon-4:30pm. She is having a family Thanksgiving Dinner. Elders approved.
- Email sent October 11 from Trustees wishing to approve having new gutters installed on the CE building. The bid from Sharps Seamless Gutters, LLC came in for \$896. The Trustees want to take care of this before we get snow and ice. Elders approved.

DEVOTION: Pat finally remembered to have a devotion picked out. It was about the effects of the Corona Virus on Church attendance and the fact that the attendance was already dropping before the pandemic. It just escalated it. The thing to remember that through all this, God is with us. He is everywhere we are. So, if the people do not come back to Worship, we can still be there knowing that God is there with us. He will take care of us. Next Month's Devotee will be Michelle.

MINISTRY TEAM REPORTS

- **Worship Team – Liz & Tammy (co-chairs), Tony, Diana, Beth & Sam.**
 - Starting to work on the upcoming holiday plans.
 - Dean Warner to fill pulpit December 26 in Pastor Andy's absence due to vacation.
 - Pastor Andy will get the Advent readers selected. First Sunday of Advent is November 28th.

- **Christian Education Team – Beth (chair) & Tammy**
 - Beth gave a report of SS stating that there are only 4-5 kids each Sunday. She did say that Bonnie's class needed more materials ordered for Pre and K kids.
- **Stewardship/Finance/Memorial/Personnel Team – Steffanie (chair) & Michelle**
 - Personnel - Received resignation note from Barb Brown, our janitress, effective as of 10/28/2021. We are working with Kathy Welch to make a list of the job duties. We plan to begin contacting the names received already to see if there is any interest beginning the week of November 15th.
 - Personnel – To go along with the need to hire a janitress, the Team is asking for volunteers to clean the Church. They have placed a tablet in the kitchen so that the people who help with this list what they have done. That way, the next person will know what needs to be done.
 - Finance - Kathy, Michelle and I worked on the budget for 2022. Kathy will be presenting budget at our session meeting this month.
- **Technology Team – Brady (chair) & Michelle**
 - Brady and Michelle have completed the Tech Team job description for the Manual of Operations.
- **Deacon's Report**
 - Deacon's Meeting – October 24, 2021
 - Attending- Chris Evans, Marianne Taylor, Sue Lane, Andy Sonneborn, Melissa Herron
 - Cards- Sue- 2, Melissa- 6, Marianne-2, Chris-2
 - Communion- Next November 7 (Daylight Savings)
 - Help - Chris Evans
 - Bringing Bread - Melissa Herron
 - Hanging of the Greens- November 21st
 - HyVee will be sending out information for their poinsettias after Halloween.
 - Deacons will be doing a basket for Thanksgiving for a needy family and baskets for the shut-ins for Christmas.
- **Pastor's Report**
 - Worship
 - We continue to worship in person and online.
 - I led Communion online and in person on October 3, 2021.
 - I continue to lead the devotional on Wednesday at 1pm. I recently changed the format of the devotional.
 - I ordered and received the Glory to God Hymnals.
 - Dean Warner will lead worship on Sunday, October 17.
 - Pastoral Care

- I continue to call/text several members throughout the week to check in on them.
- I had a couple pastoral care conversations on Facebook messenger.
- I had people drop by the office for pastoral care.
- Presbytery
 - I attended the October 5, 2021, COM meeting via Zoom.
 - I attended subcommittee meetings for COM.
- Administrative
 - I attended the Deacons meeting in September.
 - I developed the October Burning Bush.
 - I continue to send out weekly announcements.
- Community
 - I helped with the Masons booth for Spoon River Drive both weekends
 - I helped with the church's rummage sale both weekends
 - I continue to attend the city council meetings when available.
 - I continue to attend meetings with the Masons.
 - I delivered the donated food for the food pantry to the Newcomb's

OLD BUSINESS: (identified as ongoing issues that need to be addressed)

- The Trustees presented the following bid for approval by Session. After discussion, the Session voted to approve the bid.
 - Door Replacements bid for \$19,849.00 from N. Zobrist and Sons, Inc out of Morton, IL
 - Trustees, Clark Evans, will file the 'not-for-profit' information this week.
 - Gutter work on CE Building will be completed this week (weather permitting).
 - Massey Roofing has looked at the roof leak over the choir storage room. They stated if they can repair/patch the roof, it would be \$675. If they have to replace boards or more, the price could go to \$3,575. After discussion, the Session voted to approve the Trustees to proceed with the roof repairs up to \$3,000.
 - The plaster in the bell tower stairwell will be addressed next year.
 - Trustees are looking to add a lighting fixture and/or switches in the sanctuary. This is being done so that there will be easy access to lighting if entering the sanctuary at night.
- Master Calendar – Pastor Andy to update with suggested changes.
- Winter Fest Santa Parade – The Session decided to not participate this year.
- The Session voted to approve a Congregational Meeting for December 12 after worship to elect officers for the Class of 2022.

- Church Mission Pledge – Kathy will fill out and send in using 2022 Budget figures of \$600 Pledge.

NEW BUSINESS: (items that need to be addressed.)

- The Session voted to approve Christmas Caroling as arranged by the Choir Leaders.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

The Presbyterian Women were able to meet on November 12, Friday, in the CE Building. There were 12 ladies in attendance for the meeting. We had a Bible Study followed by our Business Meeting. We decided that our Cookie Exchange/Luncheon will be held on Friday, December 10 at noon in the CE Building. We will have a soup/Subway sandwich lunch followed by our business meeting at which time we will decide what donations we will make with our savings. This will be followed by our Christmas Trivia game and cookie sampling. We will then be invited to take cookies home to enjoy later.

So, all ladies of the Church should mark their calendars and plan to attend this fun filled meeting. If you don't feel up to baking cookies, come anyway. There will be plenty to enjoy. We look forward to seeing everyone.

The Longest Night (by Kathy Welch)

The Winter Solstice is the shortest day and the longest night of the year. Cultures around the world have long held feasts and celebrated holidays around the winter solstice. They celebrate that the darkest time of the year is almost past. They look forward to lighter, warmer days to come. Fire and light are the symbols of celebrations held on the darkest day of the year.

The longest night of the year is a time of spiritual significance for Christians when we reflect, restore, and look for spiritual guidance in our lives. The longest night of the year gives us an opportunity to investigate the darkness, as well as to look toward the light. Darkness is often seen as something negative. However, darkness is as important as light because we can't have one without the other. This time of year is a perfect opportunity to go inward and investigate the darkness and light within ourselves.

Also during this time, as a church, we acknowledge the pain experienced by those around us who are struggling during the holiday season from loneliness, grief, or despair. While others are experiencing the light of hope, peace, joy., and love, many feel hope has gone, peace extinguished, joy snuffed out and love vanished. 2021 has come with its share of long nights. This year, we are collectively more aware of the hurt in the world. Join us on December 21, at 6:30 pm for our Longest Night Service.

Mission Giving

Food Pantry

Thank you for your on-going support of the Farmington Area Food Pantry. Our monthly total donations were 19 items, weighing 39lbs, and \$110.00. Our running totals for 2021 are: 996 items, weighing 795.29lbs; and \$780.

Please note our collection day for non-perishable items is the last Sunday of the month. Our next collection day is December 26, though you can always donate food ahead of time. Thank you so much for your generosity!

Sunday school Offering

This year, the Sunday school kids will be raising money to go towards purchasing an animal through the Presbyterian Giving Catalog, similar to Heifer International. We are going to have the kids pick which animal they would like to purchase and the money we collect throughout the year will go towards that purchase. If we have any extra money at the end of the year, the kids will be able to pick something else from the catalog.

Little Free Pantry

In the coming days, you will notice an addition to our church's property. On the East side of the CE building, just south of the door, will be a Little Free Pantry that the local Girl Scouts put together. This little free pantry is open and free for anyone, anytime. Feel free to drop off any food to help keep it stocked. Also feel free to take any food that you might need, no questions asked. This project is meant to help support those in our community who might need some extra food on those days when the food pantry is closed. We are excited to partner with the Girl Scouts to host this community project!

Church Officers 2021

Elders: Tammy Duley, Liz Johnson, Brady Johnson, Tony Rolando, Steffanie Ulm, Beth Martin, Michelle Lane

Clerk of Session: Pat Welker

Deacons: Alissa Holder, Lynsey Vermillion, Melissa Herron, Sue Lane, Christ Evans, Marianne Taylor

Trustees: Jay Ulm, Ben Vermillion, Tim Ulm, Clark Evans, Kevin Phillips, Joe Herron

Treasurers: Kathy Welch and Cindy Daniels

Financial Secretaries: Mickie Ulm and Gayle Lucas

December 2021

<u>Sunday</u>	<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>	<u>Saturday</u>
			1 Office Hours 1pm-5pm	2 Office Hours 1pm-5pm	3	4
5 SS 9:15AM Church 10:30AM Communion 2 nd Advent	6 Office Hours 9:30am-12pm	7 Office Hours 9:30AM-12pm	8 Office Hours 1pm-5pm	9 Office Hours 1pm-5pm	10 UPW Cookie exchange 12pm	11
12 SS 9:15 AM Worship 10:30AM Congregational Meeting following worship	13 Office Hours 9:30am-12pm	14 Office Hours 9:30am-12pm Session 7pm	15 Office Hours 1pm-5pm	16 Office Hours 1pm-5pm	17	18
19 SS 9:15 AM Worship 10:30AM 4 th Advent	20 Office Hours 9:30am-12pm	21 Office Hours 9:30am-12pm Longest Night 6:30pm	22 Office Hours 1pm-5pm Open House 5pm-8pm	23 Office Hours 1pm-5pm	24 Christmas Eve Service 6:30 pm	25 Christmas Day Pastor Andy Vacation
26 SS 9:15 AM Worship 10:30AM Dean Warner Preaching	27 Pastor Andy Vacation	28 Pastor Andy Vacation	29 Pastor Andy Vacation	30 Pastor Andy Vacation	31 New Year's Eve Pastor Andy Vacation	January 1 New Year's Day Pastor Andy Vacation ends

January 2022

<u>Sunday</u>	<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>	<u>Saturday</u>
2 SS 9:15 AM Worship 10:30AM Communion	3 Office Hours 9:30am-12pm	4 Office Hours 9:30am-12pm	5 Office Hours 1pm-5pm	6 Office Hours 1pm-5pm	7	8
9 SS 9:15 AM Worship 10:30AM	10 Office Hours 9:30am-12pm	11 Office Hours 9:30am-12pm	12 Office Hours 1pm-5pm	13 Office Hours 1pm-5pm	14	15
16 SS 9:15 AM Worship 10:30AM	17 Office Hours 9:30am-12pm	18 Office Hours 9:30am-12pm	19 Office Hours 1pm-5pm	20 Office Hours 1pm-5pm	21	22
23 SS 9:15AM Worship 10:30AM	24 Office Hours 9:30am-12pm	25 Office Hours 9:30am-12pm	26 Office Hours 1pm-5pm	27 Office Hours 1pm-5pm	28	29
30 SS 9:15AM Worship 10:30AM	31 Office Hours 9:30am-12pm					

Joys & Concerns

December Birthdays

1 Darrell Elliott; **4** Liz Johnson; **5** Darrel Gomes; **8** Stephanie Franks; **10** David Black; **17** Hubert Schuman; Randy Welch; **19** Marissa Ulm; **21** Kent Kowal; Heather McMaster; **25** Jesus; **31** Ellie Duley

January Birthdays

5 Lindsey Danley **9** Mason Gomes; Claire Herron **14** Conner Berry; Tadd Swanson **15** Darren Berry **19** Dexter Ulm **24** Donna DeGroot **27** Clark Evans

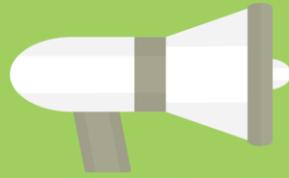
† Prayer Request †

Joys: Tammy Duley is recovering from her surgery and appreciates all the prayers and help; joy for all those who helped decorate the church for Christmas; Sam Sprecher's twin grandbabies are turning 1 year old; Beth Martin's foot is healing; Kathy Welch lifts up the joy of being with family over Thanksgiving; the joy of a community that can come together to support each other; Melody Martin was accepted into ISU and is planning on attending there in the Fall; Kay Fairburn lifted up the joy that her grandson Jacob Ulm is moving back to Farmington; Mary Ulm lifted up the joy of being a great-grandmas again; the joy of recent birthdays; Kathy Welch lifted up the joy that Randy made the Spoon River Athletic College Hall of Fame; the joy of Diana Rolando's retirement; the joy of Farmington sports teams which had post-season successes; the joy of support that Beth Martin received after the passing of her father; the joy of 8U JFL, which included Landry Duley and Easton Vermillion, won the Super Bowl;

Concerns: Prayers for those affected by the recent fires; prayers for those affected by the recent stabbing/shooting; prayers for Missy Herron's sister who is diagnosed with COVID/lost her job due to the fire at Parkside/her son has been diagnosed with COVID; Prayers for Matthew Rolando's mother-in-law, whose organs are failing; prayers for David Moermond as he continues his treatments for cancer, prayers for all the educators and students dealing with the pandemic; prayers for Lori (Danley) as she transitions to life in Texas; prayers for Kay Fairburn as she recovers from her procedure; prayers for Sam Rutledge as he recovers from his issues; prayers for Donna DeGroot's son Randy, who is dealing with blood clots and needs his knee replaced; continued prayers for Dave Waggoner as he deals with his cancer; Chris Evans asks for continued prayers for her nephew Joe Christiansen, who is starting a new treatment plan; Chris Evans' cousin ceased all medical intervention; continued prayers for Corbin Rutledge as he continues to struggle with his seizures; Bonnie Suydam's grandson, James, is doing well after surgery.

Bereavement: The family of Daly Runyon (Chris Evans' uncle); the family of Carol L. (Kay Fairburn's cousin); the McMaster family on the passing of Fred McMaster; the Duley family on the passing of Cindy Duley

Those in Assisted Living: Dianna Threw, Sue Utsinger at Farmington Country Manor; Wilma Brentz at Courtyard Estates; Leigh Ann Taylor, The Loft; Eileen (Diana's mom) Red Oak Estates, Canton.



UPDATES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

December Meetings

Trustees: Dec. 6 before worship
Session: Dec. 14 7pm meeting
w/ Deacons
Congregational Meeting Dec. 12
after worship

If you would like to add something to next month's Burning Bush, please submit it to the office by the 4th Monday of the month. For January's BB, that would be December 27. We prefer receiving it by email at firstpresfarmington@gmail.com or by dropping it off in the office.

We thank you for sending in your tithes and offerings, especially during this time of crisis. You may either bring your tithes and offerings to worship or you may send your tithes and offerings directly to Mickie Ulm, our financial secretary. Her address is 516 Idlewhile Ct. Farmington, IL 61531.

Holiday Dates

December 21: 6:30pm Longest Night Service
December 22: 5pm-8pm Open House
December 24: 6:30pm Christmas Eve Service

Sermon topics & Scripture for December:

December 5: "Are you really ready?" Luke 1:68-79
(Marianne Taylor Advent Wreath)
December 12: "Filled with Expectation" Luke 3:7-18
(Herrons Advent wreath)
December 19: "My Heart Glorifies God" Luke 1:39-56
(Tim and Mickie Ulm Advent Wreath)
December 21: Longest Night
December 24: Christmas Eve (Duley Family Advent wreath)
December 26: Dean Warner Preaching

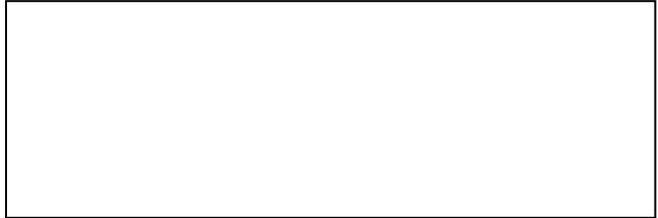
The Farmington Food Pantry is open on the 3rd Wednesday of each month (December 15) from 12:30pm-1:30pm. The Food Pantry is located at New Hope Fellowship Church 1102 N State Route 78, Farmington IL 61531. You don't even have to get out of your car. It is open to anyone in the Farmington school district or who lives in Elmwood. There is no income requirement.

Pastor Andy's Contact Information

Cell Phone: (217) 994-8588 (preferred)
Office Phone: (309) 245-2914
Email: revandysonneborn@gmail.com (preferred)
Office Email: firstpresfarmington@gmail.com
Home Address: 68: N. Gold St. Farmington, IL 61531
Office Address: 83 N. Cone St. Farmington, IL 61531

Pastor Andy will be on vacation from December 25-January 1. If you need to reach him, the best way is to call his cell phone. Due to the holidays the last week of December, the Burning Bush will come out the first week of January

**The Burning Bush
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
83 North Cone Street
Farmington IL 61531-1248**



COME WORSHIP WITH US:
First Presbyterian Church of Farmington, IL
Worship Service is at 10:30AM, Sunday
mornings, on Facebook Live and in person

Video of worship service will be posted on:

YouTube: First Presbyterian Church of
Farmington, IL

&

On the website: www.firstpresfarmington.com

