
The Burning Bush

January 2022

Greetings Colleagues in Ministry!

I hope all of you had a wonderful Christmas and New Year's with your loved ones. I know I did. I was able to be with my parents on Christmas Day and with my siblings and their children throughout the rest of the week between Christmas and New Year's Day. It was nice to have some time off to be with family and friends.

I am so glad that 2021 is finally over. How about you? The last 2 years have been so difficult for all of us. We have all been going through the collective trauma of COVID-19 for just under 2 years. I wish things were different and that COVID-19 hadn't happened. However, there is no point dwelling upon what could have been. We must look to the future, even if it is uncertain. I don't know what this new year will bring me or us, but I do know that God is with us now and God will be with us in 2022. That is the message of Christmas, after all. God came down in the form of the Christ Child to lead us, to love us, to show us a better way.

I don't know about you, but I gave up a long time ago making New Year's Resolutions. I rarely ever kept them. I tried setting goals for me in the new year, but I always had loftier goals at the beginning of the year that I struggled to fulfill. It's kind of like going to the grocery store while hungry. This year, instead of making resolutions or goals, I will endeavor to simply trust more in God. I will pray more often. I will read the Bible more often. I cannot control everything that happens to me or to others, but I can control how I react to life's situations.

It is my hope that each one of you will take time this year to find ways to get closer to God. May you always remember and keep in your hearts the promise of Christmas that we are not alone...that God is with us. May we share that Good News this day and every day in 2022.

God bless you

Pastor Andy

Snippets by Pat

Snippets from the December 14 Session Meeting:

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: Michelle read a devotion about 5 ways that God is giving us Christmas gifts. These gifts are – 1) LOVE – always; 2) PURITY – sent Jesus to forgive our sins; 3) SALVATION – wants everyone to be saved; 4) LIVING IN LOVE – we should love each other as God love us; 5) LIFE – God gives us eternal life through His Son. (Next Month's Devotee will be Pastor Andy.)

MINISTRY TEAM REPORTS

- **Worship Team – Liz & Tammy (co-chairs), Tony, Diana, Beth & Sam.**
 - Worship...continue to have 20-25 people for in person worship service on average.
 - Pat Welker made treat bags for children's time...thanks.
 - Tim Ulm and Jane Rutledge have filled in ringing the bell for Sam.
 - Requested that we sing more than just 2 verses of hymns that are well known, per request of congregation.
- **Christian Education Team – Beth (chair) & Tammy**
 - There will be a video made of the kids for Christmas. Some will be done in-person for the kids in attendance at Sunday School. Others can make a video and get it to Tadd Swanson who will put it all together.
 - Pat gave out 19 Advent Calendars to the kids who were in Sunday School prior to the pandemic.
- **Stewardship/Finance/Memorial/Personnel Team – Steffanie (chair) & Michelle**

- Finance – 1) We received final figures from our insurance and also a notice that Presbytery has raised the pulpit supply pay from \$125 to \$150 per Sunday. 2) The 2022 Budget was presented for approval by Session. There was much discussion concerning our ability to actually meet the Budget as presented. We are not currently meeting monthly Budget costs without using savings which is a concern. Many things were discussed, very heatedly at times, as possible solutions. It was finally decided that the Budget would be put to a vote. The vote was 3 for, 3 against and 1 abstention, with Pastor Andy breaking the tie by voting in favor of the Budget. It was then decided that the Budget needs to be provided to the congregation prior to the Annual Meeting in January so that they know the facts going forward. Beth Martin will draft a letter that will be used in a mailing for Active Members that will include a copy of the 2022 Budget as well as donation/expenses from the last 5 years. This will reflect how we are doing in covering our expenses each year with tithes/donations. Once the letter is ready, the Elders will review it prior to mailing out.
- The Session voted to approve cleaning the church once per week for 4 hrs at \$15.50 per hour/ \$62 weekly. Candidate must pass our church's insurance background check.
- Stewardship or Memorial – Nothing to Report.
- **Fellowship and Mission Team** – Tony (chair) & Steffanie
 - Fellowship- 20 takeaway cookie bags were prepared and disbursed at hanging of the greens by Pat Welker & Steffanie Ulm.
- **Nominating Team** – Tammy (chair), Deacon Alissa Holder), Cozy Hoover, Crystal Gomes & Pat Welker
 - Lissy Holder & Nyle Staley will be Elders, Pat Welker will be a Deacon and Mickie will be Financial Secretary (with change to By-Laws) for the Class of 2024. The Nominating Team could not find a second Deacon or two Trustees. Hopefully we'll have an increase in attendance in 2022 to that we have more candidates in the future.
 - Cindy Daniels & Kathy Welch will continue as Co-Treasures as elected by Session at the November meeting.
 - Nominating Team work complete.
- **Deacon's Report**
 - Deacons Meeting November 14, 2021
 - Attending- Marianne Taylor, Chris Evans, Lissy Holder, Missy Herron and Pastor Andy
 - Cards- Chris 3, Sue 2
 - Communion served November 7 to 41 worshippers.
 - Next Communion Dec. 5th

- Chris Evans, Marianne Taylor and Missy Herron serving.
- Hanging of the Greens - November 21st
- Sheet for sign-up for Poinsettias is Nov. 21, 28 and Dec 5. Poinsettias are \$9 for 6-inch.
- Thanksgiving dinner box delivered November 21.
- Shut- in receiving Christmas Baskets containing fuzzy socks, candy, decorations were:
 - Diana Threw; Sue Utzinger (Friend of parishioners); Wilma Brentz; Leanne Taylor; Aileen Dillard (Diana Rolando's Mom)
- December 14- Meeting with Session - Deacons first on agenda.
- December 12- Congregation meeting
- December 19- Next Deacon meeting
- **Pastor's Report**
 - Worship
 - We continue to worship in person and online.
 - Helped with the Hanging of the Greens on November 21
 - Obtained people to light the Advent wreath during Advent
 - I led Communion online and in person on December 5 2021.
 - I continue to lead the devotional on Wednesday at 1pm.
 - Recorded choir video for worship
 - Dean Warner will be leading worship on December 26 while I am on vacation.
 - I am getting ready for the Longest Night and the Christmas Eve services. I've contacted the Weekly Post to include information about the services.
 - Pastoral Care
 - I continue to call/text several members throughout the week to check in on them. I try to contact people monthly-when I think of it.
 - I visited with Sam Rutledge at OSF
 - I had several phone conversations with people for pastoral care.
 - I led the graveside service for Wanda Lee Hitchcock
 - Presbytery
 - I attended the Presbytery meeting on November 13 which included professional boundaries training.
 - I hosted the professional boundaries training follow up zoom meeting for the Presbytery.
 - I attended meetings for COM related business on Dec. 2, 4 & 7.
 - I conducted site visits with 3rd Presbyterian Church and Hope Presbyterian Church, both in Springfield
 - Administrative
 - I attended the Deacons meeting in November.

- I attended the Trustees meeting in November. There wasn't a meeting in December. All projects approved are in progress. Clark filed the necessary paperwork with the state of IL for non-for-profit status.
- I developed the November Burning Bush.
- I continue to send out weekly announcements.
- I updated the Master Calendar
- Community
 - 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
 - I opened up the CE building for the first responders during the fire at Parkside
 - I met with the Council of Churches to open up a donation account for those affected by the recent fires.

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

- Manual of Operations – The Session voted to approve the Manual.
- 2021 Officers Training for Elders and Deacons – The Deacons attended this meeting for discussions. – complete.
- Trustees
 - Getting doors replaced in the CE Building.
 - Complete - Clark Evans, filed the 'not-for-profit' paperwork.
 - Complete - Gutter work on CE Building.
 - In-process - Massey Roofing to repair leak over choir storage room.
 - The plaster in the bell tower stairwell will be addressed next year.
 - 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.
- Complete - Master Calendar – updates/changes done.
- Complete - Church Mission Pledge filed.

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

- The Session voted to approve the following reimbursements to Pastor Andy:
 - Professional Expense: Devotional/\$65.86 and Keyboard & Mouse/\$21.94.
 - Office Supplies Printer Paper/\$36.99.
- The Session voted to approve January 23, 2022 Annual Meeting to receive the 2022 Annual Report, elect 3 At-Large Nomination Committee Member for 2022 and approve Pastor Terms of Call.
- The Session voted to hold Officer Ordination on Sunday, January 9, 2022, during worship. Pastor Andy will notify Nyle Staley of date.

- Agreed to donation of Coat Closet items to OSF Coat Collection and other charities (i.e., South Side Mission of Peoria, etc.)

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

The Presbyterian Women held their Cookie Exchange/Soup Luncheon on December 10 Friday, in the CE Building. There were 15 ladies in attendance for the meeting. We enjoyed a wonderful lunch and fellowship.

Next, we held a short business meeting. During the meeting we had our collection taken, which the Treasurer quickly counted up and added to our bank balance. We were fortunate to have \$950 plus \$70 in the Least Coin collection. The Least coin collection is of pennies donated each month. donated to the Church to help with heating costs of the CE Building. We then decided to send \$250 to each of these charities: Fulton County Salvation Army, Farmington Hope Chest and Sophie's Kitchen (a Peoria Catholic Church that feeds several hundred folks each week. The remaining \$200 went to the Farmington Central School program Farmer's Backpack program which sends food home on weekends with kids who need it.

Finally, we divided into two 7 member teams and played Christmas Trivia. The two teams were led by Crystal Gomes and Tammy Duley. Tammy's group won and received a small gift of chocolates. Everyone had a good time.

Lastly, we all got a cup of coffee and sampled the many sweets that were brought for the exchange. Prior to leaving, everyone took some of their favorite cookies/candy home with them to enjoy later. Our next meeting is Friday, January 14. This will be a potluck, so we will meet at noon in the CE Building. Hope to see you all there.

ADVENT SEASON

I really enjoyed the Advent Season this year. The Sanctuary is so beautiful all decorated for the season. I didn't make it to the December 21 Longest Night service but hear there were around 15 in attendance. I did attend the December 22 Open House. This is a time to enter the Sanctuary, light a candle and just sit and think about the year past and the year coming. The Sanctuary is only lit by the Christmas lights and candles places around the room. Carols were playing on the Video Screens. It is so peaceful and really a time to think about things or pray for whatever is on your mind or who you are thinking about.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

My favorite service of the whole year. It was so nice to see so many people in the Church again, it was like old times, before all this Covid stuff. The service was beautiful with readings and lots of hymn singing. And especially the end when we pass the candle light to everyone and sing Silent Night. It was a great and meaningful service.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26

This service ended up being cancelled. Pastor Andy was on vacation and Dean Warner was going to fill the pulpit. Unfortunately, Dean's teenage daughter was in horrible car accident on Tuesday or Wednesday, Dec. 21 or 22 and banged up pretty good. Lots of bruises, stitches, cuts and eye involvement. In light of this and the fact that it was the day after Christmas it was decided to cancel the service. It was disappointing to miss having Dean in the pulpit, but he certainly was in the right place, at home with his family.

SUNDAY, January 2, 2022

This service was also cancelled. The reason was that we had a winter storm come through on January 1st that dumped 3-4 inches of snow. It started snowing early Saturday morning and didn't stop until late Saturday night. Then the temperature was to drop to the 15-20 range. So, with both these factors in play, the Session voted to cancel worship so everyone could stay home and stay safe. This doesn't happen very often thank goodness. But when we have to do it, it is good that the Elders are on top of things and make the decision to keep us all safe. Hopefully we'll be back in worship next week.



Mission Giving

Food Pantry

Thank you for your on-going support of the Farmington Area Food Pantry. Our monthly total donations were 67 items, weighing 62.62bs, and \$270. Our total giving to the Farmington Food Pantry for 2021 is: 1,081 items, weighing 871.25lbs; and \$1,030.00.

Please note our collection day for non-perishable items is the last Sunday of the month. Our next collection day is January 30, 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. So far, we have raised \$31.00 towards our goal.

Little Free Pantry

On the East side of the CE building, just south of the door, is 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 food pantry 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 2022

Elders: Liz Johnson, Brady Johnson, Tony Rolando, Steffanie Ulm, Beth Martin, Alissa Holder, Nyle Staley

Clerk of Session: Pat Welker

Deacons: Melissa Herron, Sue Lane, Christ Evans, Marianne Taylor, Pat Welker, Vacant

Trustees: Ben Vermillion, Clark Evans, Kevin Phillips, Joe Herron, Vacant, Vacant

Treasurers: Kathy Welch and Cindy Daniels

Financial Secretaries: Mickie Ulm

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 Committee on Ministry	5 Office Hours 1pm-5pm Devotion 1pm	6 Office Hours 1pm-5pm	7	8
9 SS 9:15 AM Worship 10:30AM Installation of officers	10 Office Hours 9:30am-12pm	11 Office Hours 9:30am-12pm Session 7pm	12 Office Hours 1pm-5pm Annual Reports due Devotion 1pm	13 Office Hours 1pm-5pm	14 PW 12pm	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 Devotion 1pm	20 Office Hours 1pm-5pm	21	22
23 SS 9:15AM Worship 10:30AM Congregational Meeting	24 Office Hours 9:30am-12pm	25 Office Hours 9:30am-12pm	26 Office Hours 1pm-5pm Devotion 1pm	27 Office Hours 1pm-5pm	28	29
30 SS 9:15AM Worship 10:30AM	31 Office Hours 9:30am-12pm					

February 2022

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

Joys & Concerns

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

February Birthdays

5 Jane Rutledge; 9 Gary Suydam; Alexis Haynes; 11 Nyle Staley; 13 Kari Berry
17 Ryan McMaster; 18 Linda Riley; 19 Zec Black; 20 Michelle Lane; 21 Rachel
Elliott; Denise Lane; 22 Kaitlyn Stobaugh; Brea Marinich 23 Melody Martin

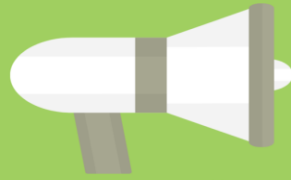
† Prayer Request †

Joys: Chris Evans lifted up that her nephew Joe Christianson's tumor has shrunk so much that they had to adjust his treatments; Melody Martin and Emma Evans received the Illinois State Scholar Award; Tammy Duley lifted up the Farmington Junior High Cheer Team, which includes Gracie and Ellie, who are going to state,

Concerns: Continued prayers for Dave Waggoner, who is receiving hospice care; continued prayers for Jean Peterson who is receiving hospice care; prayers for the Berry family who are struggling with COVID, including Kari's mother; prayers for Jodi Phillips' son Blake and his family who are struggling with COVID; prayers for Dean Warner's daughter Savannah, who was in a car accident and hurt badly; Continued prayers of healing for Kay Fairburn; prayers for Bonnie's son Jake and his family, who are struggling with COVID; prayers for Pat Welker's sister, Nancy, who has been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer; prayers for Tammy Duley, who was recently diagnosed with cancer; continued prayers for Corbin Rutledge, who is still struggling with seizures; continued prayers for Sam Rutledge, as he continues to recover from medical issues; prayers for Hubert Schuman, who is now using oxygen; for Bonnie Suydam's co-worker, who is struggling with a difficult pregnancy; for the Ulm boys, Dexter and Nolan, as they recover from COVID; prayers for Missy Herron's sister and her family as they recover from COVID; for a friend of Melody Martin who had really high blood sugar and had to be life-flighted; prayers for those affected by devastating weather in December

Bereavement: The family of Wanda Lee Hitchcock; the family of Matt Rolando's mother-in-law, family of Rich Worley; Kathy Welch lifted up the family of John Bennet, who passed away

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

January Meetings

Session: Tuesday, January 11th
at 7pm

Congregational Meeting:

Sunday, January 23 following worship

PW: Friday, January 14th at

Sermon topics & Scripture for January:

January 2: "Filled with Joy" Matthew 12:1-12

January 9: "Soul Reset" Luke 3:21-23a

January 16: "Reset Purpose" Mark 1:32-39

January 23: "Reset Values" Galatians 5:24-6:10

January 30: "Reset Direction" Acts 9:1-15

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 February's BB, that would be January 24. We prefer receiving it by email at firstpresfarmington@gmail.com or by dropping it off in the office.

The Farmington Food Pantry is open on the 3rd Wednesday of each month (January 19) 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.

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.

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

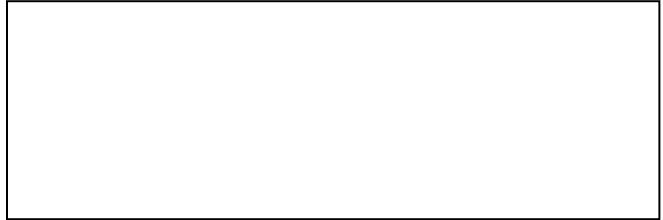
Home Address: 68: N. Gold St. Farmington, IL 61531

Office Address: 83 N. Cone St. Farmington, IL 61531

In preparation for the Annual Meeting, the office is preparing the Annual Report. Please turn in a report to the office by Wednesday, January 12.

Please email your report to revandysonneborn@gmail.com or firstpresfarmington@gmail.com. If you are unsure if you need to write a report, please ask.

**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