



First Presbyterian  
Church of Sheridan

# The Good News

November 2023

thanksgiving  
gather  
thankful family  
blessed grateful  
together  
blessings  
november

## INSIDE:

Pastor Karl.....	2
Notes from CJ.....	3
PW.....	4
FPC in Action.....	5
Good News at FPC.....	6
Session Notes.....	7
Worship.....	8
Birthdays & Anniversaries.....	9
Military.....	10
Calendar.....	11

Dearly beloved of FPC,

This is to thank you all for the prayers, notes and even some art work that has come our way since my recent stroke. After a brief stay in the Livingston Hospital, I have been working hard at the various therapies, Occupational and Physical, and have already graduated from Speech—but then you know talking was never my problem. Robin has shifted into a caregiver role which she makes look effortless, but I think is harder than my efforts toward recovery.

Every day feels a little better and we are optimistic of a near full recovery. I have felt the presence of our loving God and your prayers. God is good, all the time. May God bless and keep you.

Thanks,

Doug Melius, former pastor

## High School Service Learning Trip

Attention all high school students and parents! On Sunday, November 19, following the 10:30 am service, CJ will host an informational gathering in the youth room to share information about the 2024 Service Learning Trip.



Dear Ones,

I came across two quotes this week in my reading that stuck out to me and which I would like to share. The first is from Billy Collins, once the US poet laureate, in his poem *"What I Learned Today."* Collins writes,

*no matter what the size the aquarium of one's learning,  
another colored pebble can always be dropped in.*

The second comes from the book *"The Myth of a Christian Nation: How the Quest for Political Power is Destroying the Church"* which our Thursday 7 AM study has just begun. Author and pastor, Gregory A. Boyd, writes,

*"I also know that few things in life are as intellectually and spiritually beneficial as forcing ourselves to consider ideas different from our own - even ideas that may irritate and offend."*

Collins and Boyd get at the same reality. We never have it all figured out, and that's okay. It's actually a rich place spiritually to admit such because it humbles us. Unfortunately, we sometimes think we do have things figured out or we, at least, act like we do. When we think and act that way, we're in danger. One of the biggest obstacles to loving God and loving our neighbors (the core to this faith as Jesus tells us) is the belief that we have nothing to learn from either of them. If we cannot open our minds and perceptions, it's impossible to open our hearts. If we are not trying to understand (even without ever fully understanding) and listening to the situations and needs of others then we will never truly empathize with them. We will never find ourselves able to show compassion as Jesus showed compassion, because it will be so easy to disregard anyone who is not just like us. We will never find ourselves immersed in God's glory if we are focused on ourselves nor will we find ourselves in awe of God's world if we think we could have designed it better. Finally, if we are convinced that we know best and that our aquarium cannot hold another pebble, then it will be doubly difficult to love because we will spend our time vigilantly defending what we have come to profess as the highest professions.

So, be reminded today that you do not have it figured out. And be reminded that this is okay. It's a spiritually healthy place to be because it helps us realize God's tremendous love for us. You don't have it figured out, and God is still holding you. You don't know everything about everything, and the One who does is still seeking to guide you. You have no clue what tomorrow will bring, much less how to bring peace in the Middle East or Ukraine, but God is working to break your heart open to love others and to receive the love that the Holy Spirit is pouring into you (Romans 5:5).

In summary, you don't know it all. Neither do I. Nor does anyone else. But God loves us. And humbling ourselves by considering what we do not know opens us to that love and makes it most possible for us to share it.

Without a clue but with all my love,

Pastor Karl



At the beginning of every November, we celebrate All Saints Day. All Saints Day is dedicated to remembering all believers who have passed on and helped shape our faith. This year will hold a different meaning for me.

On Craig's and my trip to Europe, we took the opportunity to visit two different Concentration camps, Dachau and Auschwitz-Birkenau. They are both powerful and meaningful and hold different but similar histories.

Dachau, Germany, was the first established "work camp" in 1933. The creation of this camp was to house the political opponents of the nazis. Life at Dachau was not easy, but the life expectancy was higher there than at Auschwitz-Birkenau. One of the many things I took away from Dachau was a paper mache mask. They called it a death mask. The mask was made by a fellow inmate and was smuggled out to the family, so it was the only thing they received. Auschwitz-Birkenau is probably the most famous death camp of the Nazi reign. My visit there will be something I will carry with me and process my whole life. The sole purpose of this camp was to exterminate and wipe the people from existence. The life expectancy of a prisoner at Auschwitz was six months, and that was for those deemed helpful. Whole families just disappeared.

As you walk in and out of the main center at Auschwitz, it is a long cement corridor with a voice reading the victims' names. Our guide said that for many, this is all that remains of them. They have no one else to remember them.

The people who walked the grounds of Auschwitz-Birkenau were there because of their faith. Someone loved them enough to tell them the stories of God, taught them their faith, and cherished them. Would I be strong enough to endure what they did? The faith that caused them to be here is the building block of my faith. You see pictures from the ghettos of people with their stars on their clothing, and you think, did they want to hide their faith? As I walked the lanes and the buildings, I thought of the many people who walked this path and didn't make it. I thought of Anne Frank. She walked these lanes, and we have heard her story. It put a face to a young girl who was starting her life. They were killed for the God that they believed in.

The majority of the people murdered in Auschwitz-Birkenau were Jewish—the people who lived out their faith. These saints that have gone before taught us to be strong. They speak now, saying don't let hate and fear of someone worshiping a different God justify your actions. When I toured Birkenau, a lone tree stood in what now is an empty field. The field once contained rows upon rows of poorly made barracks that housed thousands and thousands of Jewish people. The tree reminded me evil does not have to prevail. A symbol of family, strength, and change grew in an area where blood, tears, and death overflowed. If we remember and learn from those who came before us, the saints have taught us how to overcome and love. I was at Auschwitz-Birkenau a month ago, hearing about the horrors of hate and religious punishment decades ago. When I came home, I turned on the news, and hate and fighting were in the headlines. Israel is at war with itself because of religious differences. Congress is split because of political differences. It just makes me sad. People shut down when they hear that they don't believe the same that they do. What are we teaching the next generations? They look to us to show them what Jesus meant when He said love your neighbor.

Reading through Common Prayer for Children and Families by Jenifer Gamber and Timothy J.S. Seamans, I came across this prayer.

"We Are One Family"

God, who called all humans into being,  
you long to share your life with all people.

We say "yes" to you in many ways:

Allah, Father, Brahman, Elohim, and Jehovah;  
open our eyes and ears when we meet people of other faiths  
so we can come closer to you and to one another  
as one family.

Amen.

Friends, remember to lead with your heart and do all things with love. In all that you do, model the love of Christ, recognizing those saints who taught you what it means, and think of those whom you will become saints.



## **Presbyterian Women Giving Thanks for You—Our Church Family!**

Praying for God to Help Us Bloom Where We Are Planted in 2023.

PW wants to thank all people who baked, helped, ate, advertised and bought pies to make our **Pie Sale for Local Mission** on October 22<sup>nd</sup> a success. A special thanks to Tori Milne for the homemade ice cream. Yum!

### **Our Purpose**

Forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit we commit ourselves:

- To nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study
- To support the mission of the church worldwide
- To work for justice and peace, and
- To build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (USA) and witnesses to the Promise of God's kingdom.

**All women of the church are Presbyterian Women.** You are welcome to visit PW meetings, gatherings and Circles to see what it is like – you are always invited! Pray about it and see what the Lord reveals to you. If you can only attend sporadically – don't let that stop you – you are always welcome!

The Circles (small groups) gather on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month during the school year September through May.

- Circle 1 gathers at 10:00 am in the Parlor
- Circle 2 gathers at 10:00 am in the Fellowship Hall
- Circle 3 gathers at noon in the Fellowship Hall (bring your own lunch)

The next PW luncheon is December 6<sup>th</sup> at noon. Our program will continue the (many years

long) tradition of a presentation by Spectrum. Spectrum is a singing and dancing performance group from Sheridan High School. We plan to have Spectrum perform in the sanctuary at noon. You might want to get there 10 or 15 minutes early so you don't miss their performance. Their schedule is tight. Lunch will be in the Fellowship Hall following their performance.

We are stepping out in faith by having the Angel Tree gifts go to the Everything Beautiful Thrift Store in Lame Deer, MT. This allows families to have dignity and pay (or work) for a toy for their child or relative to put under the tree for Christmas. The child can then say something like, "My mom bought this for me last Christmas." The Angel Tree will be up Nov. 1 through November 26<sup>th</sup>. The gifts don't need to be wrapped.

Our God wants us all to be reconciled. In, John 14:34, Jesus is talking and says, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have love you."

We hope to see lots of Presbyterian Women and guests on December 6<sup>th</sup> at noon!

Love and blessings from your sisters in Christ, Helen 673-1710 and Rhea 683-2362





# FPC in Action!



**A Big Thank You** for the October Lunch  
Together volunteers. We served 140  
meals. We serve again on December 4-7.  
Thank you! -Denise



## Noah's Ark

The Bridge participants learned  
about Noah and the Ark and then  
built their own!



## Pumpkin Patch Party



# Good News at FPC !

## RETIREMENT

Shelley Cundiff, 4th Judicial District Circuit Court Judge will be retiring from her position effective January 1, 2024.

Best wishes Shelley !

## PROMOTION



Ty Malone was recently promoted to Vice President of Finance with Kennon.

Ty has an MBA from Arizona State University and Bachelor's degrees in Finance, Human Resource Management, and Business Administration from Dickinson State University.

Congratulations Ty!

## Pumpkin Party 2023!



Heading out in the wagon to find that perfect pumpkin and then.....

.....the perfect pumpkin!



Church Cleanup Day found Jason Szwec varnishing the main doors!  
Thank you Jason.



## SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The monthly Session meeting for October was held on Saturday the 14th at 9 AM in the Fellowship Hall.

News of Interest --

- The Tech Committee is working to get the TV in the nursery operational so anyone who needs to use the nursery during church service will be able to watch the service.
- A big thank you to Ted Knapp for all the time and work he puts in keeping our technology up and running!
- The new church directories are available after the 10:30 services.
- The Properties Committee is working on replacing the lighting in the Fellowship Hall and in the hallways.
- The Maui Lunchtime Fundraiser is on October 28.

Gary Joy, Clerk of Session



### Interested in participating on the FPC's Salvation Army Kettle Drive team?

We compete against other churches and service organizations. This year we will be ringing on Saturday, December 2nd, with two-hour time slots beginning at 1 PM. If interested, please contact Dave Engels at 307-751-2009 or [d\\_t\\_engels@yahoo.com](mailto:d_t_engels@yahoo.com).

## Financial Summary for 2023 through the end of September

### Giving:

Actual Giving	\$ 291,559
Budgeted Giving	\$ 287,850
Difference	\$ 3,709

### Expenses:

Actual Expenses	\$ 272,915
Budgeted Expenses	\$ 296,899
Difference	\$ -23,984

### Net:

Actual Giving	\$ 291,559
Actual Expenses	\$ 272,915
Difference	\$ <b>18,644</b>

These numbers reflect that a few large annual donations received early in the year are divided by the remaining months in the year and then added to each month's actual giving.

Your contributions to our Per Capita obligation to the General Assembly totals \$3,305 through August. Our total 2023 Per Capita assessment is \$13,600.

## Do You Need a Printer?

We have an older printer in the office that we would like to get rid of.

**HP LaserJet 4050**

Stop in the office and take a look to see if it is something you could use.



*For their service to the church during the month of October, the Worship Committee would like to thank these faithful servants...*

**Musicians:** Miriam Nance, Ryan Landis, Mary Apple, FPC Choir

**Worship Leaders:** Henry Szwec, Gary Joy, Becky Motsick, Rachel Mathews-Landis, Tori Milne

**Ushers:** Mike Browne, Sandy Browne, Gary & Sherry Laughton, Greg & Beth Thurow, Lorrie Ledgerwood, Gary & Jeri Joy, Jean Morgen, Dave & Catherine Engels

**Communion Prep:** Su Rappleye-Jackson, Denise Mueller

**Communion Servers:** Gary & Jeri Joy, Beth Thurow, Lorrie Ledgerwood

**Audio/Visual Systems Operators:** Ted Knapp, CJ Clem, Craig Clem, Gloria Dierking, Parker Rieger

**Coffee Sponsors:** Mission Committee, Mike Stoll & Tina Anderson, Janet Burtis, Miriam Nance



## Keep them in your prayers



**Ongoing Prayers:** Margie Elkins, Karen Townsend, Darlene McNair, Kathleen Shafer, Jerry and Myrna Saunders, Robert & Jeannette Ruttinger, and Roy & Carol Davis.

**Prayers for Peace & Healing:** Howie Fitzpatrick, Julie Bugher, Jae Satterlee, Diana Miller, and Mary Hutton.

**Prayers for Mission Partners:** Highlands United (Cheyenne) and the Food Group.

If you have prayer concerns that you would like shared, please call the church office at 672-1717.

## Thank You

To Cheryl Kelsey, Su Rappleye-Jackson, and Lorrie Ledgerwood for doing communion prep in the month of November.

Also, thank you to Miriam for making gluten free bread for each communion service. - Denise Mueller

## Session Members and Committees

### Budget & Finance

Scott Davis, Gary Laughton

### Clerk of Session

Gary Joy

### Christian Education

Rex Arney, Tori Milne

### Fellowship

Kim Wells, Becky Motsick

### Congregational Care

Bobbie Spahn, Jean Morgen, Larry Apple

### Mission & Outreach

Tina Anderson, Rachel Mathews-Landis

### Personnel

Shelley Cundiff, Nancy Cook

### Properties

Dave Youngren, Kurt Smith

### Worship

John Jackson, Beth Thurow

### Tech

Gloria Dierking, Craig Clem



## NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

November 1—Jerilea Phillips,  
Harvey Johnson,  
Rachel Mathews-Landis

November 2—Melissa Rieger

November 3—Louise Semino

November 6—Julie Bugher  
Dennis Ledgerwood

November 7—Dennis Schreffler

November 10—Tina Anderson

November 12—Nickie Arney

November 13—Jason Szewc  
William Graves

November 15—Cheryl Madden

November 16—Kevin Bailey, Jan Deaver  
Robin Smith

November 17—Mary Apple, Barb Finch

November 19—Jae Satterlee

November 20—Cal Botten

November 21—Mandy Phillips, Ruby Szewc

November 25—Todd Phillips, Craig Clem,  
Eli Clem

November 26—Kal Malone, Sandy Browne

November 27—Carly Motsick, Tod Windsor

November 29—Jack Elliott, Jim Douglas

**Thank you to all the volunteers  
who baked bread for  
World Communion Sunday!**



## Happy Anniversary! November

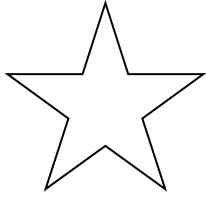
November 11—Tom & Miriam Nance

November 13—Dennis & Lorrie Ledgerwood

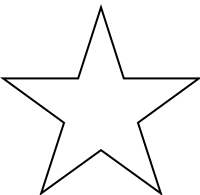
November 23—Gene & Becky Bard

November 25—Dick & Sandy Birkholz  
Jerry & Myrna Saunders

November 28—Dennis & Karen Schreffler



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### **Space Force**

**Ryan Laughton** (Son of Gary & Sherry Laughton)

### **Air Force**

**Brennan & Sydney Negrete** (Grandson & Granddaughter-in-law of Carol Maloy)

**Megan Price** (Granddaughter of Karen Fosher)

**Captain Rory Montgomery** (Great Nephew of Harvey & Linda Johnson)

**Bridger Ammann** (Grandson of Joyce and Gary Meling)

### **National Guard**

**Allen Price** (Son-in-law of Karen Fosher)

**Carsie Mitchell** (Grandson of Jim & Dianne Perry)

**Henry Johannesen** (Grandson of Judi Palm)

### **Army & Army Reserves**

**Ethan & Johnna Hall** (Grandson & granddaughter-in-law of Carol Maloy)

**Jacek Aksamit** (Grandson of Mary & Larry Apple)

If you would like to have your loved-one in the military listed on this page, or if you would like to have their address printed in the newsletter, or their picture on our picture board, please give the information to the office.





*First Presbyterian Church*

2121 Colonial Drive  
Sheridan, WY 82801

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