



First Presbyterian
Church of Sheridan

The Good News

December 2023

Come let us
Adore
Him



INSIDE:

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

Choir/Bells Lessons in Carols “Sing This Story”

Join us for our annual Lessons in Carols service. Together in song we will learn of God's purpose in creating us and reflect on the consequences of humanity's rebellion against God. We will listen to prophecies that speak of the coming of a Savior and hear from the Gospels about the way in which Jesus fulfilled those predictions. Each scripture reading is followed by a prayer, a carol, or some other song, to help us respond to what we have heard. Come and be part of this story as it unfolds in song. Together with the congregation, the choir, handbells, vocal soloist, and small ensemble will “Sing This Story”.

Sunday, December 10 at both 8 am and 10:30 am worship services.

Christmas Schedule

December 20 - 7 pm Ecumenical “Longest Night” service at United Methodist Church

December 24-10:30 am Worship w/Youth Christmas Program

5 pm Christmas Eve Service

8 pm Christmas Eve Candle Light Service

December 31 - 10:30 am Pajama Sunday (casual worship with Christmas stories, carols, and treats)

There will not be an 8 am worship service on either Sunday, December 24 or Sunday, December 31.

Ecumenical “Longest Night” Service

There will be an ecumenical “Longest Night” service on Wednesday, December 20 at 7 pm at First United Methodist Church, 215 W. Works St. This service brings community together to support those dealing with personal loss/struggles to find joy during the holiday season.

Adult Mission Trip

Please remember in prayer our FPC adults as they travel on their mission trip to Frontera de Cristo on Saturday, December 30th. The group will spend time with our mission partners, Rev. Mark Adams & Miriam Maldonado Escobar on the US/Mexico border.

The group will return Saturday, January 6th.

Dear Ones,

The word “advent” is from the Latin “ad venire” meaning “to come.” The church year begins with Advent because all of what we do as a church and in our lives begins with God coming to us. God takes the initiative not only to create us but to redeem and sustain our broken lives and world in Jesus Christ and to continue with us until this work is complete. Everything begins with God. Advent sets up the whole of the church year and its movement through the life of Jesus and sets up our own lives as those who seek to follow him by giving us a time to prepare for and to open our hearts to the Holy One who comes.

But what does this preparation look like? How *do we open our hearts?*

I wonder if our cue on this doesn’t come from Jesus Christ, himself. We draw near. Proximity is a powerful thing. God chose close proximity to us in Jesus Christ because love is known most powerfully and most fully when it is near. The love of God that arrives in a dirty stable and rests in a little manger is vulnerable and close. It is accessible and understandable. It is the tangible love of a God who does not leave us on our own but wishes to be with us in all of the divine power, glory, and possibility.

So, in this season, make sure to light your candles on the darkest nights and let the light of God shine for no darkness separates us from Jesus Christ’s close proximity. Lift your voices in song even on the coldest mornings, when your breath cuts the air and the air cuts your breath, because we draw near to God when we join the melody that creation has always been singing. Volunteer at Lunch Together. Offer something to the person on the street corner in need. Jesus’s own coming to us shows that transformation only happens when we draw near. No issue that plagues the world, such as poverty or hunger, will ever change if the ones who are rich and fed keep their distance.

“Ad venire.” To come. Thanks be to God for coming to us in Jesus Christ because that is what makes it possible for us to come near to one another, across all of the barriers we and our world have set up, and to share in Christ’s unending, unconditional, and transforming love with open hearts.

In Christ,

Pastor Karl



I am a sucker for traditions. We have several at our house. For birthdays, the person we celebrate gets to pick their meal and dessert. Around Christmas, we have several more. One of them is that we get something to read. The kids' books have changed over the years: Eric Carle or Fancy Nancy morphed into graphic novels and true crime stories. One child requested audiobooks so they could listen to them while they worked.

Several of the books the kids and Craig were given were weekly devotions, yearly Bible journals, or little prayer books. For some reason, I loved the idea that they would be given a spiritual practice that would transcend over the year and not just end on Christmas morning. If the idea of gifting a parent or buying one for yourself a prayer book, I have stumbled across two books I wish I had sooner: *Ordinary Blessings for Parents* by Meta Herrick Carlson and *To Light Their Way* by Kayla Craig. They are both filled with prayers for everyday and special events.

To Light Their Way, prayers are longer. I go to this one when I have more time to read and meditate. After each prayer, the scripture that inspires the prayer is listed. *To Light Their Way* also has prayers for holidays and holy days. It also has breathing prayers, which I love. One of the breathing prayer is INHALE: You are tender and merciful. EXHALE: Guide me to the path of peace. As I write this and think about the breathing prayers, I might start putting them on sticky notes and leaving them in places where I need them.

Ordinary Blessings for Parents: Prayers, Poems, and Meditations for Family Life is another one that I am enjoying. This one has short little prayers. This one has prayers you say over the child, while *To Light Your Way* is more prayers to share with God. *Ordinary Blessings* has something for every stage of development. They even have a prayer for when a child moves out. This book does not have any holiday or holy day prayers, but Meta Herrick Carlson does have a book explicitly dedicated to Christmas, *Ordinary Blessings for the Christmas Season*.

I have all three in my office or my backpack if you want to look at them. As the Advent season gets going, don't forget to cherish the memories and the continued traditions. I will leave you with a prayer from the *Ordinary Blessings for the Christmas Season* by Meta Herrick Carlson.

For the Loving the World

Remember, Beloved.

The call is not
to save the world
but to love it well
and behave generously
like all of it is worth saving.

Merry Christmas,



Presbyterian Women Wish You a Very Merry Christmas 2023!

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

PW wants to extend hearty thanks all folks who donated or helped in any way to support the Angel Tree this year! The Angel Tree Mission was supported with a monetary donation by the Mission Committee as well. Praising God for His bountiful provision! I truly believe that the folks who shop at the "Everything Beautiful Thrift Store" will be blessed.

"In everything that I showed you by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" Acts 20:35

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 3rd 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 PW luncheon is December 6th at noon. Our program will continue the 30 plus [?] 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 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. Dress festively to help us get into the spirit of the Christmas season. The fellowship is always a blessing and the more the merrier. We hope to see lots of Presbyterian Women and guests on December 6th at noon! Let the Luncheon Committee Chair, Judi Palm, know how many guests you will be bringing so they can prepare enough food.

January's luncheon lands on the 3rd day of 2024. Stay tuned for more details. In January we remember our sisters in Christ who joined the Church Triumphant in 2023. We also install the officers.

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



Summer Smiles at Camp Story!

See more pictures and article on page 8 of the newsletter.



FPC in Action!



Huxon Sadler was baptized on Sunday, November 26.



Did you notice how gifts multiplied during the month of November at the Angel Tree? Thank you to everyone who shared their blessings!

Gifts this year are going to “Everything Beautiful Thrift Store” in Lane Deer.



The youth had a “Friendsgiving” night prior to the Thanksgiving holiday. Bowling, games, snacks, conversation!



Parents’ Night Out in November found 13 parents having a night out at Smith Alley. Childcare was provided.

Bells were ringing in November at FPC and we’ll hear more from them in December.



Good News at FPC !



Logan Timothy White was born November 7th to Brady & Alexa White. He is the first great grandson of Carla White. He weighed 7# 8oz and is a robust little guy! Logan spent his first few days in the NICU at St. Vincent's in Billings but is now home and doing great!

Tecuari Riot Zuniga was born November 27th at 1:45 pm weighing in at 6 lbs. 2 oz. Parents are Marisa and Armando and siblings are Ryker (8) and Paxton (3). Grandparents are Teresa & Mike Williams and great grandparents are Dave & Mavis Williams.



Happy Birthday to Kevin Bailey as he celebrated his 60th birthday. May the year be filled with many blessings!

Please share special days/events/milestones for our Good News at FPC page in our newsletter.

We like to share good news!

The Congregational Care Committee has set up a meal train for the Zuniga family. Click on this link to sign up to provide a meal for the family. <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054FAEA923A0FE3-meal#/>

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The monthly Session meeting for November was held on Tuesday the 21st at 7PM in the Fellowship Hall.

News of Interest --

- The mission trip to Frontera di Cristo is in December. There's room for a couple more people.
- Please fill in a Coffee Voucher if you are taking Cafe Justo Coffee for funerals, fellowship time, etc.
- Thank you to the following Elders whose terms on Session will end at the of the year: Craig Clem (but he has been re-elected for a new term), Scott Davis, Gloria Dierking, Gary Laughton, Kurt Smith, Beth Thurow, and Amy Turpin.

Gary Joy, Clerk of Session

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

Financial Summary for 2023 through the end of October

Giving:

Actual Giving	\$ 323,526
Budgeted Giving	\$ 319,867
Difference	\$ 3,659

Expenses:

Actual Expenses	\$ 302,667
Budgeted Expenses	\$ 328,999
Difference	\$ -26,332

Net:

Actual Giving	\$ 323,526
Actual Expenses	\$ 302,667
Difference	\$ 20,859

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 months actual giving.

Your contributions to our Per Capita obligation to the General Assembly totals \$3,350 through August. Our total 2023 Per Capita assessment is \$13,600.

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, Mary Hutton, Arlene Herrboldt, and Melony Douglas.

Prayers for Mission Partners: First Presbyterian (Gillette) and Habitat for Humanity of the Eastern Big Horns.

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

Camp Story

This summer, I had the honor of visiting with Barb Harden who celebrated her 90th birthday at Camp Story. Her family has been coming to camp story since the 50's and served in many roles at camp. They have a genuine love for Camp Story and it's success and what a treat to see someone like that talk about camp and beam from ear to ear. She told me "I have always known God is everywhere, but it's like he is shining a light down on Camp Story." I couldn't agree more and feel so thankful for people like Barb and so many others who love Camp Story and support it with all their heart.

Camp Story is ready for winter! The water is blown out and the cabins are locked up, all the vehicles and equipment are properly stowed after a blessed summer. We will not be having our annual Christmas at Camp this year. Camp Brochures and registration for Summer 2024 will be available January 1st and we are so excited to share the fun ideas and things that will be happening! We are hoping to launch an online camp store filled with amazing swag and gifts for your Christmas needs! Stay tuned for a launch date for that!

I am very grateful for this congregation and the love and support they show Camp Story. Truly, camping ministry is such an impactful ministry and is super important to maintain and support. Camp Story itself is such a special place, it has touched the lives of so many and will continue to do so! Keep your eyes out for new information and camp registration for 2024.

Grateful, Alicia Ford

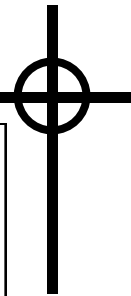


Alicia and Barb!



Camp Staff





DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

December 1—Jacob Botten, Mary Hutton
December 4—Mia Shifrar, Laurie Paronto
December 7—Roger Porter
December 8—Judy Garber, Shelley Cundiff
December 9—Ron Spahn, Hannah Will,
Myrna Saunders
December 10—Kim Wells
December 12—Karen Schreffler
December 13—Sharon Basse,
Arlene Herrboldt
December 15—Graeme Ford, Ryan Landis
December 17—Brian Morgen, Nathan Motsick
December 18—Carla White, Chad Rieger
December 18—Marilyn Koester
December 21—David Hackert
December 22—Rick Semino, Dorothy Johnson
December 23—Lois Trujillo
December 28—Sherry Laughton, Nancy Cook
December 29—Roy Davis



Happy Anniversary! December

December 3—John Jackson & Su Rappleye-
Jackson
December 4—Dave & Becki Youngren
December 16—Rob & Tori Milne
December 22—Jack & Nancy Elliott
December 27—Bob & Marilyn Koester
December 30—Mike & Cheryl Madden

Thank You!

A sincere thank you to all who offered prayer,
phone calls, and sent cards during my recent
surgery and recovery. It was so very much
appreciated!

“Every single act of love bears the imprint of
God.”

Thanks,
Sharon Basse



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

Musicians: Miriam Nance, Ryan Landis, Mary Apple, FPC Choir, Doug Moore, Handbell Choir

Worship Leaders: Gloria Dierking, Kim Wells, Rachael Milne, Tori Milne

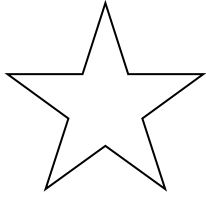
Ushers: Dave & Becki Motsick, Erica & Brian Bainter, Ottis Clem, Isaac Rugh, Prakash Landis, Kim Wells, Scott Davis, Shelley Cundiff, Marigene Vogt, Jason Szewc

Communion Prep: Su Rappleye-Jackson, Cheryl Kelsey, Lorrie Ledgerwood

Communion Servers: Dave & Becki Motsick, Kim Wells, Erica Bainter

Audio/Visual Systems Operators: Ted Knapp, CJ Clem, Craig Clem, Eli Clem

Coffee Sponsors: Mission Committee, Mike Stoll & Tina Anderson, Miriam & Tom Nance

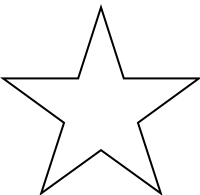


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Space Force

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.

December 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 1 pm Bell Ringing for the Salvation Army
3 8 am Worship w/ Communion 9 am Sunday School 10 am Fellowship 10:30 am Worship w/Communion 11:45 am Choir 4 pm Confirmation	4	5	6 12 pm PW Luncheon	7 7 am Bible Study	8	9
	Lunch Together			Pastor Karl Out of Office		
		6:30 pm Cub Scouts	6:30 pm Bells			
10 8 am Worship/Choir & Bells 9 am Sunday School 10 am Fellowship 10:30 am Worship/Choir & Bells	11	12 11 am Properties 12 pm Personnel 4:45 pm CE	13 10:00 am Congregational Care Committee	14 7 am Bible Study	15	16
17 8 am Worship 9 am Sunday School 10 am Fellowship 10:30 am Worship 4 pm Confirmation	18 6:45 am M3 	19 6:30 pm Cub Scouts	20 10 am Circle 1 & 2 12 pm Circle 3 7 pm Ecumenical "Longest Night" Service at United Methodist Church	21	22	23
24 10:30 am Worship w/ Youth Christmas Program 5 pm Christmas Eve Service 8 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service	25 Christmas Day	26 Office Closed	27 Office Closed	28	29	30 Adult Mission group departs for Frontera de Cristo
31 10 am Fellowship 10:30 am Pajama Sunday No live stream of the service.						

First Presbyterian Church

2121 Colonial Drive
Sheridan, WY 82801

Return Service Requested

Mailing label goes here

