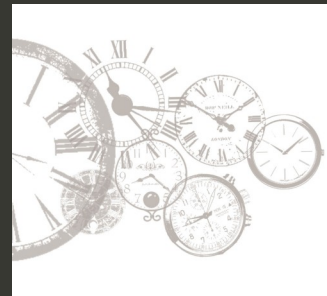




The Epistle

December 2014
Volume 2014-12

Upcoming Events



- 12/3—Advent Festival Potluck
- 12/8—BUNKO
- 12/9—Cancer Support Group
- 12/14—Healing Touch Circle
- 12/15—Session
- 12/21—Sunday School Christmas Pageant
- 12/24—Christmas Eve Service
- 12/26—Church Office Closed

Advent 2014 *For Such a Time as This...*

Do you feel it? Can you hear it?

Underneath the often noisy, always hectic rush to Christmas, it is there. Quieter. More subtle. But certainly persistent.

A yearning. A longing for a world that is different from the one we live in. More fair, more just, more like what we know it can and should be.

A sadness, even suffering, because in spite of the insistence that it be so, sometimes this time of year feels neither happy nor joyful, neither calm nor bright.

In the church year, the four weeks leading up to Christmas are known as ADVENT. Its name comes from the Latin word *adventus*, which means “coming” or “arrival.” In this season, we anticipate the coming of the Christ child, the Light of the world. We watch, we wait, we prepare, we expect, and yes, we yearn and we long for something better.

Our theme for this year is “*For Such a Time as This...*” It is a line from the story of Esther, a young Jewish woman who became queen and ended up being able to save her people. This is one of the stories we will hear on the first three of the four Sundays of Advent. All three are from the time of exile, when the Hebrew people were (or anticipated being) uprooted from the land God gave them and taken to live in exile, as aliens, strangers in a strange land.

Like us today, the Hebrew people knew all about yearning and longing, sadness and suffering. In the face of that they could only do some soul searching, taking stock of the injustice of the world and an honest look at their own complicity in that injustice. They asked, *Where is God in this? How then shall we live? How do we move forward?* There was even the question, *If this is the way the world is, why have faith? Why choose God’s way?*

During this season of Advent, these questions will be our questions as we do the difficult, in no way tinsel-y work of honestly preparing ourselves for the birth of Christ.

We are not called simply to celebrate the coming of the Light of the World, but to more *deeply and fully commit to God so that we can be light-bearers*, in big ways and small ways.

May each of us, carefully and prayerfully consider how we have been called—as individuals and as a congregation—for *such a time as this...*

Pastor Lori

First Presbyterian Church

301/309 First Street NW
Mount Vernon, IA 52314

Phone: 319-895-6060
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We're on the web:
www.firstpresmv.com

Follow us on

Facebook:
First Presbyterian Church of Mount Vernon



Twitter:
FirstPresMV

The office hours are Tuesday through Friday mornings 9:30am until 12:30. pm

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mvfirstpres@q.com

Pastor Lori Wunder.
431-2227 (cell)
Lewunder@gmail.com

Treasurer: Barb Bjork
bjorkbarb@gmail.com.

Music Director:
Damon Cole



NEWS & Notes



Bell Choir—Director **Joey Crowley** and several of our regular players are ready to start rehearsals, **BUT** we need more ringers! No experience is necessary; some ability to read music is helpful. Anyone aged 12 years and up is welcome to give it a try. Contact **Joey Crowley** (joanne.k.crowley@gmail.com) or the church office if you are interested in learning more!



Bunko— Monday, December 8th, Fellowship Hall, 6:00 pm



Cancer Support Group — Tuesday, December 9th, Fellowship Hall, 6:30 pm



Healing Touch Circle—Sunday, December 14 at 3:00 pm, in In the Community Room

TLC—No meeting until further notice.



Session Meeting— December 16th, Community Room, 6:30 pm

Watch Us on YouTube!



Did you miss a service or want to watch one again?

Carl Riechers continues to record our Sunday services and now uploads them to our very own channel (FirstPresMV) on YouTube! Find it any of these three ways:

- Click on the link on our Facebook page (First Presbyterian Church of Mount Vernon)
- Search "FirstPresMV" at youtube.com
- Go to www.youtube.com/user/FirstPresMV

Hey, Facebook Users!



Want another way to find out what's going on at church? Be sure to 'Like' *First Presbyterian Church of Mount Vernon* on Facebook! We use this page to promote events, post photos, and the occasional encouragement or interesting link.

SESSION MEMBERS

Sue Deibner
 Paul Jerabek
 Amy Weber
 Stephanie West (2nd term)

James Cannon (youth elder)
 Lyz Erlandson (youth elder)

Those continuing their
 service are:

Becky Ahrens
 Pam Mott (2nd term)
 Rozanne Petrick (2nd term)
 Beth Simon
 Nate Willems

SERVING OUR CHURCH:

Clerk of Session: Rozanne
 Petrick

Christian Education: Amy
 Weber & Sue Deibner

Adult Forum: Roger Johanson

Fellowship: (Pam Mott is a
 member of this committee)

Finance/Stewardship: Becky
 Ahrens

Member Care: Beth Simon,
 Nate Willems, & Sue Deibner

Memorial: Rozanne Petrick

Outreach:

Personnel: Pam Mott

Building & Property: Paul
 Jerabek

Social Concerns: Beth Simon
 and Nate Willems

Worship:



Stewardship Time

- Our Dedication Sunday was November 16, but there is still plenty of time to turn in a pledge card for 2015. Blank "Pledge Card" forms are at the back of the sanctuary.
- Feel free to contact AI or Becky Ahrens if you have any questions or if you would like information about having your pledge automatically deposited to the church's account (ACH).
- The following is a current status:
 - Pledge cards turned in: 27
 - New Pledges: 1
 - Increased Pledges so far: 15
 - Anticipated additional Pledges* 22

**For 2013, we received 49 pledge cards
 and for 2014 we received 48.*

We **THANK YOU** for your continued support
 and all the ways you help us do God's work
 where we are!



- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 1—Ciera Minor | 16—Nannette Gunn |
| 1—Zach West | 17—Marilue Watkins |
| 3—Matt Recalde | 19—Carolyn Palmer |
| 4—Joe Schmitz | 19—Lori Wunder |
| 7—Gretchen Lindembolt | 25—Alex Minor |
| 9—Lynn Woodley | 25—Carol Walden |
| 9—Deb Klopp | 27—Drew Heck |
| 12—Barb Bjork | 30—Jayden Weber |
| 12—Paul Jerabek | 31—Bob David |
| 15—Jean Bothel | |
| 15—Holly Gunn | |

Please contact the church office if we missed your birthday.



UPCOMING EVENTS



Advent Festival – Wednesday, December 3

6:00 pm Potluck Soup Supper

(Please bring soup, bread or treats to share)

6:45 Enjoy crafts for all ages,
decorating around the church
and filling care packages for Waypoint.



Volunteers Need
Sunday, December 7th
Sunday Evening Meal Program at
First Pres in Cedar Rapids
3:30 pm to 6:30 pm

December 7th, we serve the free evening meal in Cedar Rapids. We meet at the church parking lot at 3:30 pm and car pool to the First Presbyterian Church on 3rd Ave. in Cedar Rapids. We help set-up, serve the meal and assist with clean-up. We leave at 6:00 pm and return to Mount Vernon by 6:30 pm. Sign up in Fellowship Hall.

If you have questions contact Beth Simon at 895-6966.

AUCTION

Fall Auction Results and THANKS!

The congregation's annual Fall Auction was held on Sunday, November 16 and it was a huge success! The donated items showed the tremendous range of talent present in our congregation and community, not to mention the level of generosity.

THANK YOU to everyone who attended and/or donated items for the auction! **Between the live and silent auction, over \$5900 was raised for the general fund.** Wow!

This event could never happen without the efforts of a lot of people.

Pam Mott, Rita Swales and Laura Werkman helped organize the whole thing from beginning to end.

Dixie Mackie, Linda Nost, Carol Dillard, Becky Ahrens, Barb Bjork, and Connie Boettcher helped get everything set up and ran it the day of the auction.

Craig Engel once again did a fabulous job as auctioneer.

Dixie Mackie organized the lunch while **Paula Kamerling, Larry Petrick, Rozanne Petrick, Becky Whitman, and Kevin Whitman** worked in the kitchen, serving up the food and washing up the dishes.

Cooper Becthold, Cindy Burge, Amanda Dragon and Camron Woodley helped keep the auction running smoothly by running items and cards to where they needed to be.

Ben Recalde and Joey Recalde made the sign that went up outside.

Thank you ALL!

First Presbyterian Church

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OFFICE E-MAIL: mvfirstpres@q.com

Presbyterian Epistle Volume #2014-012. Editor: Deb Klopp

Each Sunday, "Weekly Announcements" containing the most current information of dates,

Christian Education for Children and Youth

The Children's **Christmas** Pageant is coming!

This year the pageant will be more "back to basics," telling the story of Jesus birth and singing traditional carols. Children PreK through Grade 6 are welcome to participate!

Rehearsals begin **Sunday, November 9** and run through **Sunday, December 7th**, at 11:00.

The children will present the pageant in worship on **Sunday, December 14th!**

COMING SOON... WARMING STATION

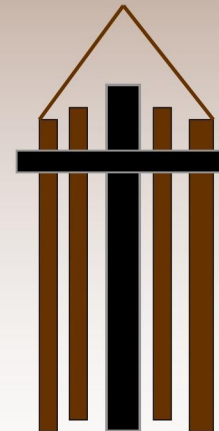
Sledding Warming Station

@ First Pres

Wednesday 3:45 - 5:30 PM

(weather permitting)

First Pres will be open for all sledders to warm up, use the restroom and get a cup of FREE hot chocolate!



December—Worship Assistants

Sunday, December 7 - 9:30 am – Worship, Communion & Second Sunday in Advent

Liturgist: Ann Cannon
 Greeters: Weber Family
 Ushers: Don Burch & Paul Jerabek Bell ringer: Usher Select
 Candle lighter: Weber Family
 Communion: James Cannon, Larry & Rozanne Petrick and Beth Simon
 Nursery: Hannah Garvey

Sunday, December 14 - 9:30 am – Worship, Birthday Blessing & Third Sunday in Advent

Liturgist: Rita Swales
 Greeters: Cannon Family
 Ushers: Stephanie & Greg West Bell ringer: Usher Select
 Candle lighter: Cannon Family
 Nursery: Hannah Garvey

Sunday, December 21 - 9:30 am – Worship & Fourth Sunday in Advent

Liturgist: Joe Mulinix
 Greeters: Hanson - Deibner Family
 Ushers: Kevin & Becky Whitman Bell ringer: Usher Selects
 Candle lighter: Hanson - Deibner Family
 Nursery: Hannah Garvey

Wednesday, December 24 - 5:00 pm – Worship

We will need liturgists, ushers children to bring forward figures for the manger, as well as helpers to set up (and take down) luminarias out on the sidewalk. Please talk with Pastor Lori if you're willing to help!

Sunday, December 28 - 9:30 am – Worship

First Sunday in Advent

Liturgist: Sue Deibner
 Greeters: Carol & Denver Dillard
 Ushers: Linda Nost & Pam Mott Bell ringer: Usher Select
 Candle lighter: Jaidyn Burge
 Nursery: Hannah Garvey

The kingdom of God is not something in the far future that is going suddenly to come down from heaven and settle on you and magically turn everything right. You yourselves are it. It's in you and among you; you have to do it or it will never come.

[Beatrice Bruteau](#)

Source: [The Holy Thursday Revolution](#)



December 2014

Worship Every Sunday 9:30



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 6:00 pm Advent Festival 7-8:45 pm Choir Rehearsal	4	5	6 10-11:45 am Choir Rehearsal
7 9:30 am Worship Communion 11:00 am Children Christmas Pageant Rehearsal	8 Office Closed 6:00 Bunko Fellowship Hall	9 6:30 Cancer Support Group Fellowship Hall 7:00-9:00 pm Art Class, Community Room	10 7-8:45 pm Choir Rehearsal	11	12	13 10-11:45 am Choir Rehearsal
14 9:30 am Worship Birthday Blessing Children Christmas Pageant 3:00 pm Healing Touch Circle	15 Office Closed 6:30 pm Session, Community Room	16 7:00-9:00 pm Art Class, Community Room	17 10:00-4:00 Quilting Group, Fellowship Hall (Connie Boettcher) 7-8:45 pm Choir Rehearsal	18	19	20 10-11:45 am Choir Rehearsal
21 9:30 am Worship	22 Office Closed	23	24 5:00 Candlelight Christmas Eve Service	25 	26 Office Closed	27
28 9:30 am Worship	29 Office Closed	30	31			

Seeds of Faith Lutheran Church will host a Blue Christmas Service on Sunday, December 21st at 7:00 pm. This contemplative service recognizes that for some of us this holiday season does not feel "merry" or "joyful," and encourages us to find healing and hope through authentic worship that acknowledges that reality. All are welcome! Please contact the church office with any questions or to arrange transportation to and from the service (455-2599 or seeds@seedsoffaihlutheran.org). Seeds of Faith is located on Highway 30 in Lisbon, just east of Dollar General.



2014 Advent and Christmas Worship Schedule



“For Such a Time as This...”

First Sunday of Advent – November 30

9:30 am Worship

Habakkuk 1:1-4, 2:2-4, 3:17-19

The prophet laments to God, and God responds

Second Sunday of Advent – December 7

9:30 am Worship

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Esther 4:1-17 - *Esther, chosen by God to save her people*

Third Sunday of Advent – December 14

9:30 am Worship

Presentation of Children's Christmas Pageant

Isaiah 42:1-9 - *God's servant will be a light to the nations*

Fourth Sunday of Advent – December 21

9:30 am Worship

Chancel Choir's Music Program

Matthew 1:18-25 – *Jesus' birth announced to Joseph*



Christmas Eve – December 24

5:00 pm Candlelight Worship

A Service of Lessons and Carols

Featuring the Chancel Choir

Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Volunteers Making a Difference! Fill the Backpack Thanks

Each month, Southeast Linn Community Center sends home backpacks of food with the many children in Mount Vernon and Lisbon who are “food insecure.” This extra food is intended to help them get the calories and nutrition they need so they can better find success at school.

In November it was our congregation’s turn to back the backpacks (or rather, pack the plastic bags that would be put in the backpacks!). We had a great group of volunteers on Thursday, November 20 and got all of the work done in one hour.

Thank you to Al Ahrens, Becky Ahrens, Mary Clare Coulter, Carol Daly, Dixie Mackie, Pam Mott, Vern Pitcher, Laura Werkman and Lori Wunder for helping out!



Looking for a Way to Help in December?

Sunday, December 7—Sunday Evening Meals Program (see page 4)

Adopt a Family for Christmas—November 30th & December 7th

An annual tradition! Choose a “wish list” ornament for kids in need (identified through Southeast Linn Community Center), do the shopping and return the gifts by December 7th. Ornaments available on the tree in Fellowship Hall on November 30!

2104 Presbyterian Giving Catalog—all month long

How about giving gifts this year that make a difference to those most in need? \$25 for a family of chickens, \$30 for a bag of seeds, \$75 for a Rainwater Catchment System, \$125 for an Emergency Life Pack. These are just some of the gifts offered in the catalog. Find one on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall, or head to presbyteriangifts.org

Paper & Hygiene Products for SELCC—Sunday, December 21st

The SELCC food bank (open Tuesday mornings) has enough food, but clients are often in need of things like toilet paper, tissues, feminine hygiene products, shampoo, conditioner, soap, lotion, etc. (Food stamps cannot be used for any of these items.) Let’s step in and help provide these very necessary items. Please bring donations of any of these items to worship on December 21. Thank you!