

# THE EPISTLE

## January 2020

### HAPPY NEW YEAR!

#### A Prayer for the New Year

God, above time, above space, yet with us and in us in Christ, we who are creatures of time and space come to you with thankfulness.

We give you thanks for the year that has passed. We thank you for the many ways in which you have touched us, in moments of great happiness or in deep distress. You have been present in Christ, the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.

We thank you for the people who matter to us, near and far, who have given themselves to us and through whom you have been present to us in their love.

We thank you for your church, the community of faith in whose company we have journeyed, whose friendship we value, whose challenge we welcome, and whose wide boundaries are not defined by time, by space or by death.

As we move into a new year, give us grace to leave behind our failures and any sense of guilt, to let go of the past with gratitude, and to leave in your hands the future in faith—to live each moment in joyful discipleship, in the company of him who is always Emmanuel, God with us. Amen.

(by John Harvey in *Hay & Stardust: Resources from Christmas to Candlemas*. Glasgow: Wild Goose Publications, 2005)



### ANNUAL MEETING

**Annual Meeting of the Congregation**  
Sunday, January 26 following worship

The purpose of the Annual Meeting is to:

1. Receive the reports from the previous year and allow for questions.
2. Elect new officers and members of the Nominating Committee.
3. Approve the pastor's terms of call.

#### THE LATEST FROM THE CHURCH:

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#### DECEMBER

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

- *5- Worship & Communion (9:30am)*
- *5- Epiphany Celebration*
- *5- Adult Forum (11am)*
- *8- Confirmation (6pm)*
- *12- Worship & Birthday Blessing (9:30am)*
- *12- Adult Forum (11am)*
- *13- Bunko (6:00pm)*
- *15- Session (6:30pm)*
- *19- Worship & Noisy Offering (9:30am)*
- *19- Adult Forum (11am)*
- *21- Dementia Caregivers Support Group (4:00pm)*
- *22- Confirmation (6pm)*
- *26- Worship (9:30am)*
- *26- Annual Meeting (10:30am)*
- *27- Knit Group (1pm)*
- *29- WEO (1:15pm)*



## First Presbyterian Church

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Check out our website:

[www.firstpresmv.com](http://www.firstpresmv.com)

Find us on social media:



First Presbyterian Church  
of Mount Vernon



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## DECEMBER SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

A stated meeting was held on Wednesday, December 11 at 6:30 pm in the Community Room.

**Present:** Elaine Bishop, Ed Bjork, Carol Daly, Carole Frazee (via Google Hangout), Pat Hogan, Roger Johanson, Larry Petrick, Larry Purvis, Jonathan Walsh, Greg West

**Excused:** Scott Peterson, Allan Reclade

**Financial Report:** We have borrowed \$5500 from other accounts in 2019. Expenses have been kept down. We anticipate a deficit of around \$10,000. A preliminary budget for 2020 was approved.

**2020 Pledges:** We have received 45 pledges totaling \$108,376. (In 2019, we had 37 pledges totaling \$96,650.)

**General Mission Giving (to Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly):** the Session decided to not pay this for 2019 and to reconsider what to do for 2020 in six months.

**Children's Ministry:** Starting in January, we will offer Sunday School for PreK through Grade 6 on the third and fourth Sundays, during worship. Children and teachers will leave after the anthem and/or Discovery Time. We will be using a PC(USA) curriculum, Awesome Adventures. Wednesday Early Outs (WEO) will continue once per month.

Epiphany Celebration on Sunday, January 5, during and after worship. Congregation is invited to bring gifts as the Magi did, but for Southeast Linn Community Center (Toilet Paper, facial tissues, lotion, lip balm) and Washington Elementary School (Girls underwear sizes 6-6X and black sweatpants sizes 4T through 14/16).

**Called Meeting** on Sunday, December 15, 2019 at 9:15 am in the office

**Present:** Elaine Bishop, Ed Bjork, Pat Hogan, Larry Petrick, Larry Purvis, Greg West for the purpose of receiving the following new members:

By Reaffirmation of Faith

Mike and Kim Andresen

Mark Andresen (Vivienne)

Shane and Jackee Austerman (Isaiah and Ellie)

Pete Rian and Teresa Sullivan (Cece, Henry, and Imogene)

By Letter of Transfer

Brian and Emily Fitzpatrick from Solon United Methodist Church

Scott and Maggie Larson from Echo Hill Presbyterian Church

Joan Williams from Marion United Methodist Church

### Office Hours:

Tuesday through Friday 9am-12pm

### Office Manager:

Marie Riechers

[mvfirstpres@q.com](mailto:mvfirstpres@q.com)

### Pastor:

Lori Wunder

431-2227 (cell)

[Lewundere@gmail.com](mailto:Lewundere@gmail.com)

### Treasurer:

Barb Bjork

[bjorkbarb@gmail.com](mailto:bjorkbarb@gmail.com)

### Director of Music:

Julia Andrews

[julia.andrews4444@gmail.com](mailto:julia.andrews4444@gmail.com)

### Custodian:

Terry Jackson



# EPIPHANY SERIES: GIFTS THAT KEEP ON GIVING

SUNDAYS IN JANUARY @ 9:30AM



Now that the commercialized “gift-giving season” is behind us, let’s focus on some of God’s unexpected gifts that we can enjoy long after the carols fade—gifts that reveal themselves in new ways as time goes on.

## **January 5, 2020 – The Gift of Unexpected Gifts**

Epiphany Sunday – Star Gifts

Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper

*Matthew 2:1-12 The Magi visit Jesus and his family*

The gifts brought by the magi were completely unexpected by the household of Jesus. Gifts that are offered freely and out of a deep sense of joy, generosity, and gratitude are powerful both for the one who gives and for the one who receives.

## **January 12, 2020 – The Gift of Committed Community**

Reaffirmation of Baptism

Recognition of January Birthdays

*Matthew 3:13-17 – Jesus is baptized by John*

On this day of remembrance of Jesus’ baptism as well as our own, we also remember the commitment that people of faith have to all members of the community, baptized or not. In fact, in the commitment to these vows of baptism taken toward anyone means that we, in all ways, are called to care for, raise, and love all.

## **January 19, 2020 – The Gift of Unbridled Curiosity**

Noisy Offering

*John 1:29-42 The First Disciples (according to John)*

In John’s gospel, Jesus’ invitation to the first disciples is, “Come and see.” Curiosity is a gift. Curiosity changes us and changes the world. Not every path must be traveled, but being open to new paths at all times is a must if we are to grow in faith.

## **January 26, 2020 – The Gift of Bold Action**

Annual Meeting of the Congregation Follows Worship

*Matthew 4:12-23 The First Disciples (according to Matthew)*

In Matthew’s gospel, Jesus invites the first disciples, “Follow me.” And they do. Following Christ is complex. We, too, will have times when we are called to step out and away from what we have been, in order to discover what God hopes for us to become.



## JANUARY WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

### Sunday, January 5th- Worship & Communion

*Liturgist:* Need Volunteer

*Ushers:* Need Volunteers

### Sunday, January 12th- Worship & Birthday Blessing

*Liturgist:* Need Volunteer

*Ushers:* Need Volunteers

### Sunday, January 19th- Worship & Noisy Offering

*Liturgist:* Need Volunteer

*Ushers:* Need Volunteers

### Sunday, January 26th- Worship

*Liturgist:* Need Volunteer

*Ushers:* Need Volunteers



## SUNDAY SCHOOL

### Coming Soon! Sunday School is Returning to First Pres MV!

Starting January 19...

**WHO?** Kindergarten through Grade 5. Children PreK and under are welcome to come with a parent.

**WHAT?** We'll be learning stories about Jesus using Awesome Adventures, a PC(USA) curriculum for Kindergarten through Grade 5.

**WHERE?** In our CE classrooms.

**WHEN?** The last two Sundays of the month (January 19 and 26 for sure; tentatively February 16 and 23; March 22 and 29; April 19 and 26) during worship (children and teachers will leave following the anthem or Discovery Time).

**WHY?** Because our congregation is growing, we have adults who are willing to teach, and learning the bible stories is important.

#### A few more things to know:

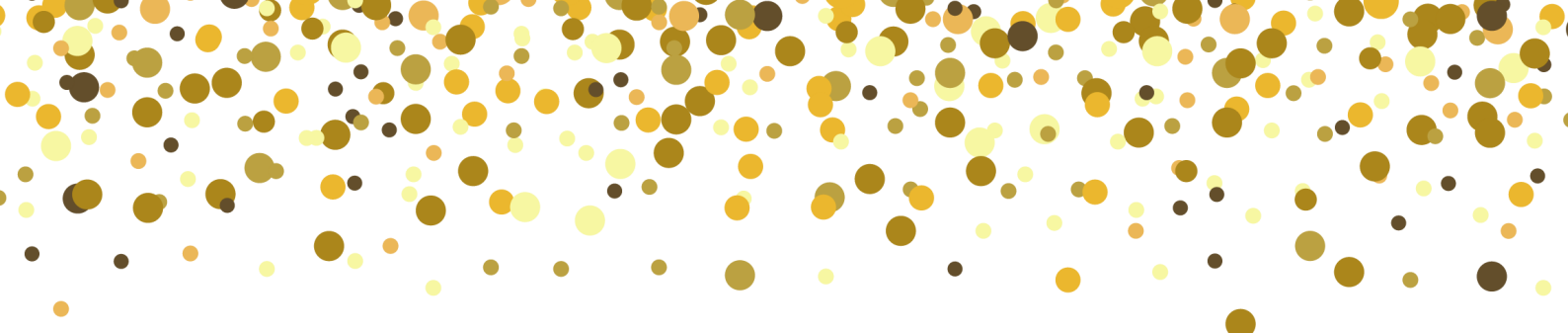
- How many age groups we have depends on how many teachers we have.
- We will have a monthly "prep party" to get everything ready for that month's lessons.
- We are looking for adults and older youth to be "on call" in case of illness or if we have a lot of kids and need help.
- This is a work in progress, so if we need to change anything to make it work better, we will.

If you have questions or want to help out, talk with Pastor Lori, Jonathan Walsh, Kristi Karwal Clark, or Pat Hogan.

## January Birthdays

- 3- Alyssa Bennett
- 3- Ted Healey
- 4- Aiden Schmit
- 6- Jordon Gunn
- 8- Christopher Cannon
- 10- Scott Taylor
- 16- Nancy Jerabek
- 18- Seamus Taylor
- 19- Emory Gillespie
- 19- Pam Mott
- 10- Ezra Crawford
- 21- Martin Benesh
- 21- Jessica West
- 23- Stephanie West
- 25- Ammie West
- 27- David Weddle
- 30- Julia Andrews
- 31- Becky Ahrens
- 31- Anita Pitcher





You are invited to attend

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF MOUNT VERNON'S

# Epiphany Celebration

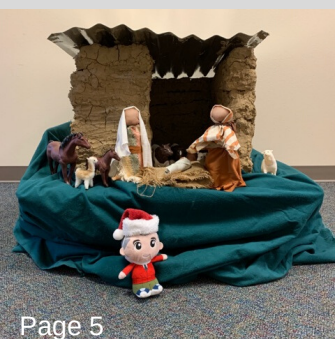
SUNDAY, JANUARY 5, 2019  
DURING AND AFTER WORSHIP (9:30AM)

THE CONGREGATION IS INVITED TO BRING GIFTS AS THE MAGI DID, BUT FOR SOUTHEAST LINN COMMUNITY CENTER (TOILET PAPER, FACIAL TISSUES, LOTION, LIP BALM) AND WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (GIRLS UNDERWEAR SIZES 6-6X AND BLACK SWEATPANTS SIZES 4T THROUGH 14/16).



## Fred's Advent Adventures

If you were on Facebook or Instagram during Advent, you may have noticed all the great things Fred (our Mr. Rogers toy) was doing to prepare for Christmas! Each day of Advent, Fred (and sometimes Daniel the Tiger) did things around the church or the community to spread kindness and Christmas cheer.



# Advent Festival

## THANK YOU!



Thank you for making the outreach project for Waypoint Services a success at the Advent Festival. Your generous gifts of toiletries and wash cloths filled 70 bags that have been donated for people in crisis. Your gifts of diapers, pullups and hygiene products are helping to meet the ongoing needs of the women and children that Waypoint serve. Thanks for the time spent collecting, organizing and delivering these special gifts from our church into the hands of people in need.

## Adult Forum- January

**January 5-** conclude the ProFuture Faith study. What does our faith say about protecting God's creation - our world and environment?

**January 12-** begin "The Jesus Fatwah - Love your Muslim Neighbor as Yourself" - The basics of Islam.

**January 19-** "Misconceptions about Islam"

**January 26-** no class session

## **WEO** Wednesday Early Out

**Our next WEO is January 29th**

Join us as we experience what it might be like to be differently abled, and learn about resiliency.

1:10ish to 3:30ish

Please RSVP to Pastor Lori  
(lewunder@gmail.com) so we can prepare for you!  
Mark your calendars for February 26, March 11,  
and April 10 (Good Friday)





# MVL Dementia Caregivers' Support Group

Caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's or dementia? You are not alone!

**MVL Dementia Caregivers' Support Group**  
 Third Tuesday of Each Month, 4:00-5:00pm- January 21st  
 Lower Level of First Presbyterian Church, Mount Vernon

Each meeting will include sharing information and a time for open discussion led by Tamra Albright-Johnson from Pinicon Place, Anamosa

Questions? Call Tamra at 319-481-7012



Volunteers are needed to be liturgist and ushers for January.

A sign-up sheet is in the back of the sanctuary, or email the office with the date you would like to help. Thank you!



Visit [firstpresmv.com](http://firstpresmv.com) to take our Time and Talent Survey!

Paper copies are available in the back of the sanctuary and in the church office.

## Holiday Office Hours

The church office will be open by appointment only until January 7th. Please email the office at [mvfirstpres@q.com](mailto:mvfirstpres@q.com) to make an appointment. For financial questions, please contact Barb Bjork or Al & Becky Ahrens.

# JANUARY 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29	30 Office Closed	31 Office Closed	1 Office Closed	2 Office Closed	3 Office Closed	4
5 Worship & Communion 9:30am Epiphany Celebration Adult Forum 11am	6 Office Closed	7	8 Confirmation 6-7:30pm	9	10	11
12 Choir rehearsal 8:15am Worship & Birthday Blessing 9:30am Adult Forum 11am	13 Office Closed Bunko 6pm	14	15 Session 6:30pm	16	17	18
19 Choir rehearsal 8:15am Worship & Noisy Offering 9:30am Adult Forum 11am	20 Office Closed	21 Dementia Caregivers Support Group 4pm	22 Confirmation 6-7:30pm	23	24	25
26 Choir rehearsal 8:15am Worship 9:30am Annual Meeting 10:30am	27 Knit Group- 1pm at Jo Williams home Office Closed	28	29 Lori gone for Continuing Ed WEO 1:15-3:30pm No Confirmation	30 Lori gone for Continuing Ed	31 Lori gone for Continuing Ed	1 Lori gone for Continuing Ed



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Each Sunday, "Weekly Announcements" bulletin insert contains the most current events and times..