



First Presbyterian Church

The Mustard Seed

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 2022, Issue 02

First Presbyterian Church, Helena, Montana

February 2022

“Names”

We, as humans, name things. This works pretty well, it adds specificity to our communications, clarity. According to the story (Mark Twain's *Adam's & Eve's Diaries*), Adam named everything, and then Eve fixed it all. Adam called it a “*Four Prong White Squirt*.” Eve said, “No, it's Cow.”

We named the four elements: Earth, Wind, Water and Fire. We noted there are things living on the earth that can generally be classified as plants and animals. There are all kinds of each of these two categories, and eventually we get around to naming them all very specifically - in Latin (!#?*). We have us (*Homo sapiens*) and Saint Bernards (*Dogus maximus*) - OK, I didn't take Latin.



Rev.
Scott Wipperman

These names define who we are and what other things are. But this naming, these definitions, this distinction leads us to see ourselves apart from the “not us” things in this world. Our perspective of the world originates from *our perspective*, placing ourselves at the center of creation. This happens quite naturally, but unfortunately it is not reality.

The Buddhist monk and teacher Thich That Hanh offers us a better way:

At this very moment, the Earth is above you, below you, all around you, and even inside you. The Earth is everywhere. You may be used to thinking of the Earth as only the ground beneath your feet. But ... everything outside us and everything inside us comes from the Earth. We often forget that the planet we are living on has given us all the elements that make up our bodies. The water in our flesh, our bones, and all the microscopic cells inside our bodies all come from the Earth and are part of the Earth. The Earth is not just the environment we live in. We are the Earth and we are always carrying her within us.

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If we think about the Earth as just the environment around us, we experience ourselves and the Earth as separate entities. We may see the planet only in terms of what it can do for us. We need to recognize that the planet and the people on it are ultimately one and the same.

We are the Earth. And the *Dogus Maximus* is the Earth. And the *Populus tremuloides* (Quaking Aspen - for real) is the Earth. And the Earth is all these. We are distinguishable, but we are not separate, we are one.

We need to change our relationship with the Earth. The Earth is part of us; we are part of it. And if we can manage this shift, maybe we are ready for the really important shift. But first, let me clarify, in case there is any confusion - we are not God (sorry to break that to you). God is Creator of the Universe, we are the created. God is distinguishable from us.

But now the important part, God is not separate from us. God is with us, around us, within us.

God fashioned us before we were born, and the Creator is part of us. Suddenly we realize, of course, that God is not “out there,” but God is in all, through all, and with all (1 Corinthians 15:28). We no longer need to fear (how many times did Jesus say “Do not be afraid” or “Fear not”!?). We are not alone. Such a thing is an impossibility. Let us be open to our oneness with the Earth, with other creatures, with the Creator - and with one another. Christ calls us into community, into relation with one another. As Paul said, “There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Galatians 3:28)! We are all part of the One.

Peace,
Pastor Scott

NOTES FROM SESSION JANUARY 18, 2021

The regular meeting of the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Helena was called to order on Tuesday, January 18, 2022, at 6:30 PM by Reverend Scott Wipperman. This was conducted as a hybrid meeting. Reverend Scott Wipperman opened with prayer and moderated the meeting.

Pastor Scott Wipperman shared a story by Elizabeth Gilbert about a bus ride she had and the bus driver’s way to reduce his passenger’s current day worries.

There was a quorum with the following Elders present: Barb Leland, Kathy Chambers, Rose Leavitt. Attending on Zoom were Elders Sheryl Eriksen, Linda Bench, John Coefield, Carol Stebbins, Mary Stiles, Karen Witte, Clerk of Session John Gneckow, and Deacon Candace Coefield. Also in attendance: Pastor Scott Wipperman, and CP Butch Plowman. Elder Mary Wright was absent.

Guests in attendance were Leo Potter, Vic Reiman, and Jim and Mary Brainard, all of whom were seeking membership in the church. Each person gave a brief account of their faith journey. Following Reaffirmation of Faith, a motion was presented to accept all four individuals into membership. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF DOCKET: Following a request to include a discussion on the 2022 Terms of Call for Pastor Wipperman, a motion was made, seconded, and approved to accept the docket with the additional item.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the minutes of December 21, 2021, as presented.

PASTOR'S REPORT: Pastor Scott reported that we ended the year in the red even though December had a net positive of \$8,460. The shortfall for the year was \$28,535. Our investments did well helping us to meet our PILP loan payments, provide \$4000 in scholarships, and cover the expenses for two new heaters and a surveillance/security system.

CLERK'S REPORT: The Clerk reported that FPC received thank you notes for recent donations from our Mission Committee to Intermountain and Glacier Camp.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Administration Committee: Elder Linda Bench reported, and a written report was submitted.

The committee reviewed the end of year Vanguard investment activity. Following the review, the committee recommended the following motion to Session for approval and presentation at the annual Congregational Meeting in February 2022: **ACTION ITEM:** The transfer of \$1718.38 from Vanguard Account #1 to the Mission Committee IAW the "Mission Motion" approved at the called congregational meeting of April 11, 2021. The motion carried.

Building and Grounds: Elder John Coefield reported, and a written report was submitted. The alarm company is still working on programming the hours that FPC wants the alarm system to be automatically armed/disarmed. The Committee Chair is looking for bids for new insurance for the church as Farmer's has raised our rates again.

Christian Education Committee: Elder Mary Stiles reported that the Committee did not meet in January. The plan is to start some adult education programs during 2022.

Congregational Fellowship: Elder Linda Bench reported, and a written report was submitted. Fellowship Time following worship is allowed with masks required and no food or drink. To-Go treats are still available following the worship service.

Mission Committee: Elder Kathy Chambers reported, and a written report was submitted. Solicitation of winter clothing to donate to God's Love is going quite well requiring additional space to hold all the donations. Matthew 25 donations for February are a request for feminine hygiene products to be shared with Good Samaritan, Florence Crittenton, and other groups involved with women.

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Memorial Committee: No activity to report this month.

Nominating Committee: Elder John Coefield reported. The committee has four people committed for the Elder class of 2025 and two individuals to fill the remaining terms of the two Elders who resigned partway through their terms. They still need two people to complete the Deacon class of 2025.

Personnel Committee: Carol Stebbins initially reported that the committee had not met during January. However, a Called Committee meeting was held January 16, 2022, to review Pastor Scott's Terms of Call and made a change to the Continuing Education Reimbursement reducing the amount from \$3000 to \$1500. No other changes were made.

Worship Committee: No Committee representative at Session although a written report was submitted. Pastor Scott reported that he will be on vacation the week of April 24.

We are already preparing for Lent. Ash Wednesday is March 2 and FPC will have a service beginning at 7:00 PM. Communion will be served along with the imposition of ashes.

We will no longer be showing on the screen the words to the music but will be using the Glory to God song books in the pews.

Also, to encourage use of the pew Bibles, we will no longer show the words to the scripture lessons on the screen.

Covid Task Force: Pastor Scott reported that the Task Force is continuing to monitor the situation in the Helena area, especially as pertains to the omicron variant. The committee indicated that now is not the time to sing in church as singing disperses more droplets containing the virus than speaking.

Deacon Report: Deacon Candace Coefield provided a report of Board activities for December. Communion was served at Touchmark and Edgewood. Session members expressed appreciation for the Christmas cards and baskets that they received during the holiday season.

Old Business: We are not ready to discuss the Basin church as an FPC "Chapel" as we do not yet have various questions answered such as added responsibilities and liabilities.

New Business: The recommended FPC Communion Services times during 2022:
The first Sunday of each month including January 2, 2023
Ash Wednesday Service
Maundy Thursday Service
Christmas Eve Service

The motion to set these dates for Communion carried.

In early January, Session members were polled on a proposal by Ashley that she set up a social media presence for FPC. The consensus was to first revise our

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web site and then explore expanding our social media presence beyond the current role.

Scott showed a preview of a revised web site that he has created using the tool from GoDaddy.com. Elders offered some ideas for adjustment or inclusion in the web pages.

A motion was made to accept the Personnel Committee recommendation for the 2022 Pastor’s Terms of Call (see Personnel Committee summary above). The motion carried.

Session reviewed the current list of members for placing those on the inactive status who have not been participating in worship services and have not contributed financially to FPC for at least a year. A motion was made to move the following members to Inactive Status:

Sandi Smith	Ann Seeley	Colby Thomas	Erin Thomas
Randy Boysen	Stephanie Boysen	Paul Chen	Abbi Lord
Amanda Grimmett	Justin Fortner		

The motion carried.

There being no further business, it was moved and seconded at 8:40 PM to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried. Pastor Scott closed the meeting with prayer.

Next Regular Session Meeting: February 15, 2022, at 6:30 pm.

The Annual Congregational Meeting: February 13, 2022, immediately following the Sunday worship service

John Gneckow
Clerk of Session



The **Deacons’ Benevolence Fund** has been used several times during the pandemic. Thanks to the congregation’s generous gifts, we have been able to fulfill every request. We want to remind everyone that this fund is for you. If you need help to pay household or medical bills, buy groceries, medicine or gas, we are here, ready to help. Just contact Pastor Scott at the church office, and he will get the ball rolling. This is completely confidential; not even the deacons know who our recipients are. We are so happy to help! God bless!



First Presbyterian Church
535 N. Ewing
Helena, MT 59601
442-4775

Larry Linton Scholarship

Larry Linton provided a scholarship gift of \$10,000 to the church several years ago. This gift was invested and is earning interest. As sufficient interest becomes available, funds are to be awarded to students for attending or planning to attend post-secondary school.

Criteria:

Student must be a member or related to a member of First Presbyterian Church

Minimum grade point average of 2.0

Demonstrated financial need

Demonstrated good character

Application Process:

Submit a letter of interest to FPC with your name, address, email, and phone number. Indicate the current school you attend and the school that you plan to attend (must be accredited).

Attach a current transcript and estimated expenses for your year of college (tuition, room and board, books and supplies).

Attach a letter of recommendation from an individual who can address knowledge of your academic ability and character.

Address the following essay questions.

1. What are your current academic goals?
2. What are your career goals once you have completed your degree?
3. What is your involvement with the First Presbyterian Church?
4. This scholarship is for students with financial need. Please describe your financial situation and how the scholarship can help you meet your academic goals.

Mail the application to the attention of the Education Committee at First Presbyterian Church, 535 N. Ewing St., Helena, MT 59601.

Scholarships are to be utilized for tuition and when awarded will be addressed to the school that the student will attend.

Availability of funds will be advertised through the church's website and newsletter. A committee representing education, mission and administration will review and recommend successful applicants.

Seeley Family Memorial Scholarship

Eve and Nelson Seeley, members of the Helena First Presbyterian Church, created an endowment at the Montana Community Foundation in 2015 called the Seeley Family Memorial Scholarship. This endowment will provide annual scholarship awards in perpetuity to benefit members of the church who are attending or planning to attend post-secondary school.

Scholarship Criteria:

- Student must be a member or relative of a member of the Helena First Presbyterian Church
- Graduate from a Helena high school
- Minimum grade point average of 2.0
- Demonstrated financial need.
- Demonstrated good character

Students may apply online for the scholarship through the Montana Community Foundation website at www.mtcf.org. Students create an account to start the process. For further information or assistance with the application process, please call or email Jenny Lou Stark, Scholarship Manager, at the Montana Community Foundation (jstark@mtcf.org or 441-4946).

The application deadline this year is March 15, 2022. The recipient(s) of the scholarship(s) will be chosen, among eligible applicants, by a scholarship committee established at the Helena First Presbyterian Church.

FEBRUARY MATTHEW 25 – PERIOD POVERTY

v.36 “I was sick and you looked after me”.

What is period poverty? How is this Matthew 25?
How is this my mission?

Our bodies are divinely created and every function is intentional.

Period poverty is defined as inadequate access to period products needed by girls and women during their monthly menstrual cycles.

Some of the many reasons for period poverty:

Menstrual supplies are expensive.

Menstruation still remains a stigmatized topic by many individuals.

Public aid is not often available for supplies.

Supplies are deemed “non-essential” and are taxed in most states.

Although shampoo, soap, and toothpaste are distributed in shelters, period supplies often are not.

Toilet paper is provided in public restrooms, period supplies are not.

Women are more likely to ask for food than period supplies.

This is a Matthew 25 issue! It is **not** from an “I am sick” perspective but rather from a focus on helping with a health issue, one too often ignored. There is stress and/or shame and/or social ostracization from period poverty. Without adequate supplies, there can be lost school and work time, lost income, job loss, underperformance at school, dropouts, infections, unsanitary conditions, and more. “I needed help and you looked after me”.

The Mission Committee has adopted period poverty as our mission for the fifth of Jesus’s commandments to us. You are asked to purchase period products and bring them to church throughout February. There will be a collection site in the Narthex. If you prefer to make a cash contribution, please note in the memo area of your check that you are donating to this mission. Products will be purchased for you. These gifts will be distributed to the pantry at Good Samaritan, the Friendship Center, Florence Crittenton and beyond if we are able. And because these gifts are being given in love, there will be a sweet treat attached to each item.

For an excellent article on the topic, please read <https://www.christiancentury.org/article/features/how-some-churches-are-working-alleviate-period-poverty>.

Dear Friends at First Presbyterian of Helena!

You are to be commended for putting your faith into action and for embodying the command Jesus gave us in **Matthew 25**. Your contributions will be distributed to our friends & neighbors who have fallen on hard times. Friends that Jesus called “The Least of These.” As we unloaded the items into our offices at the United Way, my co-workers commented on how needed these items are among our unsheltered friends. On behalf of our unsheltered and unstably housed neighbors, we thank you! We will keep you posted on how these items are distributed in the New Year!

LIVE UNITED !!

Dr. Jeff Buscher

Community Impact Coordinator

United Way of Lewis & Clark Area

A Lenten Journey

Soon we will be entering into our Lenten Season. Each year, Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent and is always 46 days before Easter Sunday. Lent is a 40 day season (not counting Sundays) marked by repentance, fasting, reflection, and ultimately celebration. The 40 day period represents Christ’s time of temptation in the wilderness, where he fasted and where Satan tempted him. Lent asks believers to set aside a time for making Lent an intentional season of focus on Christ’s life, ministry, sacrifice, and resurrection.

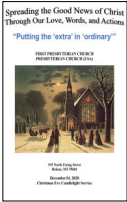
Ash Wednesday this year is March 2. We will have an Ash Wednesday service at 7:00pm. Pastor Scott will share a message to be followed by communion and the imposition of Ashes. Typically, the palms from the year before have been burned and are used for the Ashes. The symbol of the cross is drawn across the forehead with the words, “From dust you came and from dust you shall return.” At the end of the service, we will leave the sanctuary in silence.

This year we are offering a book written by Jill J. Duffield called Lent in Plain Sight. These books will be available in the narthex free of charge to help guide you through Lent. We encourage our Deacons to distribute them to our shut-ins.

May we find this time of personal repentance and reflection a Blessing as we grow into a deeper relationship with Christ our Savior. Amen

In Him,

Dianna Goodman/worship chair, Les Cramer, Ann Swisher, Pearl Plowman.



Submission Deadlines for the Bulletin and Newsletter



To allow for the production and review of **worship bulletins** and the **monthly newsletters** we want to reiterate some submission deadlines for items to be included in those. It is always appreciated if material can be received earlier than these deadlines, but these deadlines need to be met for inclusion in a particular issue.

The deadline for worship bulletins is the most straight forward deadline: items for inclusion need to be into Bruce by Tuesday at 10:00 am for inclusion in Sunday's bulletin, preferably in an electronic form. Given that the last day of the month moves, submissions for a newsletter needs to be made by 10:00 am on the sixth business day before the end of the month.

For instance, if the 30th or 31st is the last day of the month and it falls on a Tuesday, then six business days before the 30th/31st would be Monday the 22nd of the month.

For the **March Mustard Seed**, submissions need to be in by **10:00 am on Monday, February 21st**. Church holidays may require that submissions be made even earlier for both bulletins and newsletters.

Willing Workers will meet each Wednesday at 9am.

The group continues to plan for and organize future Craft Fairs and events. We invite everyone interested to attend the weekly gatherings. We need not only your ideas, but your crafts and your help to ensure the success of this event. We hope to put together many gift baskets containing hand crafted items, so we'd like your assistance with this new addition to the Craft Fair. Come one and all; we welcome your participation.

My children and I want to express our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to our church family members, Deacons, and Elders for their prayers, cards, phone calls and concern for Jerry's passing on November 26th, and for our family afterwards. Without this we would have had a more difficult time adjusting to life without him. God bless each and every one of you. ***A memorial service is planned for June 24, 2022 at the Ft. Harrison VA Cemetery at 4:00 p.m. with a reception following at the Ft. Harrison Service Club.***

Sally Luke and family



DEADLINE

The deadline for March's newsletter is **Monday, February 21st.**

UPCOMING FINANCIAL DEADLINES

Completed Credit Card Request forms, Completed Check Request forms, Personnel Forms / Time Sheets are due in the Financial Office mailbox on:

Tuesday, February 8, 2022
Monday, February 21, 2022
Tuesday, March 8, 2022

ANNIVERSARIES

1 - Les & Louise Cramer
22 - John & Carol Gneckow

BIRTHDAYS

1 - Charlotte Meyer
11 - Elaine Gingery
12 - Linda Granzow
13 - Sheryl Eriksen
14 - Arlene Carpenter
16 - Stephen Bayless
21 - Mary Craigle
29 - Ron Witte

DEACONS ON CALL

Pending

DECEMBER COMMUNION SETUP

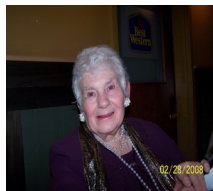
Pending

December

Lay Liturgists

Pending

April 29, 1927-January 15, 2022



Joyce Delores Kawulok Berry went to be with her Father in Heaven at 7:18 A.M., January 15, 2022 in her Liberty Lake, Washington home with her daughter (Terry) and son-in-law (Rick) holding her hand.

Mom's favorite scripture was Luke 10:27 "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and, Love your neighbor as yourself".

Her mission: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation". To do this, Mom chose sacrificial love as her instrument and prayer as her sword. She was called to be a servant to the sick, the lonely, the disheartened and the dying and to be a guide to her children and her children's children. She spent time with each of us -- always reminding us to put God first and everything else would fall into place. But most of all she served on her knees as Prayer Warrior. That is what we as a family will miss the most.

She dearly loved both of her Church families and served them by writing cards; baking items to cheer, to console and to love; teaching Sunday school; visiting those in nursing homes; volunteering with Willing Workers and serving as a deacon. She nourished her soul daily by reading her Bible and weekly attending her beloved Abigail Circle. In turn The First Presbyterian Women presented her with The Honorary Life Membership Service Award. She was so humbled by this award that she doubled her efforts to be worthy of such recognition. But above all else her Church families steadfastly prayed for her and all her children. We thank you First Presbyterian and Grace Community Fellowship Prayer Warriors.

When Mom's body no longer allowed her to minister in the ways she had before, she turned to her sword -- Prayer. And oh, how she prayed for each of us and others. Up until the moment she leaped into the loving arms of her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ she remained true to wielding that sword.



**First Presbyterian Church
535 North Ewing Street
Helena, MT 59601
www.fpchelena.org**

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Monday - Thursday
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 a.m.
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