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"Looking Back, Looking Forward"



As I look back upon 2016 I admit that I am a bit relieved that this past year is behind us. In my seven years as your pastor, 2016 was likely the busiest one we have experienced together. In May, the session voted to move forward with the bathroom and office remodeling project which had been talked about for quite some time. The work began in June and was completed by mid September. The summer months of construction went by quickly with progress being made on a weekly basis. I am grateful that this project has been completed and that we are enjoying newly updated bathrooms and office spaces.

In July the session voted to welcome the Better Together Preschool and they began moving into their new space over the summer months. The upstairs education area was cleaned, painted, and organized and the preschool opened in September with 33 children attending. The preschool has brought a heightened vitality to the church and its programs.

I began my role as a volunteer police chaplain with the Billings Police Department in January and enjoy the ministry opportunities that it brings. We are often called in situations of suicide and accidents to minister to the families, providing a stable presence of hope and encouragement in the midst of pain and sorrow. I have found myself in some pretty interesting situations with this position and it is always remarkable to see how God works in a variety of ways.

During the past year I conducted 39 funerals, the most I have ever had in a single year. Those included church members as well as other people/families from the community. The longer I am in town, the more connections I make with families. I am grateful for a church that allows me to minister to those outside of our congregation.

As we look forward to a New Year, I have much optimism that the church will continue to grow and flourish. God's love, forgiveness, and grace that is offered freely through Jesus Christ is a wonderful message we are able to share. In the midst of a hurting world and community, the ministry of Good News is always so very important. We will continue to provide opportunities for all to grow closer to God, to learn more about faith, and to express ways to live out our faith on a local, national, and international level.

Join me on Sunday, January 8 at 9:15 AM in the Fireside Room as I will be leading "New Year, New You." This class will help you change your life! It is exciting to see what God has in store for us. May we open ourselves to a God who welcomes and redeems, restores and renew us to a greater call in life. I look forward to all that 2017 will bring.

In Christ,

Pastor Dave

COMING ATTRACTIONS:

Noisy Offering will be received on Sunday, January 29 during worship
Annual congregational meeting following worship on Sunday, January 29
Presbytery meeting hosted by our church on February 10-11

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MEMORY JOGGERS FOR JANUARY 2017

January 1, 2017	The 8th	The 15th	The 22th	The 29th
Preaching Dave Thompson	Preaching Dave Thompson	Preaching Dave Thompson	Preaching Dave Thompson	Preaching Dave Thompson
Greeters Jack & Karla Mahan Kay Doss	Greeters Bob & Barbara Muir Peggy Wilson	Greeters Marge Myhra Betty Ann Nesmith	Greeters Lucille Weisbeck Carla Bracken Teena Bracken	Greeters Alta Dakolios Bob & Norma Thiesen
Ushers Gary & Judy Lohnbakken John & Sara Thompson	Ushers Diane Noddings Peg Ostlund Greg & Deb Wiens	Ushers Jerry Koch Bob Fedric Bill White Don Reed	Ushers Ken & Barbara Eichenberger Sharon Mathews Jo Albin	Ushers Paige Spalding Jim Hummel Denise Hash Chris Eriksen
Liturgist Don Reed	Liturgist Megan Lorentz	Liturgist Shari Dayton	Liturgist Suzanne Braun	Liturgist Charlie Reed
Van Driver Charles Leggate	Van Driver Don Harr	Van Driver Don Harr	South Booth Bob Culbertson	Van Driver Don Harr
Sound Booth David Bauer	Sound Booth Chuck Leggate	Sound Booth Jeff Gruizenga	Van Driver Heather McLean	Flower Delivery Edna Carlson
Flower Delivery Chris Eriksen		Flower Delivery Jack & Karla Mahan	Flower Delivery Chuck & Cindy Leggate	
Communion Sharon Lincoln Sharon Brady Paige Spalding Jim Hummel Chris Eriksen				

Church Info

Office Hours:
Mon—Thurs 8:30 am— 4 PM
406-252-3434
mainoffice@fpcbillings.org
www.fpcbillings.org
Sunday School @ 9:15 AM
Worship Celebration @ 10:30

STAFF

Pastor: Dave Thompson
Office Manager: Jeanne Thompson-Raney
Accompanist: Sandi Rabas
Choir Director: Janie Sutton
Custodian: Kent Fellingham

SESSION MEMBERS

Clerk of Session:
Marlene Spencer

Class of 2017

David Bauer
Ken Eichenberger
Sharon Lincoln
Sharon Mathews

Class of 2018

Kathy Baskett
Marv Brown
Jeff Gruizenga
Sandi Schoenberger

Class of 2019

Chris Eriksen
Jenice Fugere
Chuck Leggate
Heather McLean

FOOD BANK SUNDAY

Our church was one of the first churches in Billings to designate a monthly Food Bank Sunday. We invite you to bring some non-perishable food items with you on the first Sunday of each month as we help local people in need. Our next Food Bank Sunday will be held on Sunday, January 1. Thanks to all who brought food last month!

Session Notes: At the final meeting of the year, the session members recalled some of the highlights of 2016. Some that were remembered were:

- New members who were added to our membership
 - The installation of air conditioning in the sanctuary
 - The remodel of restroom and office areas
 - Increased giving by the mission committee
 - The addition of a preschool
 - The community block party in August
 - More young children attending Sunday School
 - The youth trip to triennium
 - Good attendance in worship and other activities
- It was a busy year!! Our next session meeting will be on Tuesday, January 10 at 7 PM.

2016 Financial snapshot

	Income	Expense	Net
December	\$ 97,369	\$ (63,234)	\$ 160,603
YTD	\$ 445,322	\$ 571,810	\$ (126,488)

Special thanks to all who have given to our church during this past year. We have accomplished much through your generosity. A full financial report from 2016 will be available in January at our annual meeting.

DECEMBER	2016
4TH	218
11TH	167
18TH	168
24TH	391
25TH	57
2016 DEC AVERAGE	200

Sermons available on-line

Did you know that you can listen to sermons on-line at our website at www.fpcbillins.org? Just click the “Listen to Sermons” tab on the upper right front of our church’s homepage. Stay connected even when you are away. Sermon for the past twelve weeks are archived on our church’s website.

Church Mice:

The church mice are reflecting at this time year at how blessed we are to have a loving, kind, generous congregation. We are grateful and thankful for all of you. We would like to mention specifically Louise and Vince Larsen. They have participated graciously at all levels of our church community. They have such a great appreciation for the children and youth of the church and community and have been strong supporters of the ministry we carry out through Sunday school, youth group, and special events. Thank you Vince and Louise! We continue to keep you in our thoughts and prayers into this New Year.



FLOWER SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Our new 2017 flower sign-up sheet is located on the back table in the narthex. We invite you to sign up for a particular Sunday to sponsor the flowers either in honor or memory of someone or a special event such as an anniversary, birthday, etc. Suggested donation is \$30. Special thanks to Linda Luse who donated flowers during the month of December and all who donated poinsettias for Christmas. Following worship each Sunday, the flowers are distributed to church members and friends in the hospital, nursing homes, or among those who are unable to attend church.

Bathroom and Office Remodeling Project

Our office/bathroom remodeling project is nearing completion. The project includes new bathrooms for men and women, a new family restroom, and updates to Pastor Dave’s office, conference room, and storage area. The total project cost is \$300,000. We continue to raise funds through a capital campaign with the goal of raising \$150,000 and the other half coming from church reserve funds. To donate to this fund, please indicated on your gift “Building Fund.” Any and all donations to this project would be greatly appreciated. For questions about this project, please talk with Jeff Gruizenga or Pastor Dave. We are close to reaching our goal of raising \$150,000. Thanks to all who have given.

Congregational meeting coming on Sunday, January 29

Our annual congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, January 29 immediately following our worship service. The purpose of this meeting is to elect a new class of elders and deacons, elect a nominating committee for the coming year for the selection of elders and deacons, review the 2016 financial statements, hear reports from the past year, and to review the 2017 proposed budget.

We appreciate everyone who helped to make 2016 a great year for our church and who assisted in the ministry we carry out in the name of Christ. We accomplished much during this past year and without the time and talents of many of our members and friends of the church, this would not be possible. Annual reports will be available on Sunday, January 22, a week prior to the meeting. We invite you to take a report and look it over prior to the meeting on Sunday, January 29.

Our Church’s Leadership Team

Moderator of Session: Pastor Dave Thompson
Clerk of Session: Marlene Spencer

Class of 2017

David Bauer
Ken Eichenberger
Sharon Lincoln
Sharon Mathews

Class of 2018

Kathy Baskett (2)
Marv Brown (2)
Jeff Gruizenga (2)
Sandi Schoenberger

Class of 2019

Chris Eriksen (2)
Jenice Fugere (2)
Chuck Leggate
Heather McLean

Deacons:

Class of 2017

Diane Noddings (2)
Kathy Ramage
Paige Spalding
Marjorie Stewart

Class of 2018

Janet Brown (2)
Pam Gore (2)
Ruth Kaufman
Charlie Pinnick

Class of 2019

Peggy Cluff
Dodie Cox (2)
Bob Fedric
Janice Ward

(2) denotes a second consecutive terms that is currently being served.

Grief Support and Caregiver Support Groups

Two support groups at our church meet monthly. Our Grief Support Group meets the first Wednesday of each month at 10:00 AM and provides help, hope, and healing to those dealing with grief and loss.

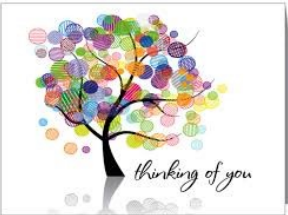
A new group, Caregivers Support Group, meets the second Wednesday of each month at 10:00 AM and provides help to those who care for others. Both groups are open to anyone in the church and community and both are facilitated by Dr. Don Harr, a retired psychiatrist with a lot of years of experience.

Stephen Ministry Update

We have an active group of Stephen Ministers who are working to help others in our church and community. Each of our church’s Stephen Ministers are assigned a care receiver with whom they provide one-on-one skills of listening, encouragement, and spiritual help. Stephen Ministry supervision is scheduled for the fourth Tuesday of each month at 6:00 PM and includes time for continuing education and support. More information about Stephen Ministry is available through one of our church Stephen Ministry leaders who are JoAnn Jones, Doris Backus, Shirley Shirley, or Pastor Dave.


On a Personal Note

Scott Harr has returned home after being hospitalized at St. V’s with severe lung and heart issues.
June Holmes was hospitalized briefly at St. V’s. She is now receiving rehabilitation at St. John’s Transitional Care Unit.
Mary Carey is recovering from heart surgery she underwent recently at the Clinic.
Charlene (Rich) Switzer continues to undergo treatment for ALS Disease.
Jean Embley has returned home following a lung embolism in November.
Congratulations to Ethan Lane TenHarmsel, infant son of Aaron and Lis, who was baptized on Sunday, Dec. 18.
Special thanks to Bob and Shari Dayton for opening their home to our youth group for our annual Christmas party on Wednesday, December 21. Lots of youth enjoyed a great evening of pizza and presents.
A memorial service for Dr. Bill Jamison will be held at Rocky Mountain College on Tuesday, January 24 at 10:00 AM. Dr. Jamison was a longtime mathematics professor at RMC and passed away last month.



Senior Singles to meet on Saturday, January 21

Senior Singles will be meeting on Saturday, January 21 at 10:00 AM at a location to be determined All senior adults who are single are invited to join this group which meets monthly. Questions about this group can be directed toward Tom Erskine or Phyllis Brown.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 No Sun School 10:30 Worship 11 West Park 	2 Preschool Program Resumes	3 9:30 Women’s Bible Study 12 Property Com- mittee Meeting	4 10 Grief Support Group 12 BLT 6:00 Youth Group 7:00 Choir Re- hearsal	5 1 Mission Commit- tee Meeting 7 CE Committee 7 College Group	6 Church Office Closed	7 10 Gluten Intolerance Group (GIG)
8 9:15 Sun School 10:30 Worship 11 West Park	9 10 Worship Com- mittee 12 Men’s Bible Study 6 Billings Child Care Meeting	10 9:30 Women’s Bible Study 7 Session Meeting	11 9 BSF Leaders 9:30 PW Board 10 Caregivers Grp 12 BLT 7 Choir Rehearsal	12 BSF Resumes 9- 11 7 College Group	13 Church Office Closed 12 United Church Women	14
15 9:15 Sun School 10:30 Worship 11 West Park	16 Martin Luther King Day Office Closed 6:30 Eagle Rock Meeting	17 9:30 Women’s Bible Study	18 PW Circles 10 RLI Group 12 BLT 6 Youth Group 7 Choir Rehearsal	19 BSF 9-11 11 Fellowship Committee 12 Cong. Care Team 7 College Group	20 Church Office Closed	21 10 Senior Singles– location TBD
22 9:15 Sun School 10:30 Worship 11 West Park	23 12 Men’s Bible Study 4 Deacons Meet- ing	24 9:30 Women’s Bible Study 6 Stephen Ministry Supervision	25 12 BLT 6 Youth Group 7Choir Rehearsal	26 7 College Group	27 Church Office Closed	28
29 9:15 Sun School 10:30 Worship Annual Congrega- tional Meeting after worship 11 West Park	30	31 9:30 Women’s Bible Study				

Presbyterian Women



The Presbyterian Women’s group enjoyed a wonderful Christmas luncheon on Wednesday, December 7 at 12noon in the Fellowship Hall. Biff Hogue read several of her favorite Christmas stories.
The PW organization in our church has five different groups which meet monthly for study, fellowship, and often food. We offer groups that meet in the mornings, afternoons, and evenings. Consider joining one of our groups to grow in your faith in God and one another. For more information about the PW organization in our church, please talk with either Sandi Schoenberger or Marlene Spencer.
The PW board will meet on Wednesday, January 11 at 9:30 AM in the Fireside Room and the monthly PW groups will meet on Wednesday, January 18.

Sunday school classes

Sunday school for all ages continue for children, youth, and adults. Lots of great classes are provided for all ages! Hope you all with join us!



Classes for Children and Youth

Kindergarten through 5th grade: This class meets at 9:15 AM
Middle School and High School: Youth meet in the downstairs youth coffee room with Russ and Heidi
Sunday school during our worship service is held every week after the children’s sermon. A variety of teachers lead this class for children ages kindergarten through the 5th grade.
With the growing number of children attending Sunday school during worship we will be offering two clas-
ses this fall during worship. Additional teachers are needed for this growing program. If interested in helping teach, please talk with Robyn Bauer.

Special Class for Adults:

New Year, New You: With the New Year comes all kinds of resolutions to start afresh, change bad habits, and begin the year on the right foot. Is change really possible? How many of us have resolved to change our ways only to find ourselves back in the same old rut? Join Pastor Dave beginning on Sunday, January 8 at 9:15 AM in the Fireside Room for a six week class on this interesting topic. He will help us set realistic goals and provide a biblical blueprint to change. Join us if you have a desire to change your life.

Church and Society Class for December

Church and Society class meets on Sunday mornings at 9:15 AM in the Church and Society Room. The group hosts a different guest every week in relation to issues pertaining to church and society.

January 8: Jean Posusta, local novelist and journalist will share, “You Go First, No, You Go First- What Not to Say/Do to a Dying Person.” Jean will present research from her next book, a fiction novel depicting how three sisters lose their parents and continue their lives. Her presentation will aid in developing skills for those inevitably approaching ‘next of kin’ circumstances. Labeled a well-rounded writer, Jean's creations are light, humor full, and insightful. She also conducts mysteries for performance through the Montana Fun Ad-ventures website. Jean’s spiritual quest includes attending many and varied religious houses in Billings.
January 15: Lynda Bourque Moss, Former Montana State Senator and Governor’s Humanities Award Reci-pient, will present, “Montana Women’s Murals.” In 2012, two new murals were installed in the Montana State Capitol. These murals honor contributions, including those through religious organizations, made by women throughout our state’s history. Lynda, who initiated the legislation and creation of the murals, will share the background, and research and design of these remarkable art works.
January 22: Dr. Alan Muskett, Reconstructive and Plastic Surgeon, will share, “Dear God. Quit Picking on Me.” Dr. Muskett is a popular speaker with our class and is a regular contributor to the Billings Gazette.
January 29: Dr. Jim Hogue, Retired Psychiatrist, will talk about “Life Without The Father.” Practicing from 1966-1993, Jim will share some of his experiences while practicing to changes he has seen in problems that people face in today’s world. He will discuss his observations about increased suicides, and the lack of a male parent and religion in young people’s lives.

Youth News:

2016 was a good year for our youth ministry program. Even without a youth director, our programs didn't really miss a step. Led by a core group of dedicated volunteers, our youth ministry programs saw growth during this past year. We have been averaging around 30 youth on Wednesday nights who come weekly for supper, games, Bible learning, and worship. We had a nice group attend the Presbyterian Youth Triennial conference at Purdue University in Indiana in July. A number of kids from our congregation attended retreats and summer youth camp at Westminster Spires. The youth also assisted with some mission projects with Friendship House, Family Promise, and went Christmas caroling at West Park Village and Valley Nursing Home. Yes, it was a good and busy year for the youth of FPC!



Special thanks to Bob and Shari Dayton for hosting the annual youth Christmas party on Wednesday, December 21. We had a great turnout of youth and college students for this fun and festive event. Bob and Shari served pizza, salad, and refreshments.

The annual winter ski retreat is coming February 24-26 to the First Presbyterian Church in Bozeman. All middle school and high school kids are invited to join us. The cost of the registration is only \$15. Skiing will be an additional cost of \$50 for a lift ticket and \$35 for ski rental. We will be leaving from the church at 4 PM on Friday, February 24 and will return on Sunday afternoon. If you are interested in going with us, please talk with either Pastor Dave or Heather McLean.

Youth group will resume on Wednesday, January 4 from 6-8 PM. All 6-12 grade youth are invited and encouraged to join us each week. Friends are always invited. A new meal sign up sheet is located on the bulletin board across from the Fireside Room door. Please help provide a meal on a Wednesday evening.

Foundation Gift received on December 18

Trina White, representing the Foundation board, presented a check to Pastor Dave during worship on Sunday, December 18 in the amount of \$24,328. These funds will go toward the General Fund of the church which supports the church's mission and ministry. We thank all who give toward the church's Foundation during this past year. The purpose of the Foundation is to provide a sustainable income to the church through the generosity of its donors. Each year the Foundation gives 3% of its fund balance to the ministry of our congregation, while the fund principle continues to grow for years to come.

Men's group

Our men's group is meeting the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month at 12noon in the Fireside Room. Join other men for a time of encouragement, fellowship, prayer, and study. This group is currently studying the New Testament book of Hebrews which encourages Christians to remain faithful to God in all circumstances. For more information about this group, please talk with Pastor Dave. The next meeting will be held on Monday, January 9 at 12noon.

Upcoming Committee Meetings

(All meetings are in the Fireside Room)

Property Committee	Tuesday, January 3 at 12noon
Mission Committee	Thursday, January 5 at 1:00 PM
Christian Education	Thursday, January 5 at 7:00 PM
Worship Committee	Monday, January 9 at 10:00 AM
Session Meeting	Tuesday, January 10 at 7:00 PM
PW Board Meeting	Wednesday, January 11 at 9:30am
Fellowship Committee	Thursday, January 19 at 11:00 PM
Congregational Care Team	Thursday, January 19 at 12noon
Deacons Meeting	Monday, January 23 at 4:00 PM

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP CONTINUES EVERY MONTH

A grief support group within our church continues to meet the first Wednesday of each month from 10-11 AM. This group is open to anyone in the church or community who is experiencing grief. Facilitated by Dr. Don Harr, this group provides support, encouragement, and help to those facing grief, loss, or transitions in life. All are invited to join this special group. The next group meets on Wednesday, January 4 at 10:00 AM at the church in the new conference room.



Birthdays

- 3 Willard Johnson
- 4 Mary Rottrup
- 5 Greta Murray
- George Schuman
- 7 Bob Shirley
- 10 Zackery Bennett
- 14 Nick Goettel
- 15 Robert Sterup
- Carol Drum
- 16 Louis Dubs
- 20 Scott Harr
- Thelma Riggs
- Bruce Phillips

- 24 Robert Keenum
- 26 Tyler Goettel
- 29 Mark Parker
- 30 Jean Schneider

Anniversaries

- 5 Ryan & Tiffany Johnson
- 6 Kurt & Cathy McLean
- 8 John & Peggy Munis
- 15 Kyle & JoLayne Buffington



Mission News

Happy New Year Everyone! We are thankful for the last year when we could help so many of God's children.

With your help, we gave Christmas gifts to many. Through the Angel Tree giving, we gave 23 presents to the residents of Ponderosa Pines and 40 to the Tumbleweed homeless and at risk kids. Without your generosity, many of them would not have gotten any gifts at all. We also filled quite a few of the hygiene bags for the Tumbleweed youth.



The staff at Ponderosa Pines was especially appreciative to all of the gifts that we gave to their residents. Many of their residents are low income, with little support from family and friends. Gifts like clothing, boots, blankets, and food go a long way for these residents. Many of them thanked us as we delivered them prior to Christmas. Special thanks to Karla Mahan who baked homemade cookies for the staff at Ponderosa Pines.

At year's end we gave these monetary gifts as well:

- \$600 to the "College Group" to help one of the Family Promise families at Christmas.
- \$600 to "Young Families early Head Start" for classroom needs.
- \$750 to Lewis and Clark School Food Pantry to make sure they have plenty of supplies over the holidays.
- And Global Village made about \$1300 when they were at our church.

Jack Bell recently returned from Zimbabwe, Africa, where he visited our sister church. He was in Africa for two weeks and had a great trip. He appreciated the financial support he had from our church. Through our church he gave a financial gift to the church in Zimbabwe for their ongoing work and ministry. The Rev. Paul Neshangwe, a Presbyterian pastor, serves the church in Zimbabwe. Pastor Paul spoke at our church several years ago. We hope to continue to build this unique and special relationship with the church in Zimbabwe.

We look forward to serving God's children, young and old, in the coming year. The mission committee meets the first Thursday of each month at 1 PM in the Fireside Room. If you would like to join the mission committee or if you have suggestions to some mission ideas, please talk with Ken Eichenberger, chair. We are an active committee that finds the best use of the resources that God has entrusted us.

First Presbyterian Foundation News

The First Presbyterian Foundation met on Tuesday, December 6 for its year end meeting. The Foundation would like to thank everyone who made a donation to the foundation in the past year. The Foundation Board shared about planned giving options during the Church & Society class on Sunday, December 4. The Foundation presented a check for \$24,328 during worship on Sunday, December 18 to the general fund operation of the church.

For more information about the Foundation or how to make a planned gift to the church, please talk with either Trina White or Bob Dayton.