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2019

Pastor's Pen

"What Child Is This?"



It is one of the most important questions we will answer in our lifetime: What child is this, who laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping? These lyrics come from one of the most beloved Christmas carols of all time, *What Child Is This* written by William Dix. It is a question I would like to consider more fully with you this Advent season: Who is Jesus?

Some say that Jesus was a good teacher, miracle worker, and upstanding moral leader. Others claim that Jesus was a radical religious extremist who taught us to love our enemies. We, as Christians, believe that Jesus was God incarnate who came not only to show us how to live, but how to have eternal life through the gift and sacrifice of his very self on the cross. The season of Advent, the four weeks leading up to Christmas, provides us a great time to explore these questions about Jesus.

I will be leading a three week Advent Sunday school class titled, "What Child is This?" beginning on Sunday, December 8 at 9:15 AM in the Conference Room. This class will explore the identity of Jesus and his relationship with God and God's relationship with us. There are many views of who Jesus is and we will dig deeper into the question, Who is Jesus? I invite you to join us as we explore this most interesting and important question.

I will also be preaching a sermon series during Advent called "Glimpses of Hope." Within this series we will be looking at various scriptures, both from the Old and New Testaments, that give us hope through the promises of God. We can easily become disillusioned and discouraged with life and lose hope. Throughout the Bible the promises of God break through, providing rays of hope and encouragement for all that life brings our way. I look forward to helping us to remember God's promises and being renewed in the hope of Jesus' coming again.

Advent devotionals are once again available for you to use during this special season. These free devotionals, titled *Arise and Shine* by Tim Wesemann, are available in the gallery. I hope you will embrace this season of Advent, holding on to the promises of God, and being renewed in the strength, hope, and peace that we have through Christ.

It is a special time of the year and I pray that you will take advantage of all of the ways that we provide to help you draw closer to the Lord. May God bless you during this special season of hope, promise, and renewal.

Waiting Expectantly,
Dave

Memory Joggers for December 2019

<u>December 1</u>	<u>The 8th</u>	<u>The 15th</u>	<u>The 22th</u>	<u>The 24th 5 PM</u>	<u>The 29th</u>
Greeters Meghan Ascheman & Daughters Ushers Bob & Cathy Culbertson Earl & Sharon Henderson Liturgist David Sanderson Sound Booth David Bauer Communion Rhonda Stenner Heather Rosenfeld Niki Youngbear Vicki Thompson Carla Bracken	Greeters Kurt & Mary Grabow Ushers Greg & Deb Wiens Gary & Jean Schneider Liturgist Dick Bailey Sound Booth Chuck Leggate Flower Delivery Edna Carlson	Greeters TBA Ushers TBA Liturgist TBA Sound Booth TBA Flower Delivery Dave & Vicki Thompson	Greeters Linda Broderson Jo Albin Ushers Chris Eriksen Jim & Jo Ausk Erin Thompson Liturgist David Bauer Sound Booth Jeff Gruizenga Flower Delivery Chris Eriksen	Greeters Bob & Linda Fedric Ushers Carla Bracken Teena Bracken Sharon Matthews Larry George Liturgist Vicki Thompson The 24th 10 PM Greeters Marge Myhra Betty Ann Nesmith Ushers Chris Eriksen John Thompson Barla Bracken Teena Bracken Liturgist Rhonda Stenner Communion Paige Spalding & Jim Hummel Russ & Janet Kline Carla Bracken	Greeters David, Robyn, Noah & Loren Bauer Ushers Bill & Colleen Lorentz Jaki Harada Marjorie Stewart Liturgist Martha Davidson Sound Booth Bob Culbertson Flower Delivery Chris Eriksen January 5th Greeters Bruce & Bernice Phillips Ushers Bud & Joanne Leuthold Jim & Biff Hogue Liturgist Megan Lorentz Sound Booth David Bauer Communion Chris Eriksen Heather McLean Charlie Reed Dottie Hilger Kristi Catlin

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Session Notes/Finance/Church Mice	2
Sunday School/ PW/ Church & Society class	3
Youth News/ Events/ Notices	4
Birthdays/ Anniversaries/	5
Personal Notes/ Calendar	6
Church Leadership Team/ announcements	7
Memory Joggers	8

Coming Attractions:

Christmas decorating coming on Saturday, December 7 at 4 PM
 Presbyterian Women's Christmas Luncheon coming on Wednesday, Dec. 4 at 12noon
 RMC Christmas concert in our sanctuary on Sunday, December 8 at 3 PM and 7 PM
 Christmas Night of Lights Bus Tour: Saturday, December 14 at 7 PM
 Treasure State Sound Christmas Concert in the Sanctuary coming Saturday, December 14
 Youth Christmas party at the Dayton's house on Wednesday, Dec. 18 at 6 PM
 Christmas Eve services here on Tuesday, December 24 at 5 PM and 10 PM

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 @ 10:30 AM

STAFF

Pastor: Dave Thompson
Youth Director: Russ Dornisch
Office Manager: Jeanne Thompson-Raney
Accompanist: Sandi Rabas
Choir Director: Janie Sutton
Custodian: Kent Fellingham
Bus Driver: David Sanderson

SESSION MEMBERS

Clerk of Session: Marlene Spencer

Class of 2020

David Bauer
Carla Bracken
Sharon Lincoln

Class of 2021

Janet Brown
Jim Hummel
Bud Leuthold
Sandi Schoenberger

Class of 2019

Dick Bailey
Kristy Catlin
Heather McLean
Bruce Phillips

Session Notes:

During the November 12 meeting of the session, the following individuals were received into the membership of our congregation: Zach Belcher, Ebin Gormley, Lori Hall, Cassandra Harr, Tricia Harrison, Paige Harrison, Joe and Betty Roy, and Rodney Thompson. The baptisms of Grace and Paige Harrison and Rodney Thompson during worship on November 17 were approved.

A motion was passed to approve the annual congregational meeting on Sunday, January 26, 2020 immediately following worship.

Marlene Spencer agreed to serve for another year as our Clerk of Session and we appreciate her good and dedicated work!!

Financial snapshot

2019	Income	Expense	Net
November	\$ 36,499	\$ 29,108	\$ 7,391
YTD	\$398,161	\$359,157	\$39,004

We appreciate your continued financial support of our church and its ongoing ministries. Pledges for 2020 are currently being received. If you need a pledge card, please contact the church office.

NOVEMBER	2019
3rd	195
10th	210
17th	235
24th	185
Nov. Ave	206

Sermons available on-line

Did you know that you can listen to sermons on-line at our website at www.fpcbillings.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:

What would we do without Michelle Lee? Michelle always says, "Yes!" when asked to help with our youth-sponsored dinners. We appreciate all of the work she has done in the past and continues to do for us. Michelle organized and cooked the meal for the Youth Pie Auction in October and helped with the senior Thanksgiving dinner on November 20. Thank you, Michelle, for being a bright, shining light in our church and for helping in many ways around here. Michelle also serves as one of our Stephen Ministers as well.



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, December 1. Thanks to all who brought food last month!

Flower Sponsorship Opportunities

Our 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 \$25. Special thanks to those who donated flowers during the month of November. They are Gary & Judy Lohnbakken in honor of our all of their family, Priscilla Laird in memory of Walt Laird and in honor of Lisa Laird for her work in indigenous ministries in Canada, and Peggy Wilson for faith, family, and friends.

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.

Trip to Zambia, Africa being planned

Seven young adults from our congregation will be traveling to Zambia, Africa next summer and will be working through the Arise Africa organization. While in Zambia, the group will be working at an orphanage, school, and community program to help bring the hope of Christ to kids and families. They recently began their "Travel Partner" fundraiser with the hopes of raising \$10,000 for their trip. For each dollar donated, they are able to travel one mile. So a \$100 donation will allow them to travel 100 miles and so forth. As of date they have raised nearly \$5,000 toward their \$10,000 goal. If you would like to make a donation to this trip, please write a check to "Arise Africa" and send it to the church office or drop it off in the offering plate. Your donation tax deductible and is greatly appreciated. Travel Partners will receive a postcard next summer from Zambia and will also be invited to their Travel Partner Banquet upon their return.

Cookbooks to support the trip are also on sale for \$20 each Sunday or during the week. Sara Thompson is the contact person for this trip and she can be reached at 696-5380 if you have any questions.



Stephen Ministry Update

We are blessed with a very active group of Stephen Ministers who support the church in providing care and concern to those in our church and community. Stephen Ministry supervision is scheduled for the fourth Tuesday of each month at 6 PM and includes time for continuing education and support. More information about Stephen Ministry is available through one of our church Stephen Ministry leaders: JoAnn Jones, Doris Backus, Shirley Shirley, or Pastor Dave. The next supervision meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 17.

Welcome New Members

We are happy to welcome the following new members. They were introduced during worship on Sunday, November 17 and include:

- Zach Belcher is a retired attorney and good friends with John and Carol Limbach.
- Ebin Gormley recently graduated from Senior High School and helps with our youth programs on Wednesday evenings.
- Lori Hall works at Sheels and grew up in the Catholic church. Lori recently lost her husband.
- Tricia Harrison and her two children, Paige and Grace. Tricia is a loan officer at Opportunity Bank and Paige is a junior at Senior High and Grace is a 4th grader at Poly Drive Elementary.
- Cassandra Harr was recently married to Travis Harr in September.
- Joy and Betty Roy moved recently to Billing from Texas and enjoy being closer to their family. Both of them have gone through the Stephen Ministry program in their former church.
- Rodney Thompson is originally from Plentywood and is enjoying retirement. Rodney was baptized on November 17 and is excited to be a part of our church family.

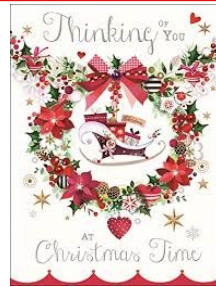
Support groups continue to meet monthly

- Two support groups meet at our church on a monthly basis. They are:
1. Our Grief Support Group meets the first Wednesday and the third Tuesday of each month at 10:00 AM and provides help, hope, and healing to those dealing with grief and loss.
 2. Our RLI Group deals with "Real Life Issues" and meets the second Wednesday of every month at 10:00 AM This group meets to discuss issues pertaining to a wide range of issues
- Both groups are open to anyone in the church and community and maintain a high level of confidentiality. Both of these groups meet in our new conference room.
- For questions about any of these support groups, please talk with Dr. Don Harr or Pastor Dave. Dr. Harr is a retired psychiatrist with a lot of years of experience in helping people cope and grow through their loss.



On a Personal Note

We extend our condolences to the family of Jack Bell whose funeral was held in our church on Saturday, November 16. Jack passed away on November 1 in the hospital in Great Falls. We share our sympathies with the family of Blake Richardson who passed away at his home under hospice care on November 6. Blake's funeral was held in our church on Saturday, November 15. Cathy McLean was hospitalized at the Billings Clinic last month with issues pertaining to her cancer. Louise Larson, Mary Carey, Charlie Pinnick, and Nina LaSeur have all been hospitalized in the last few weeks. They are all making some improvements and doing better.



Christmas decorating to be held Saturday, December 7

We invite you to join us to decorate the church for Christmas on Saturday, December 7 at 4:00 PM. We will be decorating trees, hanging wreaths, arranging the nativities, and placing our Christmas banners around the church. Free pizza, salad, and refreshments will be served, compliments of the PW group. Please join us and many hand will make the work much lighter. Come and help us spruce the church up for Christmas!

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 No Sun School 10:30 Worship 11:00 Westpark worship No reFUEL group	2 9-1 Preschool 4 Deacons meeting in the Fireside Room	3 9:30 Women's Bible Study 12noon Property Committee Mtg	4 9-1 Preschool 9 Bible Study Leaders 10 Grief Support 12 PW Lunch	5 9 Bible Study Fellowship 1 Mission Committee 7 CE Committee	6 Church closed 9-1 Preschool	7 10 Gluten Intolerant Group (GIG) 4 Christmas decorating
8 9:15 Sun School 10:30 Worship 11:00 Westpark 3 & 7 RMC Christmas Concert 6 reFUEL group	9 9-1 Preschool 10 Worship Committee 12 Men's Group	10 9:30 Women's Bible Study 7 Session meeting in the Fireside Room	11 9:30 PW Board 10 RLI Group 12noon BLT 6 Youth Group 7 Choir Rehearsal 7 College group	12 9 Bible Study Fellowship (last one until January)	13 Church closed 9-1 Preschool	14
15 9:15 Sunday School Global Village 10:30 Worship 11:00 Westpark 6 ReFUEL group	16 9-1 Preschool	17 9:30 Women's Bible Study 10 Grief Support Group 6 Stephen Ministry Supervision	18 9-1 Preschool PW Circles Meet 12noon BLT 6 Youth Party 7 Choir Rehearsal 7 College group	19 12 Congregational Care Team Meets in Fireside Room	20 Church closed 9-1 Preschool Newsletter Deadline	21
22 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship 11 Westpark 6 ReFUEL group	23 No Preschool classes 12 Men's Group meets in the Fireside Room	24 Christmas Eve 5 PM Worship 10 PM Worship	25 Christmas Day! 	26 Church office will be closed	27 Church office will be closed No Preschool classes	28
29 9:15 Sun Sch 10:30 Worship 11 Westpark No reFUEL group	30 No Preschool classes	31		2019		

Presbyterian Women



The PW Advent Lunch will be held in our fellowship hall on Wednesday, December 4 at 12noon. All women are invited to attend this special luncheon.

The PW board will meet on Wednesday, December 11 at 9:30 AM in the Fireside Room. PW groups will meet on Wednesday, December 18 with two groups meeting in the morning, two groups meeting in the afternoon, and a group that meets in the evening. Talk to Sharon Brady or Marlene Spencer about meeting times and locations.

The PW organization in our church has five different groups which meet monthly for study, fellowship. Consider joining one of our groups to grow in your faith in God and one another.

Sunday school opportunities

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



Classes for Kids:

Sunday school is offered during worship after the children's time each Sunday. I would like to introduce the college interns for this school year. Hunter Skov is back as an intern and is currently a Senior at MSUB. Jackie Harada is currently a Sophomore at MSUB as well. And lastly, Sam Dobson is a Freshman at Rocky Mountain College. The kids are going through the book of Corinthians for the next several weeks. —Russ

Special Class for Adults:

"The 7 Experiment" continues on Sunday mornings at 9:15 AM in the Fireside Room. Co-led by Heather McLean and Russ Dornisch this class will help you take a deeper look as to what truly is important in life. The 7 Experiment is not about what we own, it's about what owns us. American life can be excessive, and this class is intended to address seven places in our lives where we can overdo it: Food, Clothes, Possessions, Media, Waste, Spending, and Stress. Join Heather and Russ to change the way you see things, and even more, change your life! This class will continue through Sunday, December 15.

What Child Is This? Advent class: You are invited to join Pastor Dave for a three week Advent series titled, "What Child is This?" This class will begin on Sunday, December 8 at 9:15 AM and be held in the Conference Room. In this class, Pastor Dave will help us explore who Jesus is and the variety of claims various religions have made about Jesus.

Church and Society Class meets in the C & S Room. Here is the schedule of speakers for December:

December 1: There will be no Church & Society class due to the Thanksgiving weekend.

December 8: Amy Riesinger, Executive Director for Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Yellowstone County (BBBSYC). She will present, "Together WE Can Change the World." Jesus shows his care for children in various passages including Mark 10, "Permit the children to come to me; do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these." The mission of Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Yellowstone County is to create and support one-to-one mentoring relationships that ignite the power and promise of youth. Our vision is that all youth achieve their full potential. The presentation will provide an overview of BBBS programs and impact in Yellowstone County.

December 15: Dr. Tim Lehman, Professor of history at Rocky Mountain College. He will present, "One Nation Under God: The Rise of Political Evangelism." Back by popular demand, Tim will conclude his previous presentation. His discussion will trace the increasing involvement of Christian evangelicals in politics from the rise of the Moral Majority in the 1970's to the flourishing of Christian responses to politics in the present.

December 22: Rev. Matt Lundgren, Executive Director of Billings Leadership Foundation. He will talk about "Homeless or Helpless?" Learn how Billings Leadership Foundation is working to improve our city for the glory of God. Rev. Lundgren will discuss what this umbrella foundation does for the Montana Rescue Mission and the Friendship House in addressing this problem and others.

Youth News:

November was a great month for the youth, we enjoyed our first Lock-in of the year and had 37 kids show up. We enjoyed a fun night of pizza, movie, games, and other activities. Special thanks to a variety of people who helped with this fun event.



We had a great turnout for the Senior Thanksgiving Dinner on Wednesday, November 20 and the kids loved getting to serve the church. Special thanks to Jody Ferestad who coordinated this meal and to all of the other helpers who assisted. A big thank you also to the people who cooked meals for our kids this past month. They include Bill and Coleen Lorentz and John Reed.

December will be another great month for us as we go into the Christmas break. December 18th will be our Christmas party going into our break. It will be at 6 PM at the Bob & Shari Dayton's house. The Daytons will provide pizza for all of the youth and the kids will exchange white elephant Christmas gifts. This has become an annual tradition of our youth group.

After our Christmas party we will officially be on Christmas break. Youth Group will return on January 8th after the holidays. The dinner signup sheet is back for the Spring semester, please sign up for it or contact Russ to be added, thanks!

Russ Dornisch, Children's and Youth Ministry
 russ@fpcbillings.org
 719-431-3846

Birthday's

- 1 David Marshall
- 2 John Limbach
- Judy Wallinder
- Dorothy Leeds
- 5 Lowell Butler
- 6 Jim Graff
- 8 Bob Dayton
- 9 Lorna Ames
- 10 Shirley Shirley
- 11 James Haefer
- Jeanie Hekkel
- 16 Tom Kreger
- 19 Ann Chase
- 20 Teri Pattee
- Edna Carlson
- Haley Kouba

- 20 Maliyah Stennerson
- 22 Gary Schneider
- 22 Lois "Jean" Grocholski
- 23 Jane Myhre
- Louise Graff
- 26 Robert Muir
- 27 Tim Janiak
- Doris Backus
- 28 Cathy McLean
- 30 Erin Bean
- Jessica Grabow
- Kurt Grabow
- Jay Kouba
- 31 Jenanne Luse
- Allison Dubs
- Isabella Stennerson

Anniversaries

- 19 Marv & Janet Brown
- 20 Aaron & Lis TenHarmself
- 27 Bob & Barbara Muir
- 28 Bill & Amy Letson
- 29 Jim & Louise Graff



Better Together Preschool continues

Our church continues to be the home of the Better Together Preschool and they provide classes on Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays from 9-1 This school is open for children ages 2 through pre-K and meet in the downstairs classrooms. The preschool staff is comprised of five ladies, plus additional help is asked of the parents. For more information, please contact Karen Norsworthy at 690-8481 or Karen Morrow at 281-0280. Christmas break begins December 23- January 3. Preschool will resume on January 8, 2020.

Men's group

Our men's group meets 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 book of Matthew from the New Testament. For more information about this group, please talk with Pastor Dave. The next meeting will be held on Monday, December 9 at 12noon. All men are invited.

Upcoming Committee Meetings in September

(All meetings are in the Fireside Room)

Deacons Meeting	Monday, December 2 at 4:00 PM
Property Committee	Tuesday, December 3 at 12noon
Mission Committee	Thursday, December 5 at 1:00 PM
Christian Education	Thursday, December 5 at 7:00 PM
Worship Committee	Monday, December 9 at 10:00 AM
Session Meeting	Tuesday, December 10 at 7:00 PM
PW Board Meeting	Wednesday, December 11 at 9:30am
Congregational Care Team	Thursday, December 19 at 12noon

Congregational meeting coming on Sunday, January 26

Our annual congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, January 26 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 2019 financial statements, hear reports from the past year, and to review the 2020 proposed budget.

We appreciate everyone who helped to make 2019 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 19, a week prior to the meeting. We invite you to take a report and look it over prior to the meeting. If you are to submit a report for the annual meeting we ask that they are into the church office by January 10.

Mission News



Many of you have shared how you used your "Pay it Forward" seed money you received in November. Some make blankets for the homeless, some provided funds for an orphanage, some provided food for the hungry, while others used their seed money to make a larger gift to a charity that helps those in need. It is fun to see how you have used your seed money to make a great difference for the Kingdom of God. If you didn't get the \$10 seed money to get you started, talk to Dave or Jeanne in the church office.

The mission committee, at its meeting on November 7, had Holly Sessions from NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness of Montana) as their guest speaker. NAMI's provides educational support and advocacy for individuals who suffer from or deal with mental illness. All services provided by NAMI are free to the participants. They have Support Groups, Education Classes for families, individuals, and parents who have children and adolescents with mental illness. They also give community presentations.

The Angel Tree will be up for the first Sunday in Advent. This year you will have giving opportunities for 3 organizations. (1) \$25.00 fast food gift cards for Castle Rock Middle School Food Pantry gifts, (2) The Presbyterian Giving Catalog, and (3) Those at Eagle Cliffs Manner Senior Living Home who will not get any other gifts.

Once again, Betty Ann Nesmith has volunteered to purchase needed items for Gateway House. With Mission Committee money, Betty Ann bought 8 blankets, 6 wash cloths, 8 bath towels, 10 toothbrushes and toothpaste, deodorant, Kleenex and a couple of can openers.

Sandi Rabas has generously volunteered to make a CD of her favorite music with all proceeds going to the Zambia trip. The Mission Committee gave Sandi \$200 to help her get started with this project.

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."
 —Isaiah 9:6



Come and reFUEL on Sunday evenings

Do you have a desire to get to know people in the church in a more personal way? Do you wish to study the Bible and see how God's word applies to your life? Join us for reFUEL (Fellowship, Understanding, and Encouragement in the Lord) on Sunday evenings from 6-7 PM in the Fireside Room. This group recently began a new study on the book of 2 Corinthians from the New Testament. This is the Apostle Paul's most personal letter that has many implications for us today. Co-led by Bruce Hoffman, Kerry Gruizenga, and Pastor Dave, this series includes an opening game, sharing, study, prayer, and treats. They will not be meeting on Sunday, December 1 due to the Thanksgiving weekend.