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2021

Pastor's Pen

"A Year to Remember"



2020 will go down as one of the most memorable years in our lifetimes. Most will remember the year for the pandemic that drastically changed our lives in March with supply shortages, canceled activities, and an emphasis on social distancing and mask wearing. Hospitals and medical staff have been overwhelmed with rising cases throughout the summer and into the fall. November brought a highly contested presidential election and several impending runoffs to determine the balance in the U.S. Senate. Add to this past year, several natural disasters and the Christmas star that last appeared in 1226, and you have a year to remember.

In spite of all of the unpredictable things that occurred in 2020, our church carried on with a steady and consistent ministry. Following the state mandates, our church pulled back on worship attendance limits and entered the live-stream era. We have learned much about technology include Zoom, YouTube, and Facebook platforms. Our live-stream allows people all over our country and even in foreign countries to tie into our ministry and share in our mission. Daily devotionals over the summer provided a greater footprint for our church. As a result, our church has moved forward through this time and provided a unswerving message of hope.

In times like these we all have a greater appreciation for the Lord and our reliance upon God. Christ provides a stable presence to our lives in times of uncertainty and anxiety. By remaining open during the pandemic we are able to minister to many people in various ways, bringing the light of Christ to people near and far.

I want to thank you for all the support you have provided our church in this past year. Your prayers and words of encouragement have carried us through this. Your generosity in giving has been amazing as we surpassed our financial goals for the year. As a result we were able to give over \$87,000 to missions, including many local organizations that benefit from your generosity. Our youth group remains strong with a good number of youth attending on Wednesday evenings. We will continue to provide strong programs and activities to help draw us together, either in person or online.

Our worship committee is looking at a model of providing two worship services on Sunday mornings in 2021. This will allow a greater number of people to attend while practicing social distancing. More information about this will be coming out via the bulletin and e-news. We will continue to work to upgrade our technology (both video and sound) to provide a broadcast quality worship service those who watch online.

We don't always know what the future holds, but we do know who holds the future. By staying the course and remaining faithful to God's promises, we will walk each day in the assurance of God's grace. And when we do this, we can know that we are in the best possible place. I look forward to 2021 and see what the Lord has in store for us.

A year ago, none of what we saw in 2020 was predicted and yet we continue to move forward. Let's hold on to the words of the apostle Paul in Philippians 3:13-14, "Forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

—Dave

Upcoming Events:

Our annual meeting will be held after worship on Sunday, January 31.

The Women's Retreat which was scheduled for February has been postponed to the fall due to Covid.

ReFuel Groups will resume the week of January 17. If you would like to join a group for the next six week session, we will find a group for you. Currently we have two groups meeting on Sunday evenings at 6, a group meets on Mondays at 2, and a group meets on Tuesdays at 1. We will continue our journey through the New Testament book of 1 Peter. We will love to add more to these groups as a way to draw closer to God and one another. Talk to Pastor Dave if interested.

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Online giving option increases with our mobile giving app!

We offer online giving through our church's website at www.fpcbillings.org. You can go to the online giving tab on the homepage of our website. In addition, our church has a giving mobile app. You can simply text fpcbillings to 77977 and give a one-time gift or set up recurring gifts. We appreciate all of the ways you give to the ministry of our church. If you have any questions about this you can talk with Jeanne or Pastor Dave.

Volunteer Schedule

Our volunteer schedule is on hold during this time of pandemic. If you would like to volunteer to serve as a worship assistant, please talk with Pastor Dave. We will resume our volunteer schedule when the restrictions lift. We will provide updates through the weekly bulletin and e-news publications.



Church Info

Office Hours:
Mon—Thurs
8:30 AM— 4 PM
406-252-3434
 mainoffice@fpcbillings.org
 www.fpcbillings.org
Worship:
Sundays @ 10:30 AM
 facebook.com/
 fpcbillings

STAFF

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

Birthdays

- 1 Fern Nelson
- 3 Willard Johnson
- 4 Mary Rottrup
- 5 Greta Murray
- 10 Zackery Bennett
- 14 Nick Goettel
- 15 Robert Sterup
- Carol Drum
- Donny Cole
- 16 Louis Dubs

- 17 Martha Davidson
- 20 Thelma Riggs
- Bruce Phillips
- 24 Robert Keenum
- Bart Erickson
- 26 Tyler Goettel
- 27 Katelyn Morrow
- 28 Bill White
- 29 Mark Parker
- 30 Jean Schneider
- Kay Hein

Anniversaries

- 5 Ryan & Tiffany Johnson
- 12 Ronald & Junice Wooten
- 15 Kyle & JoLayne Buffington



You are appreciated!!

Thanks to all of you who helped make 2020 such a good year! This includes our elders, deacons, Stephen Ministers, Presbyterian Women’s leaders, youth volunteers, ReFuel group leaders, committee members, musicians, support group leaders, preschool teachers, work crews, technology support, Bible study leaders, church staff, and many others. Our church could not do it without us all working together! Together we provide a ministry to our community and bring glory to God. Thanks you again for all you do! —Pastor Dave

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1 	2
3 No Sunday Sch. 10:30 Worship	4 9-1 Preschool re- sumes 9 Monday work crew	5 9:30 Women’s Bible Study 12 Property Com- mittee meeting	6 9 BSF Leaders 9:30 PW Board 10 Grief Support 6 Youth group 7 College group	7 9 Bible Study Fel- lowship 7 Christian Ed meets in Fireside	8 9-1 Preschool 12 Christian Study Group meets in Fireside	9
10 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	11 9-1 Preschool 9 Monday work crew 12 Men’s Group	12 9:30 Women’s Bible Study 12 Finance comm 7 Session meeting	13 9 BSF Leaders 9-1 Preschool 10 RLI Group PW Circles Meet 6 Youth Group	14 9 Bible Study Fel- lowship	15 9-1 Preschool	16
17 9:15 Sunday Sch 10:30 Worship 6 ReFuel groups	18 2 Refuel Group	19 9:30 Women’s Bible Study 10 Grief Support 1 Refuel group	20 9 BSF Leaders 9-1 Preschool 6 Youth Group 7 College group	21 9 Bible Study Fel- lowship 12 Congregational Care Team Meets	22 Newsletter Deadline 12 Christian Study Group	23
24 9:15 Sunday Sch 10:30 Worship 6 ReFuel groups	25 9-1 Preschool 9 Monday work crew 12 Men’s Group	26 9:30 Women’s Bible Study 6 Stephen Ministry Supervision	27 9 BSF Leaders 9-1 Preschool 6 Youth Group 7 College group	28 9 Bible Study Fel- lowship 7 Mission Comm.	29	30
31 9:15 Sun Sch 10:30 Worship Annual Meeting 6 ReFuel groups						

SESSION NOTES:

During the December 8th meeting of the session, Dan and Deanna Hansard were received into the membership of our church by way of transfer of membership from the Community Presbyterian Church in Jordan, Montana.

The property committee was given permission to purchase a new video camera and mics for the sanctuary. This camera will be installed near the sound booth instead of in the aisle. Both purchases will improve the quality of the live streaming.

Pastor Dave’s request to take vacation time from December 28, 2020 to January 1, 2021 was approved.

On a Personal Note

We extend our condolences to the following families who have experienced loss of loved ones:

Rodney Thompson who passed away on Christmas Eve due to cancer.

Shirley Shirley and her family upon the death of her husband Bob.

Jase and Karen Norsworthy upon the death of Jase’s father. His name was also Jase.

Juanita Stovall upon the death of her son Manny. He died of complications of Covid and heart issues.

The family of Mary Ann Canan. She died on December 18 at Morning Star Assisted Living.

Congratulations to Janie and Jonathan Sutton on the birth of Winifred Martha Sutton. She was born on December 21 weighing 6 lbs. 15 oz. and measuring 19”.

David Culbertson will begin chemotherapy and radiation after having a tumor removed from his brain. The family is hopeful that once treatments are completed he will be cancer free.

Sharon Brady has returned home after being hospitalized for several weeks with Covid

Bud Leuthold has returned home after being hospitalized in Denver followings several strokes.

Judy Wallinder has returned home after having been hospitalized recently.

Pastor Dave’s sister, Liz, has returned home to Juneau, Alaska, after a lengthy hospitalization in Seattle.

Tonya Appelt would appreciate prayers for her mom and dad who have both been dealing with health issues.

Financial snapshot

2020	Income	Expense	Net
December	\$ 97,069	\$ 52,620	\$ 44,449
Year to Date	\$ 493,093	\$404,103	\$ 88,990

Thank you for all the ways you contributed to our church in 2020. Your gifts of time, talents, and treasures are so appreciated as we continue to provide a valuable ministry to those in our church and community.

Church Mice: Angel Tree Appreciation!

The church mice would like to thank everyone who contributed to our church’s Angel Tree this Christmas. We had more gifts than ever returned to the Angel Tree, truly remarkable in light of the pandemic. About 40 care packages were delivered to our homebound, shut-in, and assisted living members of our church and community. A number of blankets were donated to residents at TLC Assisted Living in Lockwood and the Billings Housing Authority. A number of gift cards were given to low income students in the school district, and many items were donated via a cash donation through the Presbyterian Giving Catalogue. Thanks for your incredible generosity!



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 poinsettias and other flowers during the month of December. The poinsettia recognition list is in this newsletter and those who donated special flowers include: John and Linda Luse in honor of their daughter Jenanne’s birthday, and Thelma Riggs.

Our new 2021 flower schedule is available on the table as you enter the sanctuary. Lots of spots are available for flower sponsorship in the New Year.