



First Press Magazine

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From Pastor Laurie

*For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert.*

--Isaiah 35:6b

Best to sit down to read this issue. Advent is the season where God is calling us to pause more often and think more deeply. To be more present to the people around us and the beauty of God's earth; or else we might miss the new thing that God is doing through us. Like turning discarded neckties into a new stole; restoring our faded welcome sign; resuming the joy of Deacon potlucks with new faces at the tables; or providing a home country and a home to refugees who had neither. These are just a few of the many new things pictured and described inside. Accept my invitation to drink slowly the streams of restoration pouring forth on every page. Savor God's language of love.

And take heart: from generation to generation, God indeed dwells *with* us through Christ. Even in the wilderness and the deserts. For God's unspeakable gift we say, we breathe, we live, "Asante." Thank you.

LOOKING JUST AHEAD: *Advent & Christmas Schedule*

SUN. DEC. 18 FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT: CANDE OF LOVE

9:30 Children Present their Christmas Play:
The Christmas Hedgehog,
FPC Brass Ensemble;
Christmas Joy Offering Dedicated

Following Worship: Jesus' Birthday Party;
Christmas Cookie Plate Sale

SAT. DEC. 24 CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE OF LESSONS & CAROLS

6:45 Prelude concert with Brass, Woodwinds,
Strings, Voice

7:00 Candlelight service begins (with Chancel
Choir, Handbells, Holy Communion)

SUN. DEC. 25 NATIVITY OF THE LORD/CHRISTMAS DAY

9:30 Short, relaxed, informal Christmas Day
worship followed by Pastor Laurie's
Traditional Swedish Tea Ring Coffee Cakes

First



Press

The Magazine of First Presbyterian Church — Marshfield

Winter 2022



Remember, Release, Reimagine, Restore

Beginnings



Did you notice . . .

Pastor Laurie's new Advent Stole? Here's the story of its genesis from **Kathy Phillips**, its designer and creator. "A couple of months ago I solicited several men in the congregation for neckties they no longer needed. I had 5 or 6 who brought me ties. After time spent on research and getting the ties disassembled, washed and pressed I was ready to give this idea a try. Ties used are from: David Carroll, Bruce Lautenschlager, Ralph Mueller, Ken Zittleman, Bill Berry and a friend, Sue Vick." (Yes, the one with the numbers on it was from Ken.) – **Kathy Phillips**



We still Choose Welcome!

Check out our new Welcome sign! You might have noticed the Welcome sign was looking the worse for wear. The original sign was erected in May of 2018, a result of work by the Immigration Action Team. Some thought went toward a redesign, but the old one needed replacement quickly. A new design may be in the works as well as a plan for semi-permanent in-ground posts for other types of displays. Watch this spot for developments!

Fall 2022 Investigating Church Membership class



Say "hello" to Jeff and Dana Talsness, Dave and Nancy Vance, Dominic and Kristina Kaiser, Pam Smith, and our thanks go to their teachers: Clay Bernick, Pastor Laurie, and Nicole Johnson (not in photo). New members will be received by Session and welcomed by the congregation on Jan 29, 2023.

CROP Walk 2022



The CROP Walk was held on September 25, 2022. We had 17 walkers from Faith Lutheran, FPC Arpin, FPC Marshfield, and Church of Jesus Christ LDS. Total donations were \$2860 with \$715 going directly to Soup or Socks, down a bit from last year, so there are plans to organize earlier next year to get more involvement and ensure this event continues well into the future. Watch your calendar next year and join us with your feet and your funds!



Faith Stories



Janet Wolfe

Janet grew up in Greeley, CO. Her mom taught Sunday School at the local Presbyterian church. Mom would leave before the worship service and Janet would leave with her. Dad was not involved in church until later when he found a congregation that shared his passion for social justice issues. When the glee club at school made her choose between P.E. and singing, she chose P.E. and joined the church choir. She has been singing in church ever since.

The campus ministry at Colorado State U offered a trip to the World Student Christian Federation in Ohio where she first met Martin Luther King, Jr at a book signing. Her education degree got her a job teaching, but it was as Janet says, "a disaster," so she entered the University of Colorado for a masters in Political Science. The campus ministry, led by Presbyterian pastor Wally Toevs, organized a trip to join the last day of the march from Selma to Montgomery.

The experience felt "like going to church on Easter," so later that summer, Janet and two friends signed up for the SCOPE voter registration campaign, piled into her Volkswagen Beetle, and headed back to Alabama.

Students from San Francisco Theological Seminary had helped with logistics on these events so when Janet decided to enter the seminary, that is where she decided to go. She graduated in 1969, passed the ordination exams, but was not ordained until twenty years later. Multiple rejection letters read, "We are not seeking a female for this position."

Ordination came with a post in the worship department at the Presbyterian Center in Louisville, KY. She worked on the Book of Common Worship and other projects, but the job eventually amounted to little more than sales and "they didn't like my style," so she sought a congregation and wound up in Arpin, WI, ministering there from 1991 to 2005.

In her retirement now, Janet has become a pillar at FPC, serving communion, doing pastoral visits, and offering pulpit supply when needed. Evangelism is being a welcoming church and supporting spiritual growth defined by prayer and deepening of faith. She is always ready to join a community for curiosity, Bible study, and book groups. She will bring the cookies!

The Return of the Potluck!

Our beloved tradition of potluck meals was put on hold by the pandemic, but it returned in force on Sunday, November 20th. Our deacons graciously pulled out the stops and brought us back in style. That smile on Jennifer Lurvey's face says it all.

We're back, Baby!



Close-up Curt Hanson

Curt spent the first ten years of life in Red Wing, MN, cultivating a love of the outdoors, hunting and fishing with his dad. They would drive past the edge of the reservation and Curt would see the meager existence and children peeking through holes in their hogan and ask, "Why don't we stop and give them some of our fish?" Dad would reply, "That wouldn't be a bad idea if they would take them." Love for nature and neighbors would become one and the same.

Scandinavian roots guaranteed a Lutheran upbringing, so after moving to Eau Claire, WI, Curt was confirmed Lutheran. A regimented two year process of memorizing the catechism culminated in a graduation ceremony at Grace Lutheran. Among 70 kids seated in rows, he was fortunate to draw a smaller recitation at the graduation ceremony. The next guy was not so lucky. Once confirmed, though, he could relax in his well-earned Lutheran identity, and feel free to spend a lucky Sunday hunting or fish-

ing with no regret. A field trip in college to study geology in northern WI that brought Curt and Sarah together. They shared a seat on the bus ride home. The first date was the next weekend. Curt would learn that Sarah's father was a leader at the university, and influential at the Presbyterian church. The new family expectation was that he become Presbyterian and Curt could see no reason not to switch. They graduated and married the same year.

Curt began his career as a Junior High science teacher, but eventually found his place as school principal, a position that followed him as they moved to Marshfield in 1971. He learned that a judgmental attitude does not work. Public schools must welcome all and work to make a place for every one to grow and blossom. It is the same for the church whose task is to welcome all to discern right from wrong, and stand for the good. The challenge is to be more attractive to new members.

Refugee Resettlement Marshfield



Submitted by Tracy Olson

Two delightful families have now begun their resettlement process in Marshfield, arriving to our community about two months ago. Our resettlement teams have been working with them on the many things there are to learn in this huge adjustment.

The **education committee** has been working with the children in a small group initially and they then were successfully placed in age appropriate classes in the public school system with tutoring support as they learn English. They are now able to ride the buses to 3 different schools without volunteer help. A lot of time has gone into teaching the parents about our American culture, and improving their English understanding and speaking.

The **housing and cultural adjustment committee** has been working with the family on how to take care of the house, learning about appliances, establishing adequate wardrobes for our weather, grocery shopping in Marshfield and cooking.

The **finance committee** has been working with the family on setting up bank accounts, creating a budget, making sure the family applies for all of the support programs for which they are eligible, searching for employment, setting up internet and maintaining their (very important) cell phone.

The **health committee** has been incredibly busy getting family members established for medical and dental care, following up on concerns that come up, and teaching about hygiene and medication taking.

Our **transportation volunteers** have been working to make sure every family member gets to where they need to be with appropriate car seats, parental supervision, and on time. We have obviously been very busy!

We have learned a lot on this journey, especially about things we take for granted and things we don't know. We have found no Swahili word for recycling, we learned that car seats have changed a lot in 20+ years, and there is a lot required to do the most basic things like putting a utility in your name.

We have also learned about cultural differences and a few basic Swahili words. Very basic!

Special Thanks . . .



to the Spencer chapter of **Sleep in Heavenly Peace**, a charity organization founded in 2012 by Luke and Heidi Mickelson of Twin Falls, Idaho, on the principle that "no kid sleeps on the floor in our town!"

The Spencer Area chapter was born when Joleen was on leave from work, as she says, "feeling sorry for herself." At the same time, the church she was attending was looking for something good to do for the community. Joleen discovered SHP and was encouraged to start a chapter. She and daughter, Alyssa, went for training in Idaho in July of 2019. The first build took place in August of that year.

We have a core group of volunteers that are very involved, including Joleen's husband, Randy. We generally have three build days during the nicer months. Everyone from master carpenters to people in their roller walkers have been able to help.

As of this date, we've built 390 beds and have delivered 320 of them. We serve roughly 40 miles in every direction from Spencer. The need is great. We are always in need of volunteers for deliveries and build days, along with monetary donations.



Go to www.shpbs.org to donate or browse their 2022 Fall Collection of brand wear.

One of the many benefits of this experience for the volunteers has been working side by side with caring people from a variety of churches and other groups in town for this common purpose. We,

Refugee Resettlement Marshfield Update

(Continued from page 3)

as well as our partner family, have been blessed by this incredible effort.

We appreciate the support we have been given on this journey. We certainly didn't anticipate every household or hygiene need, and if you contributed money to this mission know that it has gone to important things like waterproof mattress pads and ice melt for their steps. We have also had the benefit of getting clothing items from **Soup or Socks**, beds from **Sleep in Heavenly Peace**, and **Goodwill** gift cards from Wood County. The churches working in support of this resettlement have even come together to insure that the driveway is cleared of heavy snowfalls. One of the first English words we heard family members say was "Thank You", which is certainly heartwarming and important to share.

Let's just say you read this article and think to

yourself "I'd like to do help too". Please contact **Barb Gillespie**, **Stacey Schultz**, or **Julie Tharp** as there may

Just the Basics!

English

Hello
Thank You
You're Welcome
Tomorrow
Trash
Recycling
And most important . . .
Cold!

Swahili

Hujambo
Asante
Karibu
Kesho
Taka Taka
?
Baridi

be an opportunity that you'd enjoy and that would benefit **you** in amazing ways. These are wonderful people who are working very hard through a time of transition that would be overwhelming for any of us.

Asante! from Team 3.

The Hanging of the Greens

Christmas arrived on schedule at FPC on Nov 27th with the annual Hanging of the Greens. Thanks to all, big and small, who make this treasured tradition a reality!



Remember, Release, Reimagine, Restore

2022 Fall Stewardship Campaign



I chose to do something a little different this stewardship season. For four Sundays in October and November, we embarked on a series called "Our Money Story" created by A Sanctified Art LLC. I

invited everyone to **remember, release, reimagine, and restore** their money stories to help them write the one that God is begging them to live into; individually and as our church family, FPC.

Remember

Let us **remember** that God made all things good. God stands with the suffering and walks with us in the wilderness. God sees the overlooked, loves the untamed heart and makes room for all at God's table.

Release

To relieve from that which confines, burdens, or oppresses. Many of us long to **release** shame, fear, or past harm. Perhaps it's time to release what holds us back from trusting in God wholeheartedly.

Reimagine

The practice of Jubilee in the Book of Leviticus **reimagines** systems that can impoverish rather than sustain, leaving the vulnerable without the resources and support they need to thrive.

Restore

Today, like brothers Jacob and Esau, we bring our hearts back to you, our thoughts back to love, and our prayers back to peace. Bring us back to this moment. Bring us back to love. **Restore** us. Forgive us.



To help us connect with those themes, every worshipper, not only the children, received objects such as pipe cleaners, coffee filters, and beans to participate in an embodied prayer during Discovery Time. On the final Sunday, worshippers were invited to bring forward along with their pledge cards and offerings, their heart-shaped pipe cleaner formed by their own hands earlier in the service, to symbolize our prayer for God's restoration and healing of our hearts and our broken world. — Pastor Laurie

