

The Carillon

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH –WATERLOO, IOWA

CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Amy Wiles,
Pastor/Head of Staff

Rev. Pat Gadelmann,
Associate Pastor of
Care and Visitation

Stephanie Swenson,
Director of Children,
Youth and Families

Kelley Galyen,
Office Manager

Dakota Andersen,
Sanctuary Choir
Director

Melody Steed,
Handbell Choir
Director

Brenda Sevcik,
Organist/Accompanist

A Messy World

A pastor tried something different one year during their Christmas Eve service. Instead of having the tree, the candles, and the poinsettias that usually filled the sanctuary, this pastor took everything out and filled the room with manure. Then, he covered the floor with hay so that people could really experience the smell of the manger where the Christmas story began. At one point a live donkey even walked down the center aisle and dropped a special gift for the congregation.

It was an absurd picture - dozens of church members, all dressed in their best attire, filing in the pews to sit in the rank smell of a barn. Some people looked around awkwardly. Others laughed at the absurdity. Some were deeply offended and left. But those who stayed remembered, what Jesus was actually born into - a smelly mess.

We are entering a time of year steeped in merriment and holiday shine. Christmas music plays wherever we go. Decorations make ordinary rooms seem a bit more special. We dress in our best clothes to attend parties and special church services.

And yet, there is a paradox of December that I have noticed over the years. Even with the holly jolly of the season, people seem more anxious, more angry, and more sad than usual. I think the pressure-cooker-feel of the holiday reveals our vulnerabilities and the places where we struggle. So, maybe, ironically, we need to be reminded of the strange nature of Jesus' birth during December more than at other times.

In the story of Christmas, we celebrate that God showed up in the painful, broken, stank of our world, because that's where we need God the most. We are not perfect people. We make mistakes. We don't always treat people as we ought. News reports can be discouraging. We fight with each other. We grieve over loss. We struggle with the challenges of living. Even those of the faith can be hypocritical or callous or cynical, at times.

But, here is the good news: God does not turn away from us because of our mess. Rather, God is born into it. As Steve Garnass-Holmes says, "Christ chooses to be among us not in the grandeur of the temple but in the rough stable of our real lives. The words of the psalms and the prophets that lead us toward Christmas... are the lament of the poor, the longing for redemption. The cry of the oppressed, the song of the widow, the silence of the people searching for the way... This is the world that God enters into to accompany, to bless, to heal, to change." (from Storylines, Bible Study Companion to the Narrative Lectionary)

I don't know where you find yourself this season, but I pray that you know the good news! Jesus Christ is born! Emmanuel, God with us.....whatever life may bring.

Peace,
Pastor Amy

Inside this issue:

Preparing for Advent Fellowship 2-3

Worship and Music Children, Youth, and 4-5

Mission Stewardship and Finance Items 6-7

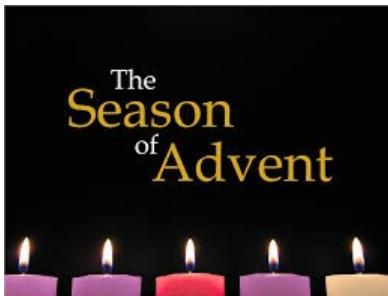
Mission continued 8-9

Life of the Church Calendar 10-11

Preparing for Advent

Advent Devotion Available

Mark the days of Advent with a daily calendar of devotions by Rev. Teer Hardy. These devotions will be available in the office free of charge starting **December 1**. The seemingly simple handout is filled with opportunities for spiritual renewal, encouraging you to focus on the coming Christ at the center of both the season and in your life. Beginning on the first Sunday of Advent and ending on Christmas Day, each day's devotional includes a suggested Scripture, a short devotion, and a closing prayer.



Christmas Caroling

Children, youth, choir, bell choir, elders, team leaders, and **every member** is invited to join the Deacons in caroling on **December 15, from 3:00-4:30**. This is a heartwarming experience for those visited, as well as those who go to sing.

Contact Pastor Pat with questions on how to sign up.

Adult Forum

Starting December 1 through December 22, Pastor Amy will lead Adult Forum in a new bible study by Amy-Jill Levine, *Light of the World*. Levine is the same teacher who led us through the parables this summer during Tapestry. Her Advent study explores the biblical texts surrounding the story of the birth of Jesus- the stories Zechariah and Elizabeth, Mary, the journey to Bethlehem, and the visit from the Magi. Join us every Sunday from 8:45-9:30 as we read the ancient story again and prepare for the birth of Christ in our own hearts.

A Christmas Poem

...and now a word from our sponsor.

You don't have to order by midnight; no postage is required
The offer on this is timeless; this sale will not expire
You'll never want another thing; satisfaction is guaranteed
This is going to make you happy; on this we're all agreed
A choir that has no rival producing glad refrains
Announced it to the masses across the hills and plains
Wise folks will come from all around guided by a star
And everyone is welcome no matter who they are
Step away from what you're doing; take time to go and see
The smallest but the greatest gift there could ever be
Jesus, our Lord and Savior, is waiting for us there
In a lowly manger under Joseph and Mary's care
Come one, come all, you're welcome to spend time in Bethlehem
We promise you'll find comfort though there's no room at the inn
God, the great creator, whose generosity astounds
Gave us the greatest gift of all, from a love that has no bounds.

A very Merry Christmas and God bless us all!
—Dan Davis

Cunningham Concert

Join in attending the Cunningham Elementary Concert at **6 p.m. on December 5**. Melody Steed, our handbells director is the music teacher at Cunningham and Cunningham is our Partner-in-Education.

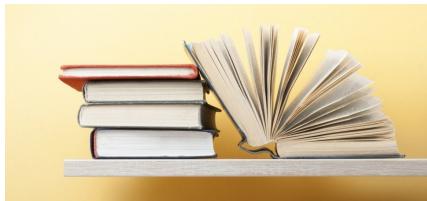
Experience the magic of children's voices during the Holiday Season.

Tuesday Morning Bible Study

Our church's Tuesday morning Bible Study continues to meet each week at **8:30 a.m. at Cabin Coffee in Waterloo**. Come and join Pastor Amy as we discuss the upcoming sermon text.

We will not meet December 24 or 31.

See you next year!



New Beginnings Book Group

The New Beginnings Book Group will meet **Thursday, December 12, at Cabin Coffee in Waterloo at 9:30 am.** The group will read "Clock Dance" by Anne Tyler.

If anyone wants to join this wonderful group and needs a copy of the book, please contact Mary Kabel.

Holiday Support Group

The holidays are especially difficult for individuals who are grieving the loss of a loved one, whether the loss was relatively recent or years ago. This is because holidays remind us of the special times we've spent with loved ones; they remind us that often the most treasured aspect of holidays is the time we've spent together with the people who meant the most to us. Cedar Valley Hospice grief counselor Stacy Baranowski will discuss the challenges of holiday grief at a Community Forum sponsored by the Catholic Parishes in Waterloo on **Wednesday, December 4, 5:30-7:30 p.m.** at COR, the parishes' hospitality center at 220 E. 4th St. in Waterloo. The program is free and open to the public. Details are available online at <https://waterloocatholics.org/community-forum>.

Annual Christmas Brunch

We hope you join us following worship on **Sunday, December 8, for the Christmas Brunch.** Please see the insert for more information and on how to reserve a spot! See you there!



*Nurture Faith
Support Mission,
Work for Justice and Peace*

The Annual Christmas Tea is **Wednesday, December 4, in Calvin Hall at 1:00 p.m.** Everyone is welcome to come and enjoy a time of fellowship and some good cookies baked by the PW ladies. Please call Marie at 232-8476 to make your reservation.

Please bring your cookies to the church by 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, December 4. We will be filling goodie bags for the home-bound at 9:30 on Wednesday.

The next meeting for Rebekah Circle will be **January 15, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.** Jan Schwab is leading the Bible Study, "Love Carved in Stone, A Fresh Look at the Ten Commandments".

Upcoming Dates

December 4—Christmas Tea at 1:00 p.m.

January 15, 2020—Rebekah Circle at 10:00 p.m.

Worship and Music

December Communion

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be celebrated during the worship service on **Sunday, December 8.**



Upcoming Sermon Text

December 1: Luke 1: 67-79
Zachariah and Elizabeth

December 8: Luke 1: 46-45
Mary's Song

December 15: Luke 2: 29-32
Simion's Song

December 22: Luke 2: 8-15
Angel's Song

Christmas Eve Service

You are invited to join us for our traditional candlelight service of "Lessons and Carols" on Christmas Eve at 6:00 p.m.

Sanctuary and Bell Choir

The last Wednesday rehearsal in 2019 for both choirs is December 11. The Celebration Ringers will play in worship on December 15. The Sanctuary Choir will sing in worship on December 15, 22, and Christmas Eve.

Rehearsal for Celebration Ringers will resume

January 8.

Rehearsal for Sanctuary Choir will resume January 15.

ALL MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND THE CHILDREN'S PROGRAM ON DECEMBER 18



Pulpit Flowers 2020

The office has created a list for the 2020 calendar year regarding Pulpit Flowers. The list will be posted in Calvin Hall for you to look over and confirm what you want it to say in the bulletin or you can initial and call the office to share what you would like to say. If you no longer want to provide flowers that day, cross your name off. If you see an open Sunday or someone's name crossed off, feel free to add your name! Contact the office if you have any questions about this!

Children, Youth, & Families

The Well

December 1: Regular time 3:30-5:00

December 8: Help serve at the Christmas Brunch and regular meeting time 3:30-5:00

December 13: Youth Bowling Party! Join us at Cadillac Lanes from 6:30-8:30 p.m.

December 15: Join in Christmas Caroling at 3:00 p.m. until 4:30 p.m.

December 22: Help serve Sunday Supper

We will not meet December 29.

See you Sunday, January 5 at 3:30!

Merry
Christmas

Christmas Potluck and Children's Program

You are invited to join us on **Wednesday, December 18** for a potluck supper followed by the Children's Program at Cedar Falls First Presbyterian. The children are working very hard on their story and music and want to share it with YOU! Supper will begin at 5:30 p.m. Please bring your choice of side dish or dessert to share no later than 5:30. We will enjoy a meal together and then enjoy the program.

If you are in need of a ride, please sign up in the office between December 1-15.

Shine

This month, SHINE is practicing for the Christmas Program each Wednesday Night. We hope your child can join us in creating a wonderful story to share on **Wednesday, December 18**.

We will NOT meet December 25 or January 1
We will resume **January 8**.

Little Tyke's Nursery Update

We are beginning to update our Little Tykes Room and why not start at Christmas with gifts to our little ones. Starting **December 1**, there will be a paper tree on the wall outside the Little Tyke's Room with items listed on them. We invite you to take a tag and sign the sheet inside the Nursery door. Gifts can be returned to the office by **December 22** so the children can open them that Sunday. Let us celebrate and help mold the minds and faith in our Little Tyke's Room.



Christmas in Walnut

The Christmas in Walnut Toy Shop aims to help disadvantaged families purchase gifts for their children at an 80% reduction in price. First Church has become a regular participant in this annual event. The shop will be set up on **Saturday, December 14** at the Boys and Girls Club. There are many ways we can help by donating gifts, making cash donations to buy gifts, or volunteering a few hours. Many volunteers in a variety of capacities are needed to make this neighborhood event a success. If you have never volunteered at Christmas in Walnut, you are missing a very uplifting experience. We continue our signup before and after Sunday worship in the main hallway. At the signup table, you can also pick up a list of acceptable toys you might buy. Please note that gifts and cash donations need to be delivered to the church by **Sunday, December 8**. There will be a table for the gifts in Calvin Hall.

Hat and Scarf Tree

Attention knitters and crocheters! Our tree is up in Calvin Hall and ready to accept your craftwork. Items will be given to our Partner-in-Education, Cunningham School. Since we often have an abundance of donated items, we expect to distribute some to organizations such as adult sizes to Hospitality House, Salvation Army, and Sunday Supper guests and infant sizes to Allen Hospital. We will be collecting through Christmas.

Sunday Supper Carol Sing

Join us as we celebrate Christmas with the Sunday Supper community! The five Presbyterian churches will gather with Sunday Supper guests on **Sunday, December 22, at 4:00 in Waterloo First Church's sanctuary** for an old fashioned carol sing and reading of the Christmas story. Stay afterwards at 5:00 for a delicious meal and warm fellowship with our larger community. All are welcome! You won't want to miss this unique and meaningful time to celebrate the joy of Christmas beyond our church walls.

NO SUNDAY SUPPER DECEMBER 29.

First Church Recognized for Mission Giving

At the November Presbytery meeting, First Church was recognized for our long time commitment to the four Presbyterian special offerings: One Great Hour of Sharing, Pentecost, Peace and Global Witness, and Christmas Joy. The recognition came from the Presbyterian Mission Agency for our 11 years of giving to all 4 offerings every year. We are now listed as a "Four for Four" church. This is a baseball metaphor for a perfect batting average —something that is practically impossible to achieve! To quote the Presbyterian website, "a Four for Four congregation declares its connection with the ministries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and joins in the efforts of Presbyterians around the corner and around the world to share God's grace and endless love." Over the 11 year period, we have given a total of over \$68,000! Well done! The certificate of recognition will be posted on the bulletin board outside the office.



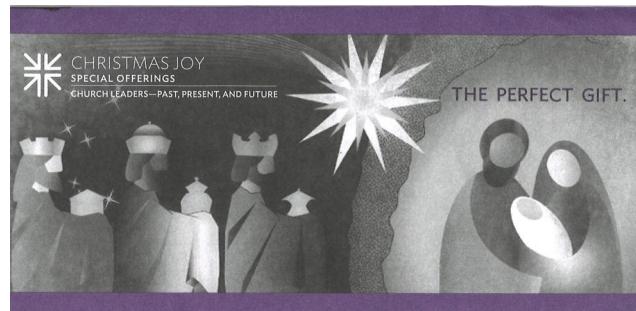
2019 Christmas Joy Offering

The annual Christmas Joy offering will be received during the worship service on **Sunday, December 22**.

This offering is one of the four major offerings promoted by the Presbyterian Church (USA). This Advent season, we reflect upon God's promise of salvation.

Made to each of us, and kept with the birth of Jesus, the promise has changed countless lives. Through the Christmas Joy Offering, we make and keep two promises of our own: to church workers through assistance in their time of need and to racial ethnic education and leadership development.

As we celebrate Jesus' love in our lives at this time of year, our gifts bear joyful witness to the power of that boundless love that helps to change people's lives.



Stewardship and Finance Update

A very warm thank you to all of you who turned in your pledge cards on Stewardship Dedication Sunday, November 3. Pledges are the backbone to supporting spiritual nurture, education, mission to the community, personal staff, building needs, and much more. Any gifts you give are a blessing. By making a pledge, you are making a commitment to the important ministries of our church. If you have made your pledge, thank you! If you have not yet, please consider doing so. Pledge cards are available in the office. Please talk to any member of the Stewardship and Finance Team if you have any questions.

Nancy Newhoff
Stewardship and Finance Committee Chair

Last Day for 2019 Giving

Please have your monetary giving for the 2019 year in the office by **December 30th, end of business day**. Contact the office if you have any questions.



Stewardship Report

| | Current Period (October) | YTD 2019 | Annual Budget | YTD 2018 |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Total Income | \$ 73,509.19 | \$ 312,372.78 | \$365,466.00 | \$332,078.22 |
| Total Expenses | <u>\$ 26,138.20</u> | <u>\$ 295,228.15</u> | <u>\$365,466.00</u> | <u>\$340,723.48</u> |
| Excess Income/Expenses | 47,370.99 | 17,144.63 | 0.00 | -8,645.26 |

First Church Receives Grant from Pauline Barrett

On Feb. 9, 2018, our church lost Pauline Barrett, a longtime member and philanthropist to the community. Pauline joined First Church in 1959. She had moved to Waterloo in 1943 and worked as an executive secretary for one of the top officers at Rath Packing Co. for 17 years. During those years, she moved into the Walnut Neighborhood and first became acquainted with the nearby First Presbyterian Church.

Pauline became very active in the church. She was on the Foundation Board and served as an elder from 1985-1991. Though her health declined to the point she could not attend, she stayed in touch with the church through visits by the deacons and pastoral staff and joined in singing with the church's Christmas carolers just a couple of months before her passing.

Through the years she grew in her philanthropy for causes she cared very much about. They included health, children, poverty and music. She loved this church because our mission believed in the same thing. Her philanthropy with our church continued over the years as she pledged each year and gave generously to our elevator project, our hallway project, to our music ministry, to our sanctuary renovation project and any other capital campaigns we have undertaken.

After her death, a Pauline Barrett Grant Committee was established so that her philanthropy could continue for many years to come. Recently, we learned that our church received one of those grants for \$60,000. We continue to thank God for the many blessings that come to us in many different ways. The Pauline Barrett grant is truly a wonderful blessing this year.

Yours in Christ,
Nancy Newhoff, Stewardship and Finance Committee Chair

Christmas Eve Offering

This year's Christmas Eve offering will be given to Lutheran Services in Iowa. LSI provides customized care for Iowa children, adults, and families in the following areas:

- Early Childhood Services to support families with home visits and parenting education.
- Mental Health Services for children, adults, and families in a compassionate, non-judgmental therapeutic environment.
- Behavioral Health Intervention Services to support children with emotional and behavioral disorders
- Family Safety and Crisis Services to provide intensive interventions designed to strengthen families and prevent child removal due to abuse or neglect.
- Residential Treatment Services to provide Iowa's most vulnerable children and teens with out-of-home 24-hour trauma-centered mental health care.
- Foster Care and Adoption Services to recruit, license, and support foster and adoptive families.
- Services for People with Disabilities including 24-hour and hourly care and Host Homes independent living for those with high intellectual or development disabilities.
- Refugee and Immigration Services to empower those groups with English classes, economic development programs and family support.

Presbytery Grant Projects

Our Presbytery makes mission partnership grants available to churches. The grants are funded primarily by “shared mission support” pledges that churches make to the Presbytery every year, and by a portion of the Per Capita giving. Basically, a portion of our giving to Presbytery is returned to us as mission grants –if we apply. This article reviews our grant activities.

You may recall that this year we received a \$3000 grant to support transportation assistance for English Language Learners at the Hawkeye College Miller Center. We also contributed directly to that project, and we were joined by First Cedar Falls and Cedar Heights Community Presbyterian churches. The total project funding was \$10,000. Hawkeye moved into the new Miller Center in January, which was a very significant undertaking. The transportation assistance program was a new program, and unfortunately started slowing, while move-related activities were addressed. Hawkeye is now in a good position to effectively manage the transportation program, and they suggested that we need not reapply for the grant for 2020, since funds are still available.

However, we did apply for and will receive a \$3000 grant in 2020 for the House of Hope Boost Program. Boost is an employment readiness training and internship program. Participants in this program are single mothers with children and young women transitioning out of the foster care system. The program provides two weeks of intensive classroom training, covering soft skills such as employer expectations, basic computer skills, and oral/written communication. The women will then interview with business partners and be placed for a 6-week internship. When the women successfully complete the internship to the satisfaction of the business partner, the women will be hired full-time earning at least \$11.00/hour in an entry level position. These positions offer the women – many with a troubled past and/or a lack of training/experience – a “boost” in their employment opportunities. First Church has also given \$1500 to Boost in 2019, and we have pledged a similar amount for 2020. The other four Presbyterian churches in the area give undesignated gifts to the House of Hope each year.

First Presbyterian Cedar Falls will be receiving a \$3000 grant in 2020 to support the Family Literacy Program at Hawkeye College. This program serves the same group of English Language Learners that the transportation assistance program serves. FLP provides “first reader” books and other learning materials – for FREE – to families so that parents can serve as the first teachers for their young children. Both parents and children will be learning to read together! We have joined in this project with a donation of \$1000 in 2019 and a similar donation is pledged for 2020.

First Presbyterian Cedar Falls also will be receiving a \$1500 grant to support Love, Inc. Of course, we support Love, Inc by allowing them to use our building every Tuesday for their Begin Now life skills classes. Westminster Presbyterian also provides financial support to Love, Inc.

The Presbytery mission partnership grants have become a wonderful way to supplement our support of local mission projects and to work in partnership with the other Presbyterian churches in the area.



Life of the Church

Thank you!

First Presbyterian Friends,

It was such a beautiful day on October 20th that we will always remember. Thank you so much to everyone for *all* you did for Carmen's baptism. She loves reading her new books and cuddling up with her quilt as well.

Love,

Carmen, Courtney, and Lucas

Thank you from the Wiles Family

Dear First Church,

Thank you for the beautiful quilt, Bible, and very special books in honor of Thomas' baptism. It is such a joy to serve as members of this faith family. It is an even greater gift to raise our children in such a loving, supportive community. We love you!

Sincerely,

Amy and John Wiles



Welcome to our Church Family!

Sawyer Swenson, son of Brady and Stephanie Swenson, was baptized Sunday, November 24

First Church Family Birthdays for December

- Dec 4 David Ames
- Dec 8 Kathy McClain, Dan Paulsen
- Dec 9 Ruth Meade
- Dec 12 Pat Gadelmann
- Dec 14 Dave Kabel
- Dec 20 Jim Walker
- Dec 23 Rhonda Frerichs
- Dec 26 Darlene Roberts
- Dec 28 Frank Swallow
- Dec 30 Penny Bunger
- Dec 31 Jane Christensen, Russell Gemoll



In Loving Memory

Don Lowe
Joined Church Triumphant on
November 19, 2019

Thank you!

Thanks to all who helped with coffee hour. The snacks were appreciated. This special time of fellowship is important to our church family. Dianna Powell will be coordinating coffee hour next year.

Connie Leeper



December

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|-----|---|--|---|---|-----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 10:30 a.m. Worship and Music 4:00 p.m. Mission & Outreach 5:30 p.m. Christian Nurture & Fellowship | 4 1:00 p.m. PW Tea | 5 6:00 p.m. Cunningham Music Concert | 6 7:30 p.m. UNI Glee Christmas Concert | 7 |
| 8 Communion Christmas Brunch | 9 | 10 9:00 a.m. Foster Care 4:00 p.m. Personnel 5:00 p.m. Love INC 6:30 p.m. Deacons | 11 | 12 9:30 a.m. New Beginnings | 13 6:00 p.m. Youth Bowling Party | 14 |
| 15 3:00 p.m. Christmas Caroling | 16 | 17 9:00 a.m. Foster Care 6:00 p.m. Session | 18 NO WEDNESDAY MUSIC REHEARSALS 5:30 Christmas Pot-luck and Children's Program at CF First Presbyterian | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 Christmas Joy Offering 4:00 p.m. Sunday Supper Carol Sing | 23 | 24 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSE AT NOON 6:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service | 25 Merry Christmas! CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED NO EVENING ACTIVITIES | 26 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED | 27 | 28 |
| 29 NO WELL NO SUNDAY SUPPER | 30 | 31 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSE AT NOON | January 1 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED NO EVENING ACTIVITIES | | | |

Each Sunday:

8:45 a.m. Coffee and Conversation
10:00 a.m. Worship Service
3:30 p.m. The Well (Junior/Senior High Fellowship)
5:00 p.m. Sunday Supper

Each Tuesday:

8:30 a.m. Tuesday Morning Bible Study
1:00 p.m. Staff Meeting

Each Wednesday:

5:30 p.m. SHINE (Elementary and Parents) at 1st Pres. Cedar Falls
6:00 p.m. Celebration Ringers Rehearsal
7:30 p.m. Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Waterloo, IA 50703
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www.1stpresby.org

Church Office Hours

9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.
Monday through Thursday
(closed 12:00-1:00 for lunch hour)

Closed on Fridays

The Church office will close at Noon on December 24 and be closed December 25-27.

The office will be open normal hours Monday, December 30.

The office will close at Noon on December 31 and closed all day January 1.

Contact Us

Phone: 319-233-6145

You may also e-mail the staff at the following addresses:

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First Church Leadership Team

Elders: Donna Beaver, Jim Christensen, Tom Christensen, Mary Kabel, Dan Klann, Kari O. Narey, Nancy Newhoff, Jean Seeland and Nancy Valentine

Deacons: Jan Bellinger, Beth Klann, Gary Lee, Kathy McClain, Marsha Muir, Mary Mumm, Richard Platt, Marge Polacek, Ann Sage, and Don Schwab

PWC Moderator: Marie Fernau

Treasurer: Craig Sage

Clerk of Session: Jean Seeland

Foundation President: David Kabel