

THE BLADE

*Our vision is to see lives changed through joyful worship, supportive relationships,
faith formation, heartfelt service empowered by the mercy, grace, and love of Jesus Christ*



December 2021

*“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.”*

John 3:16 NRSV



God With Us



“One of the essential paradoxes of Advent: that while we wait for God, we are with God all along, that while we need to be reassured of God’s arrival, or the arrival of our homecoming, we are already at home. While we wait, we have to trust, to have faith, but it is God’s grace that gives us that faith. As with all spiritual knowledge, two things are true, and equally true, at once. The mind can’t grasp paradox; it is the knowledge of the soul.”

Michelle Blake, The Tentmaker



Celtic Advent Worship Service

Wednesdays Dec. 1, 8, and 15, 2021 at 6:00 PM
in the Sanctuary. (There will be no Zoom)



THE BLADE

First Presbyterian Church

405 7th Avenue

Brookings, SD 57006

(605) 692-2416

www.brookingspresbyterian.org

presby@brookings.net

Rev. Norlita Kaul

(248) 342-6190

brookingsfpcpastor@gmail.com

In office at FPC 9:30 am-12:30 pm

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday

Church Office Hours

Monday - Thursday 9 am – 2:30 pm

Admin. Assistant

Rozanne McGrath

presby@brookings.net

For regular updates and photos, like us on Facebook



www.facebook.com/fpcbroomings

Please check the website

www.brookingspresbyterian.org for the “Prison Lighthouse Ministry Newsletter” and “Susan’s Saga.”

Got myself a Microsoft advent calendar, I'm worried that once I've opened 3 or 4 windows I won't be able to open any more...



Many thanks to our members and friends for your continued financial support. Offerings can still be made by sending a check to the church or to David Peterson.

* Just for your information, the per capita per person for 2021 is \$34.78. If you have not done so, we would appreciate your donation.



If you would like our team of prayer volunteers to pray for you or a loved one, please contact **Jan J at 692-5325**, **Lee P at 692-7757**, or the church office at 692-2416 who will contact the prayer volunteers. *(Your concern will not go beyond the prayer team unless you request it be shared with others)*

Prayer Families

Prayer is an important part of our life as a community of faith. We encourage you to pray for the people listed each week during your time of daily prayer.

December 5: Martin & Sally M, Tom & Jeannie M

December 12: Maria M, Mike & Judy M, Robert & Rozanne M

December 19: Dan & Carolyn M & family Hannah, Allison, Emma, Marlys M; Don & Kay N, Dave & Lee P

December 26: Harold & Marjorie P, Rose P, Cliff R

Session approved Administrative Assistant's vacation from Dec. 27 - 30, 2021. Rozanne back in the office 1-03/2022.



**Donations accepted
November 28-December 19**



TREE OF WARMTH: The Deacons have set up a Christmas tree for donations of **new** mittens, caps, scarves. All sizes are needed for children to choose and give to siblings and parents for Christmas. Last day of donations is **December 15th**.

Thank you for the monetary donations so First Presbyterian could supply instant mashed potatoes for the **FEEDING BROOKINGS Thanksgiving Meal**.

*Thank you for food pantry donations however the need is never ending. Food Pantry donations of non-perishable items can be dropped off at our church or the Food Pantry at 217 4th St. between 9:30 and 5 MWF.



Q: How many Christmas trees can you plant on an empty farm?
A: One, because then the farm isn't empty anymore.



News You Can Use



UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Wednesday, Dec. 1 **Deacon Meeting** at the church, 12 Noon
- Tuesday, Dec. 7: **Mission/Finance** via **Zoom** at 6:30 PM
- Thursday, Dec. 9. : **Session Meeting** in **person** at 7:00 PM

STUDY AND FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

- SUNDAY** 9:15 AM Adult Sunday School and 11:45 AM Youth Sunday School
 - TUESDAY MORNING COFFEE GROUP** 9:30ish AM at First Lutheran Mission Coffee House
 - PIECES AND PRAYERS** meet Tuesdays at 1:30 PM at the church to quilt. All are welcome!
 - THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY** at 9:30 AM in the FPC Center Meeting Room
 - MEN'S BROTHERHOOD** on December 16 at 5:30 PM at the church basement
- ADVENT POTLUCK after worship on Sunday, Dec. 19**



POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS: We are accepting monetary donations for poinsettias to grace and beautify our sanctuary starting Sunday, Dec. 12th. If you would prefer to purchase and bring your own poinsettias, we will be glad to display them also. Names of those honored or remembered will be included as always in the PowerPoint. There will be a sign-up sheet on the office counter.

***You're Invited to attend
the Pastor's Table Gathering Holiday Edition***

When: *Wednesday, December 8, 2021*
Where: *Summerhill Community Clubhouse
on Trail Ridge Circle Drive*
Time: *11:30 AM-1:30pm*
What to bring: *Yourself!*
Cost: *Just Your Time*
**Please RSVP to the Church Office by Sunday
Dec.5th**



*Come as you are, for as long as you're able.
We'll share food, fellowship, Communion and Christmas Carols/Songs in a Sing a long. Looking forward to seeing you there!*

Rev. Norlita

MEN'S BROTHERHOOD

Andrew L'Amour

December 2021



Men's Brotherhood Notes: MB met November 18 for dinner.

There were eight in attendance. We had a wonderful spaghetti, meatballs, garlic toast and salad for a meal. Ice cream bars for dessert. No program, but Mike and Dave gave some updated info on the east-side parking area. It is being considered that we have a dinner with the women at some future time at a to be determined location.

Seasonal thoughts: Hopefully we have reviewed the many things we are thankful for this year. The obvious things – health and well-being (we hope), family friends, comfortable living standard, etc. The usual. But what about those who do not enjoy these things? Are we thankful that we can offer some peace and comfort to them either through prayer, visiting, or some form of monetary assistance?

Coming off the pandemic our country is in a state of some folks doing well and some struggling yet financially or with health and safety issues. We need to reserve judgment about their decisions. We live in times of increasing polarization and judgment about the actions of folks we don't agree with. I confess I am at times drawn into the trap of being judgmental. We must be careful that we do not withhold assistance if there is a need. We can fall back and say, "I told you so!" but we should not go there. If a brother or sister is in need, we are to offer any aid we can.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.... Jesus came to show us how to live with each other, how to get along despite any differences we might have.

Christmas time is time we celebrate the birth of Christ and the gifts He brought to us – love, compassion, sacrifice for one another. These are the real gifts of the season. Forget the ties, the electronic toys, all the doodads and whatnots. They can be a total distraction we need to resist. Keep our eyes on the prize! The prize being Jesus Christ and the lessons of love found in scripture. Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year!



HY VEE

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE!

Goal: \$150,000.00
Receipts: \$136,253.51
Needed to Date: \$13,746.49

Required for \$1,000 donation:
\$150,000.00

Remember to bring in your Brookings Hy-Vee receipts.

Please contact the church office if you are willing to help enter the HyVee receipts--join the team! If you have a computer with internet access, we will help you set up your free google account (if needed) and train you on how to enter the HyVee receipts.

Many hands make light work, so let's work together!

Q: What has forty feet and sings Jingle Bells?

A: Christmas Carolers.



Revelings for December 2021

"Take time to be aware that in the very midst of our busy preparations for the celebration of Christ's birth in ancient Bethlehem, Christ is reborn in the Bethlehems of our homes and daily lives. Take time, slow down, be still, be awake to the Divine Mystery that looks so common and so ordinary yet is wondrously present.

"An old abbot was fond of saying, 'The devil is always the most active on the highest feast days (holy days in the Christian Year).'

"The supreme trick of Old Scratch (the devil) is to have us so busy decorating, preparing food, practicing music and cleaning in preparation for the feast of Christmas that we actually miss the coming of Christ. Hurt feelings, anger, impatience, injured egos—the list of clouds that busyness creates to blind us to the birth can be long, but it is familiar to us all." Edward Hays, A Pilgrim's Almanac



Dear Friends,

As we move through the days of Advent preparation, to make ready and the room in our hearts to receive the blessing of Christ's Holy Birth, may our days be meaningful and intentional. Our question as First Presbyterian Church remains, "where are you leading us O God?" Into this season of Advent's preparation, and the incarnation of God's presence comes into our world, in human form through a child named Jesus in Nazareth, lies the mystery in the answer to this question. It comes to us as individuals and as Christ's church.

From Luke's Gospel, Chapter 1, verses 28b-33, 37-38 we read:

"Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you. But she (Mary) was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel (Gabriel) said unto her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now you will conceive and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.'...For nothing will be impossible with God. Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.'

With Mary's example of vulnerability, intentionality, and trust as God's servant, we can and should confidently pray then our question of openness, willingness and own vulnerability, "where are you leading us O God." May God's peace be upon you during this month of December. May it be filled also with Hope, and Love, but most of all Joy! From my house to your house-God's Blessings always!

Faithfully,
Rev. Norlita

Session approved Pastor's vacation Tuesday, Dec. 21 through Sat. Jan. 1, 2022. For pastoral care needs, please contact one of our CREs, Robby and Donna or Elizabeth.



**Advent/Christmas Theme –
Living ‘In Between’**

Nov.28 “Hanging of the Greens”
(The coming kingdom means new life)
Mark 12:28-34

Dec. 1 Celtic Advent Prayer Service

Dec. 5 “Repent and Follow” (Shifting our

directions & priorities enables reception of new life) Luke 3:1-6

Dec. 8 Celtic Advent Prayer Service

Dec. 12 “What Then Should We Do” (Repenting means choosing to live differently) Luke 3:7-18

Dec. 17 Celtic Advent Prayer Service

Dec. 19: “Can They Hear Us Singing?” (Music Sunday) Luke 1:39-55

Dec. 24 Christmas Eve Service/Communion led by Elizabeth Fox at 6:30 PM (sanctuary/Zoom)

Dec. 26 “Lessons and Carols” (a lay person led worship service)

There will be no Sunday School on Dec. 26, 2021 and Jan. 2, 2022



**Welcome to our new members, Kennedy N and Gayle F
who joined us officially in November!**



SUSAN'S SAGA

December 2021

The arrival of the holiday season includes the tasty prospect of many traditional foods, for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and the New Year. These traditions vary quite a lot from family to family, and especially between cultures.

In Mexico, the festivities begin with All Saints Day. Among the traditional foods are *enfrijoladas*, which are corn tortillas immersed in a thin sauce of pureed black beans flavored with avocado leaf, then folded over and served with string cheese. (These have become one of my favorites!)

The holiday season lasts into January. On Epiphany the arrival of the Kings or Magi is commemorated with wreaths of sweet bread, decorated with colorful dried fruits, to be shared with the extended family. There are little plastic figures embedded in the dough. Whoever gets one is supposed to treat everyone else to tamales on Candlemass, which is February 2nd. That is the traditional date when the Baby Jesus was taken to the temple, 40 days after His birth.

I am currently taking a class on Cross-cultural Self-awareness. One of the topics is food, meals, and associated practices. It is amazing how widely customs can vary between cultures. What is deemed acceptable and normal in one culture, can seem awkward, quite weird or downright disgusting to people from another culture. For example, in some cultures it is essential to serve the seniors first out of respect and the children last. In others, it is offensive for women to eat with the men. In some places, food is never served family-style, but someone dishes out the food for each person. In yet others, everyone eats from a common platter. Yet food is really basic for everyone and can be an effective way of relating cross-culturally. We need to learn to accept others and be willing to get out of our own comfort zone so that we can have fellowship around a meal.

It was certainly a live topic in the first century. The Apostle Paul writes extensively about food issues, in Romans 14:14-23, I Corinthians Chapter 8, and touched on again in Galatians 2:12. A good summary is found in I Corinthians 9:22: "...I try to find common ground with everyone, doing everything I can to save some."

Paul was willing to lay aside the strict Jewish customs he grew up with so that his ministry could extend to others. He came to realize that making God's message of salvation known to others was more important than feeling comfortable.

Through the centuries fellowship surrounding food has been foundational for establishing bonds cross-culturally. There is something about sharing a meal and conversation which promotes relationship. I have found that among the Mixtecs it is really important to eat with them and enjoy their food. They are pleased when I appreciate what they have prepared, as it indicates that I value their culture and identity as a people.

During this holiday season and year-round may we be sensitive to people of other cultures, including their ways of eating. Brookings is becoming more multi-cultural, with students at SDSU hailing from many places around the globe. If one looks around, there may be opportunities to reach out to those who are far from home during the holidays.

Susan Huggins

Scripture quote is taken from the New American Standard Bible. *Susan Huggins is serving in full-time ministry as a Bible translator among the Mixtec people of Oaxaca, Mexico. Susan's sending agency, Wycliffe Bible Translators, is a non-denominational organization; she raises her own funds to support this ministry*

A Christmas Chuckle:

Q: Why do so many people smile in December?


A:





December 2021



Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	5Fri	Sat
			1 Deacon Meeting at church 12 noon Celtic Advent Service 6:00 PM (no Zoom)	2	3 OFFICE CLOSED BIRTHDAY: Rosa G	4
5 9:15 Adult Bible Study 10:30 Worship and Communion in our Sanctuary/Zoom 11:45 Sunday School	6 BIRTHDAY: Dean H.	7 9:30 Coffee Group 1:30 Pieces and Prayers 6:30 Mission/Finance Mtg via Zoom	8 Pastor;s Table @11:30AM @ Summer Hill Clubhouse Celtic Advent Service 6:00 PM (no Zoom)	9 9:30 Bible Study Session Meeting at FPC 7:00 PM BIRTHDAY: LaVonne B	10	11
12 9:15 Adult Bible Study 10:30 Worship in our Sanctuary/Zoom 11:45 Sunday School	13 BLADE Articles Due	14 9:30 Coffee Group 1:30 Pieces and Prayers	15 Celtic Advent Service 6:00 PM (no Zoom)	16 9:30 Bible Study 5:30 Men's Brotherhood	17 BIRTHDAY: Carrie V	18
19 9:15 Adult Bible Study 10:30 Worship in our Sanctuary/Zoom 11:45 Sunday School Advent Potluck after service	20 ANNIVERSARY: Stephen & Carrie V	21 9:30 Coffee Group 1:30 Pieces and Prayers Rev. Kaul on vacation Dec. 20-Jan. 2	22	23 9:30 Bible Study	24 <i>Christmas Eve</i> Worship/Communion at 6:30 PM BIRTHDAY: Rozanne M.	25 <i>Christmas</i> 
26 NO Adult Sunday School 10:30 Worship in our Sanctuary/Zoom NO Youth Sunday School ANNIVERSARY: Bob & Pat F	27	28 ANNIVERSARY: Neal & Julie F Skip & Sharon W Rozanne on vacation Dec. 27-30	29 BIRTHDAY: Sally M Marge P	30 9:30 Bible Study	31 <i>New Year's Eve</i> BIRTHDAY: Jan B	

The Blade

First Presbyterian Church

405 7th Avenue

Brookings, SD 57006-2018



Return Service Requested

Regular Sunday Schedule

September - May

9:15 am Adult Bible Study
10:30 am Worship Service
11:45 am Sunday School

Pastor's Office Hours

At FPC

Mon, Tues, Thurs

9:30 am – 12:30 pm

Appointments also available
as need/desired

Church Office Hours

Monday -Thursday

9:00 am – 2:30 am

Pastor's Sabbath

Friday and Saturday

(in emergencies, please call/text
Pastor's cell #)

Our newsletter is available electronically by email.

Please contact the church office at presby@brookings.net or 605-692-2416, to notify us.