

# 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 2020



*“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*

*If you look for Me at  
Christmas,  
you won't need a special star—  
I'm no longer just in Bethlehem,  
I'm right there where you are.  
You may not be aware of Me  
amid the celebrations—  
You'll have to look beyond the stores  
and all the decorations.  
But if you take a moment  
from your list of things to do  
And listen to your heart, you'll find  
I'm waiting there for you.  
You're the one I want to be with,  
you're the reason that I came,  
And you'll find Me in the stillness  
as I'm whispering your name.*

*Love,*

*Jesus*



# DECEMBER

## THE BLADE

### First Presbyterian Church

405 7th Avenue  
Brookings, SD 57006  
(605) 692-2416

[www.brookingspresbyterian.org](http://www.brookingspresbyterian.org)  
[presby@brookings.net](mailto:presby@brookings.net)

### Church Office Hours

Monday - Thursday 9 am – 2:30 pm

### Session Members

Donna Flint (clerk),  
Dolores Canaday, Martin Maca,  
Mike McCann, David Peterson,  
Susan Smith, Terry Spitzenberger

### Rev. Norlita Kaul

(248) 342-6190

[brookingsfpcpastor@gmail.com](mailto:brookingsfpcpastor@gmail.com)

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

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday

**In office at BUUC** 9:30 am-12:30 pm

Tuesday

### Admin. Assistant

Rozanne McGrath  
[presby@brookings.net](mailto:presby@brookings.net)

For regular updates and  
photos, like us on  
Facebook



[www.facebook.com/fpcbroomings](http://www.facebook.com/fpcbroomings)



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 this year is \$34.75.

David Peterson, Treasurer



Our team of prayer volunteers are eager and ready to pray for you, a loved one, or any special request. Contact Jan Jones at 692-5325 and/or Lee Peterson at 692-7757. (Concerns are confidentially held within our prayer team unless it is to be shared by the requester.)

## *Prayer Families*

We encourage everyone in our community of faith and life together to pray for those listed below during daily prayer time.

**December 6:** Nancy Ohnstad, David & Lee Peterson

**December 13:** Brock Peterson, John Peterson, Anna Pickford

**December 20:** Harold & Marjorie Poppen, Rozella Potthast

**December 27:** Lynn & Diane Riedesel, Clifford Rindels

# Session Meeting Updates

November 12, 2020



The proposal to share ministry (yoke) with Brookings United Church of Christ has been forwarded to Presbytery to be considered in the November meeting of the Congregational and Pastoral Care Ministry Team.

Session began updating the church rolls. The church pays Presbytery a per capita amount \$34.78 for each member listed on the rolls, so keeping the roll accurate is important in the financial life of the church.

Session approved a continuing education week for the pastor Sunday December 27- January 2 to develop an Adult Bible study. Also approved was a request to roll over the 4th week of vacation from 2020 into 2021.

Session discussed the importance of the role of Deacon during this time when it is so possible for members of the congregation to feel isolated and separated from their church community. We encourage everyone to find a way to reach out to others in the church- Deacons and members alike. With God's help and the support of this Christian community, together we will weather this storm of pandemic and social and political unrest.

Respectfully submitted,  
Donna Flint  
Clerk to the Session

**SUNDAY SCHOOL for YOUTH – JOIN US SUNDAYS AT 9:15 AM**  
**Adult Bible Study on Sundays will not be meeting** until further notice.



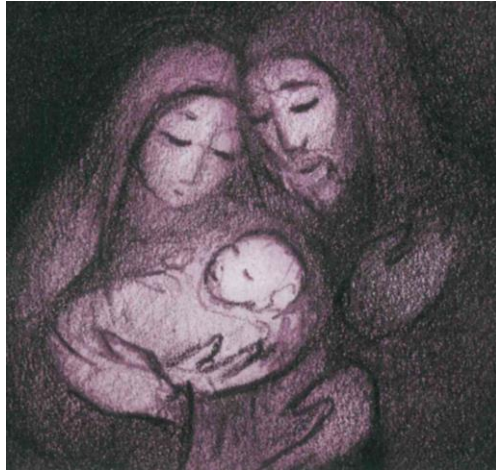
The Deacons thank each of you for your help in caring for our congregation and community by your monetary donations, volunteering time, and offering prayers.

\*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.

**FEEDING BROOKINGS** will once again be hosting a **meal for Christmas**. First Presbyterian Church has been asked to donate 125 cans of fruit. We will be accepting monetary donations for purchase of them through the **end of the month**. Thank you for your generosity!

**PROJECT JOY** Our Deacons are encouraging our participation in the PROJECT JOY gift drive this year. Personal donations may be taken to Brookings Radio, Lewis, and Walmart. Deadline: **Dec. 7th**. Project Joy trees are at Lewis, Walmart and HyVee.





## **PCUSA CHRISTMAS JOY SPECIAL OFFERING**

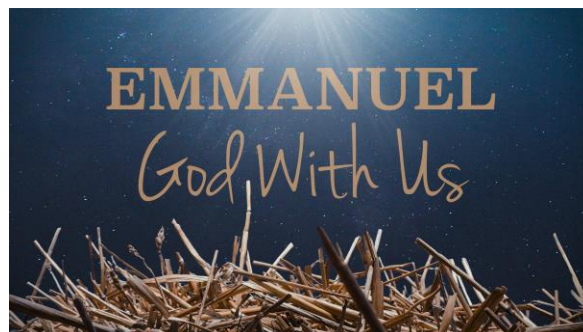
Nov. 29 – Dec. 20

### **“THE PERFECT GIFT”**

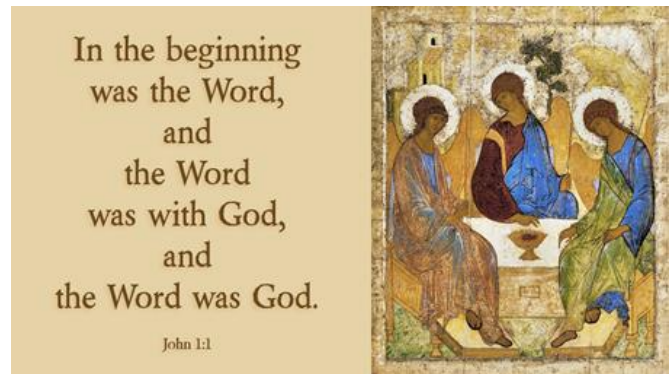
One of the most powerful things that Christians claim is that God saw the great needs of the world and offered a perfect gift in response, a gift that brought God and humanity closer together. God’s perfect gift, Jesus Christ. “Emmanuel, God is with us!” our Advent dream proclaims, as God joins in human life, and draws us together as a result. “God is with us” shows God values togetherness and relationship with us, leading us to value togetherness and relationship with one another. When we are all together—and even when we are apart.

During these past months, many of us weren’t able to be together in person, but we have always been together in spirit, and in faith. We have missed seeing faces we love—up close and personal, but the physical distance has also revealed, for us, the importance of those things which bring us together, even when we are physically far apart.

We offer our gifts during this Advent Season to the Christmas Joy Offering because God shows us the power and importance of being together, of “being with.” We might not be able to meet face to face with those who need the support that our gifts provide, but we are very much still together. We see the potential of students of color who will become our leaders and we seek to come alongside them, to encourage them, to be together with them. And we see church workers who have critical financial needs and we come alongside them, to assist them—we are with them. And we see the witness of the whole Church, either gathered in buildings or connected home to home, member to member, sharing what we have, together. We thank God for being “with us” through the gift of Jesus and for joining us together as the Church and, through our gifts, with those who have need.



## Revelings December 2020



### John 1:1-18 The Word Became Flesh

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him, not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. <sup>15</sup>(John testified to him and cried out, 'This was he of whom I said, "He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me."') <sup>16</sup>From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. <sup>17</sup>The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup>No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known. (*NRSV-oremus.org*)

As we come into this Advent Season in 2020, we're reminded again of God's promises of restoration as found in the Christ Child, as long-awaited Messiah for God's people. For me, nothing speaks more clearly and loudly about this promise of covenant-keeping to me than the relationships that God has sustained from generation to generation. The prologue of John's Gospel speaks well of this promise of the restoration of individuals, families, communities. It happens in and through our day to day living and in our relationships, one to another.

We continue with Bret Lamsma's thoughts about community from the [todaydevotional.com](http://todaydevotional.com) website which are adapted for this month's reflection.

Lamsma wrote; "It is popular today to restore old things or repurpose items for a new use. Some TV shows, stores, and internet pages are dedicated to this idea. My wife and I walk through a nearby antique mall sometimes on my day off. It's fun to look at all the old things and imagine what they would look like with a new coat of paint, a different set of accessories, or hanging on a wall.

Every so often one of those projects comes home with us or inspires us to repurpose or restore something that we already have lying around the house.

We all have scratches and dents from our lives, some from our own doing. But Jesus sees through all that and focuses on the person we are created to be. In community, we also do that for each other. We see past old mistakes, and we accept each other for the people we are created to be. In community, restoration happens all the time. "

As we embark on our Advent journey 2020 toward Bethlehem's manger, let us remember that even during this time of the pandemic, we're still part of our faith community. We may not be able to be together physically as we'd desire or hope to be, to worship or fellowship, as we've done in years passed. We may find ourselves connecting via Zoom for our times of worship or going to our faith community's website to listen to the worship service. We may be receiving our worship information via mail or email. But still, we're connected, still, we're part of our community.

As of November 15, 2020, First Presbyterian Church and Brookings United Church of Christ began a new ministry of sharing a pastor. We are excited to see what God's future holds for each faith community but also what we'll be able to do together as being part of the Family of God.

In some ways, we could look at this time of sharing as being a restoration also in the renewing of our ties in the Reformed Theological Tradition, from which both denominations can trace ancestral roots.

Advent 2020, a time of restoration, a time of promise, a time of hope in our communities of faith, in the Family of God. Wishing everyone Advent Blessings and a wonderful Christmas. May your holiday season be merry and bright!

Prayer: God we thank you for restoring us. Help us see others as you would have us see them, fully restored. Even so, come Lord Jesus into our hearts during this Advent. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Faithfully,

Rev. Norlita



**BEGINNING WITH SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29<sup>TH</sup>**, the first Sunday in Advent,

Rev. Norlita will begin the following schedule:

8:30 AM Worship at Brookings United Church of Christ (BUCC)

10:30 AM Worship at First Presbyterian Church (as normal)

Her office hours will be Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM at FPC

Tuesday 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM at BUCC

She is available by email [brookingsfpcpastor@gmail.com](mailto:brookingsfpcpastor@gmail.com) or cell phone and text at 248-342-6190.

**Members and friends of both congregations are encouraged to stop by and see Rev. Norlita as needed at either church.**

**First Presbyterian Church  
405 7<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Brookings, SD 57006  
605-692-2416**

**Brookings United Church of Christ  
828 8<sup>th</sup> St S  
Brookings, SD 57006  
605-697-2882**

# ADVENT DEVOTIONALS



Welcome to Advent 2020. It's been a year full of challenges, highs and lows, joys and sorrows. It has been a year of uncertainty, of waiting, of watching, of hoping. If ever we needed the peace which surpasses all understanding to keep our hearts and minds open, it's been this year. I've appreciated the work that the Society of St. Andrew has been doing across the U.S. for many years. I've also appreciated their approach to offering Advent/Lent Devotional Resources.

You will find four devotionals taken from this resource coming to you from our church office, for your use, one per week. Please take the week to prayerfully contemplate the scripture verses, their meaning to you and for you, the brief devotional and prayer also. What do these stir up within you? How is the Holy Spirit nudging you to some word/deed/action for the week?

If you would like to have a daily devotional as well, please visit their website to obtain their booklet @ <https://endhunger.org/advent/>. Blessings to you and yours during this special Advent and Holiday Season. Stay safe, strong, vigilant, prayerful and well!

Faithfully, Rev. Norlita



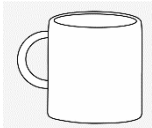
## News You Can Use

**POINTSETTIAS FOR ADVENT/CHRISTMAS** – Due to Covid guidelines, the Worship Committee has purchased two quality silk poinsettia plants. The tradition remains for you and your family to participate by donating monies toward this endeavor. Names of those honored and remembered will be included as always in the PowerPoint. There is a sign-up sheet on the office counter. These poinsettias will grace our sanctuary and bless our worship throughout the season. Any questions, please contact Dolores (692-20370).



**SPECIAL MUSIC** We continue to enjoy special music during our worship service. Please contact Donna (flintd99@gmail) or Ginny (conger.ginny@gmail.com) if you are willing to provide other special music.

**TUESDAY MORNING COFFEE GROUP** will wait until **January** to meet again. Questions? Call Nancy (697-3073) or Dolores (695-3723).



**THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY** will meet **starting December 3<sup>rd</sup> via Zoom** on Thursdays at 9:30am. We are studying the book of Genesis. Questions? Call Lee (692-7757).

## MEN'S BROTHERHOOD

Andrew L'Amour

December 2020



**Men's brotherhood Notes:** No scheduled events at this time. We hope to resume some activities as soon as permissible and prudent. Stay tuned!

**Scripture:** Matthew 11:29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

As we enter the Christmas season, I have been wondering what God the Father's thoughts were as He was preparing for God the Son's becoming human in the form of Jesus. The Father had a pretty good idea of what Jesus' fate was going to be. How do you imagine what might have been in His mind? The Father knew Jesus was entering a dangerous world and would make the ultimate sacrifice.

I have been reading a book by Howard Thurman called *Jesus and the Disinherited*. In the section I am reading right now he is talking about our needing to have a humble attitude. Having a spirit of humility helps remove any power that someone or something else may have over your life. The words humble and humility come from the Latin root word for low, "humilis". Meekness is often a word to describe humility.

Jesus was born into a society that was under Roman rule. He was a Jew and not any citizen of Rome. There was a lot of civil unrest and one reason was the unequal status of the Jews vs. the Roman Army. Jesus taught that to survive in this world and maintain one's spiritual grounding in love for one another, humility had to be an important part. Humility plays an important part in removing or abating the inequity of control one party has over another. The source of the humble attitude must come from the love we have for one another in order to help heal any division.

Having a humble, meek and loving attitude did not save Jesus from the ultimate dangers of this world. But it did usher in a path to the next. His demonstration of the expectations God has for us in our relationships is what we must be also doing.



### **HY VEE**

Remember to save  
your Brookings Hy-Vee receipts.

Goal \$150,000.00

Received to Date: \$134,041.22

Needed to Date: \$15,958.78

**THANK YOU TO EVERYONE!**

**The Scouts Troop 14**  
will not be meeting until  
safety guidelines are decided upon.





Please donate a can of Lysol or Microban disinfectant to the church—  
it will be so helpful for our expenses this year. Thank you!





# December 2020



Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3 9:30 Bible Study via Zoom <b>Called Session Meeting</b> via Zoom 7:00 PM	4 <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	5
6 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent <b>9:15 Sunday School</b> <b>10:30 Worship and Communion</b> in our Sanctuary <u>Worship Committee</u> after service	7 <i>Dec. 6 continued:</i> BIRTHDAY: Dean Hofland	8 <b>Mission/Finance Meeting</b> via Zoom 6:30 PM	9 <b>Deacon Meeting</b> 5:30 PM Church Lounge  BIRTHDAY: LaVonne Broksieck	10 9:30 Bible Study via Zoom <b>Session Meeting</b> via Zoom 7:00 PM	13	12
13 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent <b>9:15 Sunday School</b> <b>10:30 Worship</b> in our Sanctuary	14	15 <b>BLADE Articles Due</b>	16	17 9:30 Bible Study via Zoom  BIRTHDAY: Carrie Van Buren	18	19
20 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent <b>9:15 Sunday School</b> <b>10:30 Worship</b> in our Sanctuary  ANNIVERSARY: Stephen & Carrie Van Buren	21	22	23	24 <b>CHRISTMAS EVE</b> <b>CANDLELIGHT WITH COMMUNION</b>  4:30 PM @ BUCC 6:30 PM @ FPC  BIRTHDAY: Rozanne McGrath	25 <b>CHRISTMAS</b> 	26  ANNIVERSARY: Bob & Pat Fishback
27 Elizabeth Fox <b>9:15 Sunday School</b> <b>10:30 Worship</b> in our Sanctuary	28 ANNIVERSARIES: Neal & Julie Foster Skip & Sharon Webster	29 BIRTHDAYS: Sally Maca Marge Poppen	30	31 9:30 Bible Study via Zoom  BIRTHDAY: Jan Broksieck	 <b>OFFICE CLOSED December 24th</b>	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <b>Rev. Kaul on leave for Continuing Education December 26 thru January 2</b> </div>						

# The Blade

First Presbyterian Church  
405 7th Avenue  
Brookings, SD 57006-2018



Return Service Requested

**Regular Sunday Schedule**

**September-May**

9:15 am Sunday School  
10:30 am Worship Service

Lord's Supper—  
First Sunday of each month

**Pastor's Office Hours**

**At FPC**

**Mon, Wed, Thurs**

9:30 am – 12:30 pm

**At BUCC**

**Tues 9:30 am – 12:30 pm**

Appointments also available  
as need/desired

**Pastor's Sabbath**

**Friday and Saturday**

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

**Church Office Hours**

**Monday - Thursday**

9:00 am – 2:30 am

If you are interested in receiving the newsletter by email instead of by post mail,  
contact the church office at [presby@brookings.net](mailto:presby@brookings.net) or 692-2416.