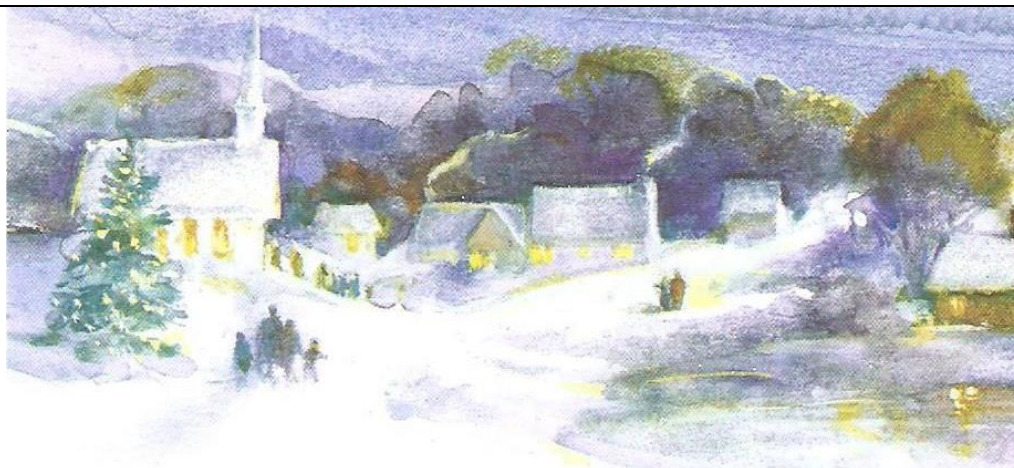


THE BLADE

January & February 2024

“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



Prayer for the New Year

Give us the kindness to hear with compassion,
to offer support,

loving comfort, and care.

Give us the courage to do what is needed,
the wisdom to choose

what is right and most fair.

Give us the vision to see what is possible.

Give us the faith

that will help pave the way
for a present that's hopeful,

a future that's peaceful--

give us the heart to bring joy to each day.

*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*



THE BLADE

First Presbyterian Church

405 7th Avenue
Brookings, SD 57006
(605) 692-2416
www.brookingspresbyterian.org

Pastors

Robby and Donna Flint
605-695-3735 (Robby)
605-695-6787 (Donna)
presbypastor@brookings.net

Church Office Hours

Monday-Thursday 9 am -12 Noon

Office Manager

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"



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.

*For your information, the per capita per person for 2024 is \$40.00. 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.

Jan 7: Dan & Michele K, Don D & Carol G, Delores K

Jan 14: Andrew & Beth L, Ella L, Pam L

Jan 21: Jeanne & Darwin L, Martin & Sally M

Jan 28: Jeannie & Tom M, Maria M, Mike & Judy M

Feb. 4: Rozanne M, Daniel & Carolyn M & family Hannah, Allison, & Emma)

Feb. 11: Marlys M, Nancy & Bob O, Dave & Lee P

Feb. 18: John P, Rose P, Joyce R, Cliff R

Feb. 25: Liz R, Rick & Bonnie S, Julie & Stanley S & family Stanley & Dylan

Counting our Blessings

Friends,

Over the last couple of months, we have been reading books, blogs, and watching webinars all to help us think about this community we call “the church.” We came across segments that echoed much of what the folks from PCUSA Project Regeneration told us about budgeting, and buildings, and the work of the church. We found sources that talk about how to make your church welcoming, how small churches can grow and thrive, and even one book that analyzed how and why churches die and close. All of these can be tools to help us think, over the next year, about what and who this church is called to be. But no amount of knowledge can replace personal, individual commitment on the part of members of this congregation- leaders, members, and friends of this congregation -all can contribute to the life of this church. We ask that you think carefully about your commitment to this church. This month, let’s talk about prayer.

For his book “Autopsy of a Deceased Church: 12 Ways to Keep Yours Alive,” Thom Rainer interviewed friends and members of churches that had recently closed. One man told Rainer that as he looked back, he remembers one thing that seemed to be the beginning of the end. It was when ***the church stopped praying***. He remembered it went from everyone praying, to a small group that met for prayer, and finally to just no genuine prayer. They continued to have corporate prayer during worship, but his church stopped being a church that prayed.

Think about the prayer life of this church. Following church policy, all of our meetings are opened and closed with prayer, we pray regularly during worship service- and these prayers are all important. We have a very strong group of ladies that meet and pray regularly for this church and for the members of this church- which is very good.

However, this should not constitute the fullness of our prayer life. How can each one of us contribute to the prayer life of the church?

It takes intentional effort to pray every day- and it’s hard sometimes to think of what to “say.” There is no rule about that- no fancy language is required. Some days, you might simply run through the list of people on your heart and mind and ask for God’s love and intervention in their lives. Other days, you could pull out the prayer list from the bulletin and think about and pray for each person on the list. As you meet people or read the paper or watch the news, look for opportunities to pray that God will intervene where there is discord or chaos or where comfort is needed- or pray in thanks when you learn of good news! All of these strengthen the prayer life of our church- it helps each of us develop the habit of prayer- the habit of turning to God and trusting in God to walk alongside of us every day.

One of the simplest, yet most important prayers you can pray is simply a request for God to lead you, to guide you, to help you to know what God’s will is for your life. We can all grow in our commitment to intentional prayer- and I hope that the church- its mission, its leaders and members- will be added to your prayer list and you will pray this simple prayer- ***God, what is Your will for this congregation and what is my part in Your plan?***

We continue to look forward with excitement and anticipation to see what plans God has for us as part of Christ’s church. We pray for each one of you and we pray for this church as this unfolds.

Yours,

Robby and Donna

Session Update—December 14, 2022

	Elder of the Month	Deacon of the Month
January	Dan K	Ann D
February	Bruce W	Ann D

The session welcomed new Elders Joel Foster and Nancy Thompson and expressed grateful appreciation to Elder Terry Spitzenberger who completed his sixth year as an elder and Chair of the Building and Grounds Committee. We also welcomed our new Moderator, Pastor Donna Flint. Donna also completed her sixth year as an elder.

Treasurer Dave Peterson reviewed the budget. Committee chairs are encouraged to talk with him about budget requests for 2024. The budget will be set to match expected giving.

The Session voted to change the worship time to 10:00 am sometime in 2024. The exact date will depend upon the organist's availability.

The annual church meeting has been set for Sunday, **January 21, 2024**. Committee chairs need to get their annual reports to Rozanne by Tuesday, **January 2**. The new Deacons and Elders will be installed during the **January 7, 2024** service.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Kemp
Clerk of Session
First Presbyterian Church of Brookings, SD



Monthly Financial Report						
2023	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Income	12,410.10	9,412.93	8,870.38	18,219.43	13,238.10	14,285.07
Expense	8,993.79	8,371.22	8,573.44	11,181.86	8,935.27	21,255.43
Difference	3,416.31	1,041.71	296.94	7,037.57	4,302.83	-6,970.36

2023	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	To Date
Income	15,930.49	6,376.33	9,361.01	15,642.07	5,966.78	0.00	129,712.69
Expense	5,927.50	6,543.93	5,532.07	6,373.75	9,101.64	0.00	100,789.90
Difference	10,002.99	-167.60	3,828.94	9,268.32	-3,134.86	0.00	28,922.79

The December financial information will be available the second week of January.



News You Can Use



UPCOMING JANUARY MEETINGS

Tuesday, Jan. 9:

Mission/Finance via Zoom at 6:30 PM

Thursday, Jan. 11:

Session Meeting at church, 7:00 PM

Sunday, Jan. 14:

Fellowship/Outreach Meeting following worship

Sunday, Jan. 21:

Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, Jan. 21:

Worship Committee Meeting after Congregational Meeting

UPCOMING FEBRUARY MEETINGS

Tuesday, Feb. 6:

Mission/Finance via Zoom at 6:30 PM

Thursday, Feb. 8:

Session Meeting at 7:00 PM

Sunday, Feb. 11:

Fellowship/Outreach Meeting following worship service

Sunday, Feb. 18:

Worship Committee Meeting following worship service

STUDY AND FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

TUESDAY MORNING COFFEE GROUP 9:30ish AM at First Lutheran Mission Coffee House

PIECES AND PRAYERS will meet on Tuesdays at 1:30 PM at the FPC Quilting Room

THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY at 9:30 AM in the FPC Center Meeting Room
(Jan. 4 start new study on Exodus)

SISTERHOOD on Thursday, Jan. 18 (at noon at the Church - see *Pill Bottles* article) & Feb. 15 at 11:30 AM at the First Lutheran Mission Coffee House

MEN'S BROTHERHOOD on Thursday, Jan. 18 & Feb. 15 at 5:30 PM at the church lounge

SERVING IN JANUARY/FEBRUARY

Liturgists in January

Jan 7: Dan K
Jan 14: Nancy T
Jan 21: Rick S
Jan 28: Dolores C

Liturgists in February

**Can we add your name here?
See Ginny, Robby, or Donna**



A huge thank you to all who gave to Project Joy and Thanksgiving Feeding Brookings. We gave 13 dozen cases of instant potatoes to Thanksgiving Feeding Brookings, that was 156 packages! Thank you!!

Food prices continue to rise, and more people are needing help to feed their family. Please continue to take food donations directly to the Food Pantry in Brookings. Donations can be made on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10am to 5pm at their new location, 908 Hope Drive located off of Harvey Dunn Street. Monetary donations can be placed in the offering plate with a notation on the check to go to the Food Pantry.



FELLOWSHIP AND OUTREACH NEWS



Ash Wednesday is on Wednesday, February 14th. Fellowship/Outreach Committee will be providing and serving a soup supper during Lent on Wednesdays, February 21, March 6, and March 20 at 5:30 PM in the church basement. Christian Ed will provide a short program after the meal.

Worship Committee



Worship Committee is looking for people interested in enhancing our worship experiences in the following ways:

- * Provide a message or sermon for a worship service. The Flints will not be preaching for one week each month, usually the fourth Sunday, so there are twelve opportunities for someone else to provide the message.
- * Assist with the service as liturgist or scripture reader. When the Flints are preaching, the assistant would read some of the scriptures. When the Flints are not preaching, the assistant would likely do more of the service as the liturgists do now. We will also be setting up a lectern on the main floor so you don't have to climb steps to participate.
- * Be a greeter to hand out bulletins and welcome people to the service.

If you are interested in serving in any of these ways, please let Ginny (605-651-1918) or Rozanne or any member of the Worship Committee know. Please let us know if you would like to be a liturgist by **January 11th**.

Pieces and Prayers

(Prayer quilt group)

Thank you so much for all your donations of fabric and sewing equipment over the past year. They are being well used and are greatly appreciated.



On Dec. 17, 2023, Pieces and Prayers gave pillowcases to the church youth for Christmas.

Pill Bottles

Matthew 25: Ministries will accept our donation of empty plastic pill bottles for inclusion in their shipments of medical supplies. The pill bottle program fulfills the dual needs of improving medical care in developing countries and caring for our environment. In developing countries, medicines are often dispensed into hands, leaves, or any other available containers. How would you like to have the pharmacist put your pills into your handkerchief to take them home? We will be sending clean, empty plastic pill bottles to help the poorest of the poor with capped, unlabeled, and sterilized containers for their medicines.



In order to reach as many people as possible, Matthew 25: Ministries partners with non-profit organizations in the recipient locations. Through these relationships they ensure that donated goods are shipped to places with true need and distributed by people who are familiar with the area. Matthew 25: Ministries works with more than 40 organizations in the Greater Cincinnati area, groups throughout the United States, and partners in approximately 70 countries worldwide.

That being said, we ask for your help. Women of the church will be meeting a couple of times to clean and package the pills we have collected during this past year of 2023 (approximately 6 boxes). Our first meeting will be **with Sisterhood at the church at noon on Thursday, January 18**. Come fellowship with us! Pizza will be served and we will clean up the pill bottles. At another meeting (date determined later) we will sort and package the bottles for shipment. If you would like to help but cannot make the meetings, you may bring Gallon zip lock bags into which the bottles will be put for shipment OR make a free will donation for pizza and postage.

For questions, please contact Dolores or Linda.

January and February 2024

Andrew L



Men's Brotherhood Notes: Men's Brotherhood's next meetings are scheduled for December 20, January 18 and February 15. As we go to print the programs for our next meetings are not set. One thing for sure is they will be interesting and informative, plus we will have a great meal as usual. Follow announcements in our weekly church bulletin for any changes. So please plan on attending and encouraging other men to attend.

Scripture: Matthew 2:9-11 ".....and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh."

Lights! Everywhere lights. My grandson and I went shopping for lights for the outside of their house. We even bought a blow-up Christmas Tree with lights for our front yard. Everyone enjoys the lights in these darkened times as we approach the winter solstice. Why lights? One reason I was told is that it was commemorating the Light the Magi followed as they approached where Jesus was. As we show these lights we are remembering the story of the Magi and Christ's birth. (Of course some folks think it is so Santa doesn't get lost but I don't want to dwell there.)

The Magi aren't alive today obviously but there are modern day Magi among us. Who are they? They are us! We modern day Magi follow the light which is the teaching of Jesus. But we are also the light as we put that teaching into practice. It is written in Matthew 5:16 "In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

Gifts! The Magi brought gifts to Jesus. We bring the fruits of our faith in how we apply the teachings of Jesus, to love God and to love one another. And the means by which we demonstrate this love, these are the gifts we bring to Christ. And we then become the light showing the way to Christ and His love for us all.



Girl Scout Troop #57024 meet the second and fourth Thursdays of each month. Christine L and Katie K are co-leaders of this troop of Daisies (K-1st).

HYVEE

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE!

Goal:	\$200,000.00
Received:	\$164,730.05
Needed to Date:	\$35,269.95

Required for \$1,000 donation:
\$200,000.00

Remember to bring in your Brookings Hy-Vee receipts.

Email a copy of the receipt from on-line orders to presby@brookings.net; Rozanne will forward it.

The Church Office will be Closed



January 1



January 15



February 19



Susan's Saga

The Incarnation. An amazing concept that infinite, eternal God enters time and space as the divine Infant. Jesus is fully human and fully God. It is logically impossible for our limited human understanding to completely wrap our minds around this profound truth.

In human terms, a new birth is cause for rejoicing, and thus we can readily identify with the joy brought by the Incarnation. During this season of celebrating the Divine birth, we can heartily join in the festivities surrounding the commemoration of Jesus' nativity.

However, even in the midst of the celebration, there is the somber foreshadowing of the reason for the Incarnation: God was born in human form so that there could be the Crucifixion. It is not logically possible for someone to die without having been born. Birth is the necessary prequel for death. Jesus had to be physically born in order to physically die. And He had to physically die in order to be physically resurrected. There is a sequential chain: birth—death—resurrection. Put another way, resurrection opens the way for freedom from death. There can be no death without there having been prior birth.

But why is death necessary with all of its pain and grief? Death is the direct result of sin: disobedience to God. Resistance and rebellion to God's good and perfect plans and purposes for life for humankind has the consequence of death. The penalty for opposing God is both individual and corporate. No one is exempt, "For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard." The only solution for freedom and release from the morass of cumulative sinfulness in which humanity finds itself mired is the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ in His death.

"Christ died for our sins, just at the Scriptures said. He was buried, and he was raised from the dead...." "For sin is the sting that results in death....But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ."

"God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins. For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood." "God did this to demonstrate his righteousness, for he himself is fair and just, and he makes sinners right in his sight when they believe in Jesus."

The Good News of the release from the guilt and death resulting from sin is the real reason for celebrating the joy at the birth of Jesus.

This remarkable gift of the complete provision of redemption, beginning with the birth and culminating in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, needs to be made known in every language through Bible translation.

Susan Huggins

Scripture quotations are from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, Romans 3:23; I Corinthians 15:3, 4; 56, 57; Romans 3:24, 25; 26.

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.



January 2024






Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
(1 <i>New Year's Day</i> Office Closed	2 9:30 Coffee Group 1:30 Pieces & Prayers	3	4 9:30 Bible Study BIRTHDAY Marlys M	5 OFFICE CLOSED	6
7 10:30 Worship and Communion in our Sanctuary/Zoom (Elders/Deacons installed)	8	9 9:30 Coffee Group 1:30 Pieces & Prayers 6:30 Mission/Finance Mtg via Zoom	10 BIRTHDAY Neal F	11 9:30 Bible Study 7:00 Session Mtg Girl Scouts 6:30-8PM BIRTHDAY Joel F	12	13 BIRTHDAY Daniel M
14 10:30 Worship in our Sanctuary/Zoom Fellowship/Outreach Mtg following worship	15 <i>Martin Luther King Day</i> Office Closed	16 9:30 Coffee Group 1:30 Pieces & Prayers BIRTHDAY Julie S	17	18 9:30 Bible Study 11:30 Sisterhood at FPC 5:30 Men's Brotherhood	19	20
21 10:30 Worship in our Sanctuary/Zoom Annual Congregational Mtg after worship Worship Committee Mtg	22	23 9:30 Coffee Group 1:30 Pieces & Prayers	24	25 Girl Scouts 6:30-8PM	26	27
28 10:30 Worship in our Sanctuary/Zoom	29	30 9:30 Coffee Group 1:30 Pieces & Prayers	31		↓	



February 2024



Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 9:30 Bible Study	2 OFFICE CLOSED BIRTHDAYS: Judy S & Robin E ANNIVERSARY: Mike & Judy M	3
4 10:30 Worship and Communion in our Sanctuary/Zoom	5	6 9:30 Coffee Group 1:30 Pieces and Prayers Mission/Finance Mtg 6:30 PM via Zoom	7	8 9:30 Bible Study Girls Scouts 6:30-8 PM 7PM Session Meeting BIRTHDAYS: Betty G & Pam L	9	10
11 10:30 Worship in our Sanctuary/Zoom	12	13 9:30 Coffee Group 1:30 Pieces and Prayers BLADE Articles Due	14 Valentine Day  5:30 Ash Wednesday Service	15 9:30 Bible Study 11:30 AM Sisterhood at Mission Coffee House 5:30 Men's Brotherhood	16	17
18 10:30 Worship in our Sanctuary/Zoom BIRTHDAY: Elizabeth F	19 OFFICE CLOSED 	20 9:30 Coffee Group 1:30 Pieces and Prayers	21 5:30 Lenten Soup Supper	22 9:30 Bible Study Girls Scouts 6:30-8 PM BIRTHDAY: Robert F	23	24 BIRTHDAY: Bob J
25 10:30 Worship in our Sanctuary/Zoom	26 BIRTHDAY: Terry S	27 9:30 Coffee Group 1:30 Pieces and Prayers	28	29 9:30 Bible Study	 Ash Wednesday — Lent Begins	

The Blade

First Presbyterian Church

405 7th Avenue

Brookings, SD 57006-2018



Return Service Requested

Regular Sunday Schedule

10:30 am Worship Service

Church Office Hours

Monday -Thursday

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Our newsletter is also available electronically by email.

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