

# Hilltop Highlights

A Monthly Publication of First Presbyterian Church

## 2019 Stewardship Planning – Grace and Gratitude

On the last two Sundays in September we'll be focusing on the 2019 Stewardship Campaign. Our congregation, children, and youth will be learning about the biblical concept of grace and gratitude through sermons, scripture readings, and a stewardship minute.



This month you will receive a stewardship letter with an *ESTIMATED* 2019 Operating Budget printed on the back. We hope this estimate of income and expenses will help you understand how our congregation can best use the contributions we receive to live out the mission and ministry to which we are called. Included with the letter will be a pledge card and a time and talent form. The pledge card will include a line for your one-year commitment to help retire the loan.

After prayerful consideration, please fill out the pledge card and time and talent form and bring them to worship on Commitment Sunday, September 30th. You will be invited to bring the card to the front of the Sanctuary for deposit in the Joash Chest, a visible symbol of people coming together to offer our gifts to God. You are also invited to leave your completed time and talent form in a basket when you bring your pledge card to the front.

Together let us prayerfully and thoughtfully learn more about what it means to more fully follow and rely on Jesus while loving and serving our community. As we grow in faith and service let us experience more deeply the joy of grace and gratitude.

In Christian Fellowship,  
Bob Jeffus, Stewardship Committee Chair



<b>Inside this issue:</b>	
<b>Keep in Prayer</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Financial Information</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Happenings</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Happenings</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Retire the Debt</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Thank You's</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Music Ministry</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Parade</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Children's Ministry</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Youth Fellowship</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Calendar</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Birthdays</b>	<b>10</b>

## Staff

Rev. Dr. Michael G. Elliott (Pastor)-[pastor@bellevuefpc.org](mailto:pastor@bellevuefpc.org)  
M, Tu, W, Th 8:30 am to 3:00 pm

June Kouba (Church Administrator/Treasurer)-[admin@bellevuefpc.org](mailto:admin@bellevuefpc.org)  
M, Tu, W, Th 8:30 am to 3:00 pm

Linda Reffert (Children's Ministry Director)-[lkreffert@aol.com](mailto:lkreffert@aol.com)  
Tu, W, Th 9:00 am to 5:00 pm (hours may vary)

Shelli Dart (Youth Ministry Director)-[youthdirector@bellevuefpc.org](mailto:youthdirector@bellevuefpc.org)  
Tu, Th 10:30 am to 3:00 pm (hours may vary)

Rob Rose (Children's Music Director)-[afchap08@gmail.com](mailto:afchap08@gmail.com)

Alice Renner (Chancel Choir Director)-[akrenner@cox.net](mailto:akrenner@cox.net)

Liane Kirmis (Westminster Bells Director)-[rkirmis@windstream.net](mailto:rkirmis@windstream.net)

Dirk Lindner (Organist)-[dirk16@cox.net](mailto:dirk16@cox.net)

Eric Van Sky (Financial Secretary)-[eric.vansky@yahoo.com](mailto:eric.vansky@yahoo.com)



## We Keep in Our Prayers

- ◆ Prayers for Gary Marks as he awaits a new kidney.
- ◆ Prayers for Jeanette McLaughlin receiving cancer treatment.
- ◆ Prayers for Becky Baruth and her family as she is being treated for cancer.

## Bakersplus.com

We just received the **second quarter** of 2018 rebate from Bakers for **\$247.07**, this is wonderful but only includes 44 households. So if you have not registered **First Presbyterian Church #HY977** under your Baker's Plus card Community partner tab, please do so. This does not affect any other rewards you receive from Baker's.

## Financial Information

	<u>July</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Income	\$25,405.28	\$226,502.06
Expenses	<u>\$34,754.20</u>	<u>\$222,052.50</u>
Difference	< \$9,348.92	\$4,449.56



# Happenings

## Kick-off Sunday September 9th

### 9:00am– Sunday School classes for all ages

We'll start the day with a short intergenerational gathering in the Fellowship Hall which will include donuts, coffee and juice. It's a chance for all of our Sunday School participants children, youth and adults to come together and celebrate the upcoming year of classes. Following our gathering, each class will go to their rooms for their regular lesson.

### 10:30am Worship

All of our Christian Education volunteers will be commissioned during the worship service.

**Starting September 9th-Worship will begin at 10:30 am.  
Sunday School for children and adults will begin at 9:00 am.**

## Crossroads Connections Dinner



Crossroads Connection ministers to current inmates at Omaha Work Release Center and provides social services to former inmates who are transitioning to outside life. They conduct a weekly Sunday evening worship service attended by inmates, former inmates, sponsors and volunteers. Providing the meal and worship service is an outreach that our congregation has participated in for many years. In September our event is on **Sunday, September 9th.**

This is an excellent outreach to volunteer for because you decide what level of participation interests you.

- We need salads and desserts for the meal. These can be prepared ahead of time and delivered to the church on the day of the event.
- We also need help preparing the meal. The time commitment varies based upon the meal.
- You can also go with us to serve the meal. We meet here at the church at 5:00 pm and carpool to the location of the dinner. We usually return by 9:00 pm.

Thank you for your support of this ministry over the years and in the future!

## Gathering at The Farm

Just bring your chair. How easy is that? The Fellowship Committee is sponsoring a gathering at Fensters' Farm on Sunday, **September 16th** from 4:00 to 7:00 pm, with a rain date of Sunday, September 23rd. Fellowship will provide hot dogs, chips, the makings for 'smores and beverages. The farm is located just across the Bellevue Bridge. We will carpool from the church. If interested in attending please sign up for the picnic or to carpool at the table in the Library. There'll be plenty of outdoor activities and a chance to visit with your church friends. It's a great way to spend a Sunday afternoon!

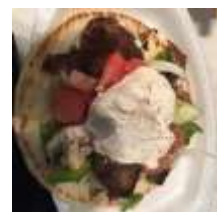


## Happenings



**The Presbyterian Women's Evening Bible Study** group will resume on September 13, 2018, at 7pm. On September 13th we will meet at the home of Jane Noden, 2011 Washington. We meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday each month September thru May, at 7pm. We will use the Presbyterian Women Horizons Bible Study '*God's Promise: I Am With You*' by Amy Poling Sutherland. As we follow this study journey through scripture, we will ask, how does God's promise of presence change us and the way we live? We welcome new participants to join us. Contact Marsha Holbert at 402.639.3695 to get a study book and further details.

**Join us for Ladies' Lunch-** We are meeting on the **Fourth Thursday** of each month at noon. In September we are going to meet at "John's Grecian Delight" on September 27th. Make your reservation by calling the church office at 402-291-1104 or e-mailing



### Hands on Mission Opportunity

The mission committee of First Presbyterian Church is sponsoring a mission outreach activity for **Friday, October 5th 12:00 to 3:30 pm** in the afternoon. We would like a minimum of 12 interested individuals to help pack supplies for the FoodBank for the Heartland Backpack program at the Foodbank Omaha location at 10525 J St, Omaha. The minimum age for participants is 16. One in five kids in Nebraska and western Iowa under the age of 18 is at-risk for hunger. Staff members at local elementary schools identify chronically hungry students then Food Bank for the Heartland supplies packs filled with nutritious food for those children to take home on Friday afternoons. Each pack provides two breakfast meals and two lunch or dinner meals. The Backpack Program distributes 8300 packs to children in need each week in 228 schools across Nebraska and western Iowa. Please consider participating with us on **October 5th** to help feed the hungry. Sign-up sheet is available in the Library.

### Operation Christmas Child

Children in 118 countries receive miracles through shoeboxes collected by Operation Christmas Child. Approximately 7,900,000 shoebox gifts in the United States, plus another 2,400,000 from nine other countries are donated.

The gift of a simple shoebox filled with toys, treats, and basic supplies will bring joy to the children and hope to their parents who can not offer their children even the simplest of gifts for Christmas.

As the 2018 Operation Christmas Child campaign draws near, will you and your church family prayerfully consider how you can help us reach more children this year? Remember, a small shoebox can have a big impact. What goes into the box is fun, and what comes out of it is eternal. Be a part of changing children's lives all over the world in Jesus' name through the power of a simple gift with Operation Christmas Child.

We will have a work day to put together the boxes on Saturday, October 20th at 10:00 am in the Valley Vista Room. If you would like to help please email [ebetino@cox.net](mailto:ebetino@cox.net). The empty shoeboxes will be available starting Sunday, October 21st and will need to be returned by Sunday, November 11th.



## RETIRE CHURCH DEBT IN 2019

In 2003 FPC took out a loan of almost \$1.7 million to finance our major building expansion and renovations. At the end of 2018, we will still have \$188,000 remaining on that loan. Our monthly payments are about \$6,300 with fixed interest at 3.7%. The balance in the building fund will cover the September to December 2018 payments. End of 2018 contributions will hopefully cover the first few (3-6) months of 2019---BUT NOT BEYOND.

What options do we have to retire the outstanding loan balance?

**Retire debt by mid-2021.** With next year's payments, the balance will still be about \$120,000 at the end of 2019. We will need about \$75,000 in 2020 and \$45,000 in 2021. Funding that amount will very negatively impact our future operating budgets. Many of you have been pledging and making payments to the ongoing campaign. FPC has been greatly blessed by your generosity; however, the current building campaign ends December 31, 2018.

**Fully retire the debt in 2019.** A very attractive alternative would be to pay off the loan. Thus there is the need for one more FINAL CAMPAIGN to fully retire our remaining debt next year.

A special **2019 Retire the Debt Pledge** line item on the 2019 Pledge Card gives you the opportunity to make as generous of a pledge as possible to this worthy goal of fully retiring the debt in 2019. Please prayerfully consider making a best estimate of your giving by entering your one-time final building pledge as part of the Stewardship Campaign. Of course, this pledge should be above and beyond your generous giving to the 2019 Operating Budget. If your tax situation warrants, consider prepaying part or all of your 2019 contributions prior to December 31, 2018.

If you have any questions, please contact me or Eric Van Sky (Financial Secretary).

Bob Jeffus

Chair, Stewardship Committee



I would like to thank my church family for their calls, visits, cards and prayers. They gave me a great deal of encouragement during my illness. I am now able to be in my home with the help of my family and additional therapy. **Marilyn Routt**

I would like to send sincere thanks to everyone for the calls, words of encouragement, and most especially for all the prayers on my behalf. I have just completed my annual health evaluation for the transplant team and am very Thankful that I can report I have been cleared to remain on the active list for another year. Again, thank you for your prayers and for continued prayers as I continue waiting for a healthy kidney.

**Gary Marks**





I shared this on Facebook, and got several requests to put it in my Newsletter article. I wish I could take credit for it, but I can't. I hope you enjoy it! **Alice Renner**

**DO YOU KNOW YOUR HYMNS?**

- Dentist's Hymn..... Crown Him with Many Crowns.
- Weatherman's Hymn..... There shall be Showers of Blessings.
- Contractor's Hymn..... The Church's One Foundation
- Tailor's Hymn..... Holy, Holy, Holy
- Golfer's Hymn..... There's a Green Hill Far Away
- Politician's Hymn..... Standing on the Promises!
- Optometrist's Hymn..... Open My Eyes That I May See.
- IRS agent's Hymn..... I Surrender All.
- Gossip's Hymn..... Pass It On
- Electrician's Hymn..... Send the Light
- Shopper's Hymn..... Sweet Bye and Bye.
- Realtor's Hymn..... I've Got a Mansion, Just Over the Hilltop.
- Massage Therapist's Hymn..... He Touched Me.

AND for those who speed on the highway- a few hymns:

- 55 mph..... God Will Take Care of you
- 75 mph..... Nearer My God to Thee
- 85 mph..... This World is not my Home
- 95 mph..... Lord, I'm Coming Home
- 100 mph..... Precious Memories

Give me a sense of humor, Lord, Give me the grace to see a joke, To get some humor out of life, and pass it on to other folks. By Gerie Hawkins

*Arrows to Aerospace*



*Parade*



## Children's Ministry



Linda Reffert

Have you noticed some of our mornings are starting to feel like Fall? Temperatures are getting crisp, football games are starting up and I hear a high school marching band practicing while I get ready for work in the morning. Fall IS here!

Say, have you traced around your hand yet, for our First Presbyterian Family Tree? I would like to get this project finished up in the next week or so, and if you are one of the people who hasn't added to our tree yet, please try to make it a point to stop at the table by the tree anytime Monday through Sunday. Our tree may look full, but it really isn't if we don't have everyone who is a part of our church family – whether you are a member or a regular visitor, and adult or a child. We want everyone to be a part of this!

Sunday School Kick Off is at 9 AM on Sunday, September 9<sup>th</sup>, in Fellowship Hall for children, youth and adults. We will have donuts, juice and coffee and then circle up in prayer before we break up to head to individual classrooms. At this time, our PreK – 6<sup>th</sup> grade teaching team is: Becca Griffin, Nora Boyd, Cindy Reilly, Rob Rose and myself. I'm still looking for one or two others to join in the fun. Sunday School is open to 3 year olds (who are potty-trained) through 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

WOW Kick Off is Wednesday, September 12<sup>th</sup>. We will begin with dinner at 5:30, followed by Music and Faith Education which end at 7 PM. WOW is open to Kindergartners through 6<sup>th</sup> graders. Sunday School is free but there is a \$50 annual fee (per child) for WOW, to cover the cost of the meals. We have been able to keep the cost the same for many years because of the careful budgeting of Head Cook, Mike Tabler. I know families are hit by many expenses at this time of year and if you would rather pay by the semester or if you need a scholarship for one or more of your children, please let me know. Scholarships are available, and there is absolutely no shame in asking!

Schedules and registration forms for all children's programming have been sent out to all families I have on the books. If you did not get a registration form, please let me know or pick one up on the table in the Parlor. I really appreciate getting

new forms for each year. It helps to keep my records accurate and classes divided appropriately. But I also need a new form each year to be up to date on medical situations and legally compliant on photo consent. I really love to take pictures at children's events and to post them on bulletin boards, my office door and our Facebook page (without names). Our kids are so cute!

Our original date for the presentation of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Bibles was September 23<sup>rd</sup>. That has been changed to September 30<sup>th</sup>. If you have a child older than 3<sup>rd</sup> grade who has not received a Bible yet, please let me know. There will be two baptisms along with Bible presentation that day so it promises to be an extra special day for our church family.

Our first Family Movie Night is coming up on Sunday, October 14<sup>th</sup> at 5 PM. We will show Paddington 2. Movie Nights are free and open to all ages. We serve dinner first, watch the movie (with popcorn and treats) and all who are interested can stay for crafts. We have been getting a good turn out from people in the community – particularly Welcome School families and friends. I encourage you to reach out to visitors and make them feel welcome. I try to get around to everyone but too often I am running around like a chicken with my head cut off. And some of you are much better at talking to new people than I am, anyway. So your help is really appreciated.

Lastly, I want to give you a final report on VBS. We had 77 kids attend. Our food item count for the Bellevue Food Pantry was a record 1,285 items! That totally smashed our previous record. The kids really did want to help feed hungry people, but a big part of the motivation was to bring enough to hit the goal and be able to slime me on the last day. That goal was met early this year and the last couple of days, the competition continued just to be able to be part of the winning crew – the crew that actually got to do the sliming because they brought the most food. I try not to think about why they wanted to get to dump slime on me. Pictures of the sliming are on the wall outside my office. But next year, both Rob Rose and Pastor Mike have offered to be slimed as a reward for mission giving. We may set a whole new record, then!



## Youth Fellowship (YF) News



Shelli Dart

*For I know the plans that I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.” – Colossians 3:23-24*

Our usual day to for YAS - Youth Active Service at the Open Door Mission was August 5th and we had to take Bethany back to KU that day. We already had 5 youth signed up and a number more interested. I really didn't want to cancel so the Griffins and Heather Glenn took a group of 12. Thank you so much for volunteering your time to help others. Well done!



The rain had a much different plan from our lake party on the 19th. Our contingency plan was to meet at the church for a Taco/Nacho bar and games. It was a fun night with Gaga Ball, Multi-ball catch, Reverse Musical Chairs and Spoons both regular and Ultimate. Thanks John, Laura and Lisa for helping in and joining the fun.



We return to our regular schedule on September 9th with Sunday School at 9 am. We will meet with all the classes in the Library for Kick-off then break out into our individual classes.

September 9th is also Youth Fellowship at Fensters Farm from 4 - 7 pm. We will have hotdogs and

s'mores and frivolity. Friends are always welcome, just remember to RSVP.



Wednesday, September 12th Illuminate begins. It is also Bellevue East's Homecoming Parade. We will meet at church for dinner then go to East to cheer our friends. We will be back to the church a bit after 7 pm.

The 5th Sunday is 9/30 so we will be Ushering and a youth will be Liturgist. Please make plans to be at Sunday School and Church that day.

I am sending postcards every other month with the schedule of events. Copies of the postcards will be in the pocket outside my office. With the newsletter, weekly e-mails, Remind.com and the texting team this should ensure everyone knows what is going on. If you are not receiving any or all of the above, let me know so you don't miss out on the fun.

I hope everyone has settled back into class and is excited to get back to our regular schedule. I know I am going to be happy to see all these smiling faces more often!

Wishing you Blessings. Shelli



### September Youth Events

- September 9** Sunday School Kick-off
- September 9** Fenster Farm Fun Day 4 - 7 pm
- September 12** Illuminate 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.  
\*\*B.East Homecoming Parade\*\*
- September 19** Illuminate 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.
- September 26** Illuminate 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.
- September 30** 5th Sunday - Youth Usher and Liturgist





~ September 2018 ~

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><b>2</b>                      Pantry Sunday                      10a Worship Service                      7p Venture Crew 26</p>	<p><b>3</b> Labor Day                      Church Office is Closed                      Lawn Team 2</p>	<p><b>4</b>                      10:30a Staff Meeting (CR)                      7p Bell Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><b>5</b>                      7p Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><b>6</b>                      8:30a Welcome School (FH)                      7p Troop 467</p>	<p><b>7</b>                      8:30a Welcome School (FH)</p>	<p><b>8</b></p>
<p><b>9</b>                      Undie Sunday                      9a Kick Off Sunday (FH)                      10:30a Worship Service                      11:30a Mission Mtg (VVR)                      4p Youth Fenster Farm Fun Day                      5p Crossroads Connection</p>	<p><b>10</b>                      Lawn Team 3</p>	<p><b>11</b>                      5:30p Christian Education Mtg (L)                      7p Bell Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><b>12</b>                      9a P.E.O. (VVR)                      5:30p WOW/Illuminate                      6p Finance Mtg (CR)                      7p Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><b>13</b>                      6p Building &amp; Grounds Meeting (CR)                      6:30p Membership (VVR)                      7p PW Bible Study (Noden home)                      7p Troop 467                      7p Worship Mtg (CR)</p>	<p><b>14</b></p>	<p><b>15</b></p>
<p><b>16</b>                      9a Sunday School                      10:30a Worship Service                      11:30a Fellowship Mtg (VVR)                      4p Fenster Farm Picnic</p>	<p><b>17</b>                      Lawn Team 1                      7p Venture Crew 26</p>	<p><b>18</b>                      7p Bell Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><b>19</b>                      5:30p WOW/Illuminate                      7p Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><b>20</b>                      7p Troop 467</p>	<p><b>21</b></p>	<p><b>22</b></p>
<p><b>23</b>                      Next Sunday Pantry Sunday                      9a Sunday School                      10:30a Worship Service</p>	<p><b>24</b>                      Lawn Team 2</p>	<p><b>25</b>                      7p Bell Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><b>26</b>                      5:30p WOW/Illuminate                      7p Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><b>27</b>                      7p Session (VVR)                      7p Troop 467</p>	<p><b>28</b></p>	<p><b>29</b></p>
<p><b>30</b>                      Stewardship Sunday                      9a Sunday School                      10:30a Worship Service</p>	<p><b>Notes:</b></p>					



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## September Birthdays:

- |                    |                        |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| 2 Jodie Graham     | 17 Beth Dawson         |
| 3 Elaine Sanborn   | 18 Makayla Burg        |
| 4 Becca Griffin    | 18 Joan Farley         |
| 5 John Kieran      | 18 Brian Urwin         |
| 8 Maria Lewis      | 19 Mary Bond           |
| 8 Riley Hasbrouck  | 20 Valerie Yates       |
| 9 Jan Robinson     | 20 David Albert        |
| 11 Kathryn Rose    | 21 Michael Brink       |
| 11 Mary Hughey     | 23 Rod deZafra         |
| 12 Lloyd Dowding   | 24 Tannis Clark        |
| 12 Anne Webster    | 28 Jeanette McLaughlin |
| 14 Nancy Hartranft | 28 Brian Renter        |
| 14 Faith Hartranft | 29 Don Fenster         |
| 14 Makayla Coats   | 30 Marty Davis         |

