

# Hilltop Highlights

A Monthly Publication of First Presbyterian Church

Looking for...

The Age of Discovery which began in the early 1400's was a very important period in European history. Many important discoveries about the world were made, many by accident. If you remember your history, Columbus was searching for a quick and easy sea route to Asia. Having finally convinced Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain to back him in his endeavor, he set sail for what he thought was India on August 3, 1492. What he found on October 12th of that same year was not India, but the West Indies. It was only after several additional voyages, that he finally realized that what he had found was a new continent, and not a shorter route to Asia. Sometimes we are a lot like Columbus in that we put so much effort into searching for something very specific that we feel we must have to make our lives complete. What we often find in our searching is that rather than just meeting our goals, we discover something totally new and exciting, something far better than our hopes and dreams would have been all too happy to settle for.



In Luke 19:1-10, Zacchaeus, the tax collector, a man hated because he collaborated with the Romans and had become wealthy at the expense of his people, heard that Jesus was coming through Jericho and he wanted to see Jesus. Because he was a short man, he climbed a tree so he could get a better look. Zacchaeus accomplished his goal that day, or so he thought. As Jesus walked by the tree, he stopped and looked up and told Zacchaeus to come down because he was going to his house for dinner. Zacchaeus was willing to settle for nothing more than a quick peek at Jesus. What he discovered was a whole new world. Zacchaeus found new life in Christ and used that new life to serve others.

I think that a lot of life these days is about searching. Searching for peace of mind, love, comfort, a good life, perhaps even notoriety or "the next big thing". And we are willing to settle for those things and nothing more. Sometimes our searching can take us to places and bring us into contact with people and put us in situations that we do not expect. Sometimes we discover that what we have found is much more than we were searching for. What we often find is that Christ has already gone ahead of us into our lives; into the hardship, pain, suffering, and loss we so often experience. We find that Christ is already waiting for us up ahead to welcome us into new life. We find God in people and places we would never think to look. We discover that God is much better than anything we were willing to settle for.

So, Happy Columbus Day. May you discover God in new ways. In new people. Through new adventures and in new places. May you discover that God who goes before us, in Jesus Christ, is so often found, even and especially in the darkest and scariest corners of our lives. Amen

Yours in Christ, *Pastor Mike*



Inside this issue:	
Keep in Prayer	2
Financial Information	2
Happenings	3
Happenings	4
Happenings	5
Retire the Debt	6
Welcome School	6
Children's Ministry	7
Youth Fellowship	8
Calendar	9
Birthdays	10

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## 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.
- ◆ Prayers for Pastor Mike's Dad, Robert for healing.
- ◆ Prayers for Dave Hartranft for recovery from knee surgery.

## 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>August</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Income	\$19,215.43	\$245,717.49
Expenses	\$27,527.40	\$249,579.90
Difference	< \$8,311.97	< 3,862.41



## Happenings

### 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.



**Poinsettia Sales-** Be sure to stop by the table in the narthex to order poinsettias for gifts or for your own home. The Fellowship Committee will sell beautiful top quality plants that are available in 2 sizes (6" and 8") and 4 colors (red, white, pink, and marble). Stop by the table in the Library for more information or to order your plants. Sales begin Sunday, October 7th and continue through Sunday, November 4th.

### Family Movie Night

**FREE** Movie, Hot Dog Dinner & Crafts, Sunday, October 14th at 5:00 pm in Fellowship Hall here at First Presbyterian Church.-We'll get acquainted, eat dinner, and watch the movie **Paddington 2**. Craft projects will be available after the movie. Bring your own pillow and/or blanket to be comfy on the floor.

All First Presbyterian Church & Welcome School families, friends, relatives and neighbors are invited to join us! If you have any questions call Linda Reffert in the Children's Ministry Office at 402-291-1104 or email at [LKreffert@aol.com](mailto:LKreffert@aol.com).



The Deacons will be hosting a **Congregational luncheon** on Oct 18th starting at 11:30am. Our guest speaker is Roger Cox from Bellevue Police Community Relations. We would be happy to pick anyone up who would like a ride. Please call Nancy Worm, at 402-291-3205 for rides. We look forward to seeing you all here for the luncheon.

### Congratulations to Bill and Marie Zipse

on the birth of their son:  
William R. Zipse  
Born 20 September 2018  
Weight 6lbs 6ozs, 20" tall



## Happenings

### 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.

### Trick or Treat Around the Church

This was such a fun event last year seeing all the kids from the community come out in costume to enjoy each and every table that the congregation sets up as well as the carnival games the youth create and run. If you are interested in being a part of this fun event and want to host a table please sign up on the sheet in the library. You can come in costume if you would like it is always a treat for everyone to see people in costume.



**Join us for Ladies' Lunch-** We are meeting on the **Fourth Thursday** of each month at noon. In October we are going to meet at "Lil Burro" on 26th and Capehart in Bellevue on October 25th. Make your reservation by calling the church office at 402-291-1104 or e-mailing [admin@bellevuefpc.org](mailto:admin@bellevuefpc.org).

Get out your rake, get out your gloves, shovels and clippers and join us on Saturday, November 3rd for a fall clean-up.

Our church building and the grounds are a part of our mission outreach to the community.

We'll be starting at about 10:00 am and with enough volunteers, will be done in a few hours.

The weather has been great for outdoor work and you'd be surprised how quick the time goes when you're having a good time visiting with your church family. Try it!





**Sunday,  
November 4th  
2:00 am**

**Troop 467**, the Boy Scout Troop that meets at our church on Thursday nights, has a treat for you...**a chili feed!** The event will take place on Sunday, November 4th at Noon in Fellowship Hall. Cost is \$5.00 per person or \$10.00 per family. This is a fundraiser for the troop to help raise money for camping equipment and fees. Thank you for your support!



### 2019 Stewardship Campaign

Commitment Sunday was September 30th. If you were unable to turn in your completed 2019 Stewardship Campaign pledge card and Time and Talent form(s) on Sunday September 30th (Commitment Sunday)---please mail or bring them to the church office at your earliest convenience. See the estimated budget below.

Estimated 2019 Operating Budget	
Personnel	246,000
Administrative	27,460
Building & Grounds	67,950
Mission Giving	14,500
Christian Education	6,750
Worship	2,200
Per Capita	11,540
Membership	2,300
Other	2,700
Total Expenses	381,400





## 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

## News from Welcome School

School is back in full swing! The kids are having so much fun with their teachers and classmates. September has really gone by fast. Students are learning about friends, sharing, farms, dinosaurs, camping and much, much, more! I see painting, rolling, pouring and hammering! We even had a chance to visit with Mrs. B from the Bellevue Public Library and we went on a field trip to Gifford Farm.

In October we look forward to a visit from our local Bellevue Fire Department; trucks and all!

[Thank you and take care, Tara Williams-Director of Welcome School](#)



## Children's Ministry



Linda Reffert

Several weeks ago, I had lunch with a Christian Education cohort from another church. It was a day off for me, and we met over by her church, at a restaurant by Oakview Mall. It was a restaurant that was thriving just a few years ago.

But things have changed for Oakview and for that restaurant. We walked in at noon and were immediately seated. I looked around and almost  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the place was empty. The restaurant was SO quiet! Our server had one other table all through the lunch hour, and yet our food was slow in coming and our order wasn't right. The whole experience felt wrong.

This last week, I had lunch with a group of friends at another restaurant closer to my house. We had to wait quite a while to be seated. Every table was full and it was SO loud, we could only hear the people who were sitting on each side of us. That also felt wrong.

I tell you this story because of a "problem" we are wrestling with now and this is the closest analogy I have. Sunday School classes can feel "wrong" too, when they are too small and when they are too full. I feel very blessed that we are dealing with a situation of being a little too full in our Preschool and Elementary Sunday School. Oh sure, we can bring in more tables and chairs. With a rearrangement of furniture to make it more like a school classroom, we could fit everyone and always have an open chair, so the kids know they can bring friends. But we don't want a formal setting, and we sure don't want to just fit bodies in an open chair. It is vitally important to us, that each child feels known and loved, as an individual child of God. We want the kids to grow close to each other, to feel our care and concern and most importantly to grow closer to God.

We have a wonderful teaching team and we are taking some steps to make our class function better. I have a Plan B and a Plan C and we won't give up. Parents, we need to keep the communication lines open and please let any of our teaching team know if your child ever feels left out or overlooked.

Of course, we'd also love to hear if we get things right. But either way, let's work together to make everyone's Sunday school experience as positive, encouraging and personal as it possibly can be.

As I write this, September 30<sup>th</sup> is this coming Sunday. It's a very special day for a number of reasons. It will be the first Sunday of the school year for the kids to sing in worship. It's our 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Bible Presentation day and Margot Boyd, daughter of Paul & Nora and Lilly Schmiesing, daughter of Connie Cook will be presented with wonderful new Bibles. AND, Margot and Eliza Boyd will both be baptized. I can hardly wait and it's been so fun to watch Eliza and Margot's eyes light up when they talk about it!

Fall is off to a great start in WOW. We've added one more table parent (Rob Rose) and the new kids are being welcomed into their groups. Lori Keaton is acting as a table parent and a shepherd and we could still use one more adult from 6 to 7 PM to shepherd kids. We have done two lessons from our Christian Character curriculum on honoring God and this week and next, we will explore "Respecting Others". Just a reminder that we will not have WOW on October 24<sup>th</sup> because of our special event called "Trick or Treat Around the Church". I hope all our kiddo's and their friends, relatives and neighbors will come in costume to trick our treat through the main floor of the church and to play free carnival games with our youth between 5:30 and 7 PM. We will also be off on October 31<sup>st</sup> so that the kids can trick or treat in their own neighborhoods and so we adults can be home to pass out treats.

Sunday, October 31<sup>st</sup> is our Fall Family Movie Night. At 5 PM we will serve a FREE kid friendly meal and then show the movie Paddington 2 on our big screen in Fellowship Hall. Welcome School families have been invited and everyone is encouraged to bring along their own teddy bears and a blanket and/or pillow if you don't want to sit in a chair to watch the movie. Guests are always welcome.



## Youth Fellowship (YF) News



Shelli Dart

*"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast." –*

**Ephesians 2:8-9**

Pastor Mike's series of Sermons on King David have been bouncing around in my head for awhile. David is the only person in the Bible who is referred to as "a man after God's own heart". We study David and Goliath in Sunday School as children but don't delve into his story much deeper. David wasn't a great guy, he wasn't a moral guy and a lot of the people from Children's Bible stories either weren't that great before or after the really cool thing they did. The wonderful thing about God's grace is that He loves us no matter what we do, when we repent and ask for forgiveness and truly change our ways it is forgiven by God. We will be talking about how good is good enough and what's the rest of the story in Illuminate this year and I'm really excited for the discussion that will be coming.

Our first Illuminate at the church was this week and we played Silly String Tag. It was a crazy



time and I think I still have some string stuck in my hair! The weather will be changing soon so I wanted to be sure we had some fun outside before the rains and cold return. It was also our last Wednesday all together since confirmation began on the 26th.

The first Sunday in October is our day to serve at the Open Door Mission. I would like to have a parent go and help drive so let me know if you are interested. October 14th if Paddington 2 for our Family Movie night. Dress comfy and bring a blanket or pillows to

watch from the floor. Dinner will be at 5 with the movie immediately following. Please grab a flier from the table in the library and invite your friends and neighbors!



October 24th is Trick or Treat around the church and I need all the youth to help with our games. Feel free to come in costume. I will have veggies and salad for you to eat after everything is set up. If you have any new game ideas please let me know.

October 31st we will not have Illuminate so you can Trick or Treat or stay home and hand out candy. I love Fall and the lovely crisp cool weather but the fun stuff isn't too far off. As a reminder, if Bellevue Public Schools are cancelled all church activities are cancelled. If you ever have any questions please call me.

Be a Blessing. Shelli



### October Youth Events

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>October 7</b>  | Serve at Open Door Mission<br>4:30-7:30 pm       |
| <b>October 14</b> | Family Movie Night 5:00 pm                       |
| <b>October 24</b> | Trick or Treat around the church<br>5:30-7:00 pm |
| <b>October 31</b> | No Illuminate                                    |





## ~ October 2018 ~

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b> Lawn Team 3 1:15p Heritage Ridge 2p Harmony Court 2:45p Richmond Village	<b>2</b> 10:30a Staff Meeting (CR) 7p Bell Choir Rehearsal	<b>3</b> 5:30p WOW/Illuminate 6p Confirmation Class (VVR) 7p Choir Rehearsal	<b>4</b> 7p Troop 467	<b>5</b> 1p BackPack Program (Heartland Food Bank)	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> Pantry Sunday 9a Sunday School 10:30a Worship Service 11:30a Deacons Mtg (VVR) 4:30p Youth Active Service/ Open Door Mission 7p Venture Crew 26	<b>8</b> 1p Women's Bible Study (CR)	<b>9</b> 5:30p Christian Education Mtg (L) 7p Bell Choir Rehearsal	<b>10</b> 9a P.E.O. (VVR) 5:30p WOW/Illuminate 6p Confirmation Class (VVR) 7p Choir Rehearsal	<b>11</b> 6p Building & Grounds (CR) 6:30p Membership (VVR) 7p PW Bible Study (Webster home) 7p Troop 467 7p Worship Mtg (CR)	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> Undie Sunday 9a Sunday School 10:30a Worship Service 5p Family Movie Night (Paddington 2)	<b>15</b> 7p Venture Crew 26	<b>16</b> 7p Bell Choir Rehearsal	<b>17</b> 5:30p WOW/Illuminate 6p Confirmation Class (VVR) 7p Choir Rehearsal	<b>18</b> 11:30a Deacon's Lunch 7p Session (VVR) 7p Troop 467	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 10a OCC Shoebox Assembly
<b>21</b> 9a Sunday School 10:30a Worship Service 11:30a Fellowship Mtg (VVR) 11:30a New Member Discovery Class (VVR)	<b>22</b> 1p Women's Bible Study (CR)	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 5:30p Trick or Treat Around the Church 7p Choir Rehearsal	<b>25</b> 12p Ladies Lunch (Lil Burro) 5p Presbytery Meeting (Faithful Shepherd) 7p Troop 467	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> Next Sunday Pantry Sunday 9a Sunday School 10:30a Worship Service 11:30a Mission Mtg (VVR)	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 7p Bell Choir Rehearsal	<b>31</b> Halloween	<b>Notes:</b>		



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## October Birthdays:

2 Warren Robinson	15 Vickie Bonitz
3 Flossie Flora	16 Elijah Warren
3 Ruby Baruth	17 Margaret McInnis
4 Katie Leware	17 Maggie Blazek
5 David Sanborn	22 Linda Glenn
5 Sue Tabler	23 Jane Hink
7 Julie Daugherty-Braun	23 Paulette Robertson
7 Audrina Urwin	25 Aoife Healy
8 Bill Warnes	28 Quentin Warren
10 Anne McDaniel	29 Rebeca Horton
12 Suzy Drap	30 Isabel Griffin
12 David Oxtoby	30 Beth Urwin
12 Mike VanRyckeghem	31 George Graham
14 Lorraine Jeffus	31 Roger Webster
14 Connie Mohr	31 Tanya Kochera



Worshipping, learning, and serving together in the name of Jesus

