

# Hilltop Highlights

A Monthly Publication of First Presbyterian Church

## My Fellow Thyratirans

*“And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These are the words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze: “I know your works—your love, faith, service, and patient endurance. I know that your last works are greater than the first. (Rev. 2:18-19)*

Now there is a phrase that I have never used before: My fellow Thyratirans! In fact, I had to google to find the exact location of Thyratira. FYI, it is in far Western Turkey and goes by the modern name of Akhisar. That’s your history lesson for today.

So why are we having a Thyratiran moment today? Well, because the words that the angel spoke to that church reminds me so much of our recent month or so. The angel said... *“I know your works—your love, faith, service, and patient endurance.”* All of those things describe, to the letter, this congregation. In March, the Spaghetti Dinner raised \$6300, roughly \$3150 to Teammates and \$3150 to our own mission endeavors. So many of you worked so many long hard hours to make that dinner possible and so many people will benefit from your labor and your time.

In April, our Laundry and Lunch Saturday event for victims of the recent flooding raised \$1200, \$860 which was used to pay for over 350 loads of laundry. We were able to donate the extra laundry supplies and cleaning supplies to the Salvation Army and extra food to the Open Door Mission. One 7 hour event spread so much hope and love across our community. The extra money will be used to provide direct assistance to flood victims here in Bellevue. As one who worked at the Laundromat, it was a long hard day, but so very rewarding. In addition, you have continued to increase your food donations to the Bellevue Food Pantry since the flood.

Our “One Great Hour of Sharing” denominational offering brought in about \$2500 this past week. This money is used by our denomination to provide aid and assistance to people in need, including flood victims both here and in Iowa.

If I do the math right, that is \$10,000 in cash, not counting food and other materials, not counting the many long tiring hours of service that we have donated in just two months. And, the Garage Sale is yet to come! Those proceeds also benefit local missions.

My brothers and sisters in Christ, my fellow Thyratirans, you are amazing. In just two short months, you have shown your faith, service and love in some mighty incredible ways. Well done, good and faithful servants. A big thank you to each and every one of you.



As for the endurance, if you are participating in “Through The Bible In A Year,” we are at the 1/3 mark. Woo Hoo! I pray that your endurance continues to run strong. This is a big commitment and it takes very deliberate prayer and discipline to finish the race. I know you can do it though.

And so, my fellow Thyratirans, *“I know your works—your love, faith, service, and patient endurance.”* I know them and they make you look beautiful!

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Mike



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## We Keep in Our Prayers

- ◆ Prayers for Jeanette McLaughlin who is receiving cancer treatment.
- ◆ Prayers for Becky Baruth and her family as she is being treated for cancer.
- ◆ Prayers for Carl Seaman receiving cancer treatment.
- ◆ Prayers for George Thompson who is suffering with Parkinson's disease.
- ◆ Prayers for Sally Syphers recovering from heart issues.

## Bakersplus.com

We just received the **First Quarter** of 2019 rebate from Bakers for **\$215.77**, this is wonderful and includes **47** 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>March</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Income	\$38,727.73	\$126,480.44
Expenses	<u>\$33,866.17</u>	<u>\$102,434.87</u>
Difference	\$4,861.56	\$24,045.57





## Church Property Beautification

**Why?** To provide improved curb appeal and overall appearance of our wonderful church property.

Your donation will help us fulfill a Building and Grounds Committee unfunded project to make our church more attractive: Improved landscaping at our two entrance signs and along Bellevue Boulevard; Trees need trimming and new trees/shrubs planted; Badly worn picnic tables need to be replaced; Other improvements are also needed.

### How We All Can Help-

Every gift makes a difference. Minimum donation is \$10.

- ◆ Visit [www.omahagives.org/nonprofits](http://www.omahagives.org/nonprofits).
- ◆ Search for First Presbyterian Church of Bellevue.
- ◆ Schedule gifts online between May 1 and May 21. Charges are processed on May 22nd.
- ◆ Donate online on May 22nd beginning at midnight. Your donations can help us win prize money and matching dollars donated by corporations.
- ◆ You can donate in memory of someone.

- ◆ You will receive an immediate thank you and tax receipt from the Omaha Community Foundation.
- ◆ Our goal is to raise \$5,000.00 to cover the cost of property beautification.
- ◆ It's easy to make a gift on your smart phone.



**Thanks for your support!**



## Happenings

Join us for **Ladies' Lunch**. We are meeting on the **Fourth Thursday** of each month at noon. May we are going to meet at Luigi's on May 23rd. Make your reservation by calling the church office at 402-291-1104 or e-mailing [admin@bellevuefpc.org](mailto:admin@bellevuefpc.org).



### 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday



Bill Coon celebrates his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on Monday, June 3, 2019. Retired Col. Coon has made Bellevue his home for 60 years. Bill retired from the Air Force after 30 years of service and resides at Heritage Ridge in Bellevue. Bill enjoys participating in activities sponsored by Heritage Ridge, joining friends and family for special meals, and growing tomatoes every summer.

Friends and family will honor Bill at his church, First Presbyterian in Bellevue on June 2 from 9:30-10:00 a.m.

The family is also hosting a birthday celebration for Bill on June 3, 2019 from 2-4 at Heritage Ridge. Church members are most welcomed to attend.

### God and the Girls Inter-generational Women's Retreat

First Presbyterian Church  
Saturday, June 8, 2019  
9:00AM to 12:00PM



Enjoy an encouraging, affirming morning.  
Bring someone special and nurture the relationship with each other, and with God.  
Want to bring more than one special person? Do!  
Food, friendship, prayer, music, scripture & a game or two.  
Enjoy old friends and make new ones too!  
\$10 registration with scholarships available.  
Ages 9 to 109. Children under 13 must be accompanied by an adult.  
Questions? See Linda Reffert or email [lkreffert@aol.com](mailto:lkreffert@aol.com)

**Spaghetti Dinner-** Many, many thanks to all who contributed in any way to our Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser. The Fellowship Committee took the lead. When asked, so many more of you stepped forward to help! You bought and/or sold tickets, worked a shift at the event, donated raffle or silent auction items, money or tickets, ate our delicious dinner, served or cleaned up, took out the trash or just helped wherever you could. We also appreciate the efforts of the TeamMates Board. The Spaghetti Dinner was a success, after expenses the total proceeds were \$6,338.00! Everyone working together in this "team effort" was greatly appreciated!



## CALIFORNIA CONGREGATION'S AFTER-SCHOOL MINISTRY ENABLES STUDENTS TO TRANSCEND POVERTY



Christopher Hall's life was not always smooth sailing, but it could have turned out very different had he not been boosted by a Rising TIDE. Rising TIDE, which stands for "Train Individuals to Develop and Excel," is an after-school ministry of Covenant Presbyterian Church in Long Beach, California. Christopher, who was born into poverty in a depressed city neighborhood, is now a successful entrepreneur, a husband and a father of three.

But if not for Rising Tide, he says life might have been much different for him and many of his friends.

"Rising TIDE helps you become something better. We could easily have become gang members or been involved in alcohol, drugs or other negative things."

Rising TIDE serves children and youth from pre-school through high school with everything from tutoring and enrichment opportunities to sports and physical fitness activities to life skills training. However, Rising TIDE is about more than programming for the 100 students whom it serves. It's also about building relationships.

"Those who come from helpful and supportive families experience the Rising TIDE family as a supplementary family," says Rev. Rob Langworthy, who co-founded Rising TIDE with his wife, Rev. Adele Langworthy. "Others who don't have that kind of family at home find Rising TIDE as their source of support and inspiration and guidance and encouragement."

Rob notes the program has its best success among students who began the program in childhood and continue through adolescence. "Well over 90 percent of those who are involved in the program for several years go on to college or university," Rob says. "We have a lot of success stories of people who have achieved in life beyond what a lot of people might have expected."

Across the United States and around the world, the Pentecost Offering helps young people achieve their God-given potential. Children at risk, ministries with youth and Young Adult Volunteers benefit from Pentecost Offering gifts. And forty percent of the offering stays right here with us, to support our own (programs/ministries).

Through the Pentecost Offering, we make an impact on young people right here in our own church, our own community—as well in other churches and other communities whose children need our love. And perhaps most importantly, this churchwide offering opens the doors to children, youth, and young adults so that they grow in the patterns of faith meant to last a lifetime. Please give generously, because as has always been the case, when we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.

*Let us pray ~*

Lift our eyes, O God, to see the potential  
of every one of your children.  
May we reach out and support those  
who are at risk so that their futures  
rise like the tides of your seas.  
Amen

**We will be collecting this offering on June 9th**



SPECIAL OFFERINGS  
PENTECOST





**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.

Our next event is on Sunday, June 23rd.

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!

I wish to express my heartfelt (literally) THANKS to all of you for your thoughts and prayers, cards, flowers, plants, visits, and meals during my recent hospital stay. I especially want to thank Pastor Mike for his spiritual guidance and words of encouragement. I am truly blessed to be a member of this large Christian family.

**Thank You, Sally Syphers**

I want to thank everyone for all their cards, prayers, hugs and all their care and support during such a difficult time in my life. My church family is such a blessing to me and I appreciate each and everyone of you. I could not imagine going through this without you. The day of Lori's service I felt such warmth and love throughout the church. **Love, JoAnne Nielsen**

## Graduates



**Maggie Blazek** will be graduating from Papillion-La Vista South High School in the top ten percent of her class. She has been attending First Presbyterian for three years with her family. She is a part of both church youth activities and church music. She is a member of National Honor Society and Band Council at Papio South. She has been involved in marching band, pep band, show choir band, musical pit band, jazz band, and the Omaha Youth Symphony throughout high school. Maggie was selected to be a part of the All-District honor band in Northern Virginia, both UNL and UNO's honor bands, and was a member of the Nebraska All-State band as well. She has received superior ratings in both trumpet and piano solos at District Music Contest.

Before moving to Nebraska, Maggie played soccer. She has also worked at HyVee as a cashier and courtesy clerk since sophomore year.

Maggie has been accepted into the UNL Honors Program and will be pursuing a double major in Business Management and Music in the fall.



## Graduates



**Morgan Braun** will be graduating from Bellevue West High School. While attending Bellevue West, Morgan participated in choir, student council, and was a part of the Varsity basketball team her freshman through junior years. She received two Varsity letters throughout her basketball journey.

Morgan volunteered during multiple blood drives and helped plan homecoming as well as being active in West Welcomers. Morgan has enjoyed growing up in First Presbyterian and has been involved in Sunday School and youth group as well as participating in numerous mission trips and volunteer work.

She will be attending either the University of Nebraska at Omaha or Morningside college but for now remains undecided. Following her sister's footsteps, Morgan is very excited for her future plans to study nursing.



**Mason Braun** will be graduating from Bellevue West High School. Mason has been attending First Presbyterian since he was born. He was baptized in the church, attended Sunday School and Youth events as well as Welcome School.

He has been a member of the football team for all four years of high school. His sophomore year he was a part of the team that won state in 2016. Mason has also been on the golf team for two years and has also participated in basketball, wrestling, and track throughout his senior high career. Mason is currently enrolled in the UNMC High School Alliance Program and has been studying topics such as Anatomy, Medical Imaging and Pharmacy.

Next year, Mason will be attending UNO where he plans to major in biology. In the future, Mason plans to be a pre-med student and continue into the medical field.



**Ash Hudson** will be graduating from Bellevue East High School. She is a member of National Honor Society and has been on the honor roll all four years. Ash has been heavily involved in the Bellevue East Band Program, as she has played trombone in the Chieftain Jazz Ensemble and euphonium in both marching band and Wind Ensemble for four years. She was also low brass section leader for three years and Winter Winds captain her senior year. Ash also marched with Railmen Drum and Bugle Corps for a winter and fall season.

When she is not at school or rehearsal, Ash works at BPS Kids' Time. She has loved and cherished her 18 years at First Presbyterian and will carry her memories of this church in her heart forever.

Ash will attend McGill University in Montreal, Canada to study Music Education, as she has always dreamed of being a teacher and inspiring her students.



# Graduates



Noelle Kochera will be graduating from Bellevue West High School. Noelle has been involved in the Bellevue West Marching Band for four years and the Bellevue West Indoor Percussion program for three years.

When she is not in school or practice Noelle works at Pizza Hut. She has enjoyed and loved her 17 years here at First Presbyterian.

Noelle has not completely decided on her choice for college yet but will still take classes through Metropolitan Community College.

## News from Welcome School

Another school year is coming to an end. April was a fun month for the children. As part of our life cycle unit in Science, we are anxiously waiting for our Painted Lady butterflies to emerge from their chrysalises. To continue with Welcome School tradition, the 3 and 5 day classes will be having a day at the park on Friday, May 10<sup>th</sup>. Let's hope the rain stays away. In May, a school bus will be coming, so the children heading off to Kindergarten can have the school bus experience. How fun!



I look forward to another great school year in September.  
God Bless, Tara Williams  
Director





## Children's Ministry



Linda Reffert

Thank you SO much! I simply couldn't believe how much candy was donated for the Easter Egg Hunt. It was awesome! That allowed us to be very generous to all the kids and allowed us to include the youth of the church in our hunt. Some of them were very excited. I won't share names because I value my life, but .....

Thank you to June Kouba for helping me to stuff just under 1,000 eggs and to Nora Boyd and her mom Jennifer for running the Easter Egg Hunt Check-in station. And to Sue Houghtaling, Deb and Ash Hudson and Ash's friend Emmanuelle for maintaining order (but not ruining the fun) in each of the Hunt rooms.

WOW ended it's year last month and this month we will be wrapping up the regular Sunday School year, with our last class on Sunday, May 19<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to our wonderful teachers Becca Griffin and Nora Boyd who were here loving on kids week in and week out and to Cindy Reilly and Deb Hudson who subbed. And thanks to Rob Rose for leading Music for the kids. Just a heads up that kids sing in Worship on Mother's Day, May 12<sup>th</sup> and we are planning a little surprise for all the moms. That day is also CE Appreciation Sunday.

Sunday, May 19<sup>th</sup> we will have Grandparent Blessing in the last half hour of Sunday School (approximately 9:30 AM). I do still have a couple of kids who need to be matched with church grandparents, so if you are willing, or at least interested in knowing more, please let me know ASAP. The summer Church Grandparent program has turned into such a nice tradition. I am so glad that it has proved meaningful and fun to both the children and the grandparents.

Sunday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> at 9 AM in Fellowship Hall will be our first Intergenerational Sunday School of the summer. We will be assembling 144 hygiene kits for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. I hope we will have a good turnout of all ages. That's a lot of kits to put together and we need to be very well organized and efficient because we need to be able to wrap up by 9:30 to join in on the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday party for Bill

Coon that will take place in the Library. Our other Summer Intergenerational Sunday School classes will take place on July 7<sup>th</sup> and August 4<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you to our awesome team of women involved in planning and leading the God & The Girls Intergenerational Women's Retreat on Saturday, June 8<sup>th</sup> from 9 to noon. The team consists of: Liane Kirmis, Sharon Elliott, Jean Lindfors, Laura Miller and myself. I believe it will be a positive and encouraging morning and I hope it will nurture you in your relationships with God and with the special someone(s) that you bring. Cost is just \$10 and there are scholarships available. The morning includes breakfast and you are welcome to bring someone special who is ages 9 or over and they do not need to belong to this church. The answers to other questions I have been asked are – 1. No, you don't have to whiz around the Bible looking things up. All scripture will be written out. 2. No, we do not expect you to bare your soul. 3. No, we do not intend to make you cry. 4. Yes, I do expect you to have opportunity and reason to laugh. 5. Yes, you will try something new and it will be ok. Registration is open already and you can sign up or email me to sign up.

VBS is coming up quicker than we think. I've been busy working on other things but will be devoting more and more time to VBS over the coming weeks. I am always looking for people to volunteer to help make decorations or to volunteer that week. VBS runs July 22 – 26, from 9 to noon and registration will open in mid-May. Cost for the whole week is just \$10 per child which includes a t-shirt if you register by July 3<sup>rd</sup>. Ages are 3 (and potty-trained) through completed 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Youth who have completed 7<sup>th</sup> grade and up, are invited to be helpers. Our Theme is Weird Animals, Where Jesus Love is One-of-a-kind. I love the thread that runs all through the week, that we are ALL a little weird, but we are just exactly who we are meant to be and Jesus loves us dearly, just as we are. Every year we have kids who do not attend church or Sunday School. Our week of VBS is a precious opportunity to expose them to the love of God and to make sure they (and all our kiddo's) leave here knowing they are precious and loved. I hope you will find a way to help make that happen!



## Youth Fellowship (YF) News



*“Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.” 1 Timothy 4:12*

With the busy month we had a small group for serving at the Mission but we had a great time helping people.



We have a few more weeks of Sunday School then our last day we will also do Grandparent Blessing. This is a fun way to promote intergenerational relationships and a connection to hopefully keep our church family connected during the summer. I know this has been a very special bond for some of our members and kiddos.



May 19th is also our day to recognize our graduating Seniors. I hope you can join us as we send them off into the big exciting world of pre-adulthood.

I am so proud of the wonderful service the youth presented in April. The Seniors did a beautiful job with their sermons and were so real and honest, the special music was beautiful and the teamwork displayed the entire time of writing and preparing was wonderful.

Just a few more weeks of school so it’s time to think big thoughts and study hard. Summer is right around the corner!

Not only am I proud of Youth Sunday but also how interested they are in learning more about the Bible, talking about different stories and relating those stories to their own life events. I hope this curiosity continues to inspire them to ask questions and continue building their faith.



Be a Blessing. Shelli



It’s hard to believe we are already done with Illuminate. We welcomed the 6th graders into Illuminate with a scavenger hunt and one of our favorite last night traditions, Upside-down-sundaes. In case you wonder what that means, I’m including a picture. This is an important time to select a partner with steady hands and good aim because they make your sundae for you. It’s quite funny to watch and they have a good time.

### May Youth Events

- May 12** CE Appreciation Day
- May 19** Last Sunday School
- May 19** Grandparent Blessing during Sunday Sch
- May 19** Senior Recognition Sunday



~ May 2019 ~

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>5</b> Parity Sunday 9a Sunday School 10a Worship Service 11:30a Deacons Mtg (VVR) 7p Venture Crew 26	<b>6</b> 1p Women's Bible Study (CR)	<b>7</b> 5p Presbyterian Meeting (Underwood Hills) 7p Bell Choir Rehearsal	<b>8</b> 9a P.E.O. (VVR) 6p Building & Grounds Mtg (CR) 6p Finance Mtg (Admin Ofc) 7p Choir Rehearsal	<b>9</b> 6:30p Membership (VVR) 7p PW Bible Study (Schlafman home) 7p Troop 467 7p Worship Mtg (CR)	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b> <b>Mother's Day</b> Undie Sunday 9a Sunday School 10a Worship Service 11:30a Mission Meeting (VVR) 6:30p Boy Scout Committee Meeting (VVR)	<b>13</b> 10:30a PEO (FHVVR)	<b>14</b> 5:30p Christian Education Mtg (L) 7p Bell Choir Rehearsal	<b>15</b> 7p Choir Rehearsal	<b>16</b> 7p Troop 467	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> <b>Armed Forces Day</b>
<b>19</b> 9a Grandparent Blessing (Sunday School) 9a Sunday School 10a Worship Service 10:30a Senior Recognition (Worship Service) 11:30a Fellowship Mtg (VVR)	<b>20</b> 1p Women's Bible Study (CR) 7p Venture Crew 26	<b>21</b> 7p Bell Choir Rehearsal	<b>22</b> 7p Choir Rehearsal	<b>23</b> 12p Ladies Lunch (Luigi's) 7p Session (VVR) 7p Troop 467	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> Next Sunday Parity Sunday 10a Worship Service	<b>27</b> <b>Memorial Day</b> Church Office is Closed	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> <b>Ascension</b> 7p Troop 467	<b>31</b>	<b>Notes:</b>



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## May Birthdays:

- |                    |                         |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Marilyn Routt    | 15 Susan Trinkle-Tamayo |
| 2 Morgan Braun     | 18 Austin Braun         |
| 2 Mason Braun      | 19 Rachael Monico       |
| 2 Matthew Clark    | 19 Margot Boyd          |
| 4 Hattie Urwin     | 21 JoAnn Carpenter      |
| 4 Gabrielle Keaton | 22 Nora Boyd            |
| 5 Miles Monico     | 23 Carolyn Lowrance     |
| 7 Brandon Van Sky  | 25 Bonnie Alexander     |
| 8 Deanna Freier    | 25 Fianna Glenn         |
| 8 Landy Jacobson   | 26 Sally Syphers        |
| 11 Ryan Baruth     | 27 Jaci Marks           |
| 12 Lexie Ryks      | 27 Bryan Kirmis         |
| 13 Dave Hartranft  | 29 Mike Tabler          |

