

# Hilltop Highlights

A Monthly Publication of First Presbyterian Church

## With a Whimper

*“King Nebuchadnezzar took into exile in Babylon those who had escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and to his sons until the establishment of the kingdom of Persia, to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had made up for its Sabbaths. All the days that it lay desolate it kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.” (2 Chronicles 36:20-21)*

As the unified nation of Israel and the subsequent kingdoms of Israel (the northern 10 tribes) and Judah (the Southern two tribes) fell further and further into sin, with idolatry being the most frequent, God allowed those curses foretold from way back in Deuteronomy 28 to come to be. First Israel (the Northern Kingdom aka Samaria) falls to the Assyrian King Sargon II in 722 BCE. Later Judah will fall to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon in 586 BCE. With a whimper God’s beloved children will lose everything. Family, friends, the Promised Land, the Temple in Jerusalem, their very freedom and go into exile in a land far from home. For 70 years, until King Cyrus of Persia allows the Jews to return and rebuild Jerusalem, the people sit in exile in a foreign land. Whimpering and wondering and whining.

Your “Through The Bible In A Year” readings for July (yes, you are over half way through the Bible now!) will come from the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah. These are the last of the books in the Old Testament that follow the chronological history of God’s chosen people. What remains to be read will be the “Wisdom” literature and the Prophets. These are not chronological.

Ezra and Nehemiah continue the story of the rebuilding of the Temple and Jerusalem at the end of the Babylonian captivity. The Persian Empire takes over the Babylonian Empire and King Cyrus of Persia will allow the captives to return to Judah. As you will read in Ezra/Nehemiah, this is a difficult time for everyone. These books are a fascinating read.

The second half of July we will be reading from the Book of Job. Good old, long suffering Job. The first book of what we call Wisdom Literature. It is also considered to be one of the oldest books of the Bible...remember, after Ezra/Nehemiah, the remaining books of the Old testament are not in any chronological order. Job deals with one of the oldest questions that face humanity: Is there a connection between sin and suffering? Or, to put it another way, do we always get what we deserve.

I find it refreshing and comforting to know that humanity has been wondering about this for thousands of years. For Job, he wanted to know not only why but where God was in his suffering. Don’t we all?

So for you “Through The Bible” participants, the month of July represents an interesting shift in focus for us in our journey through the Old Testament. I can’t wait, can you?

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Mike



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## Staff

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

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

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

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

Rob Rose (Children's Music Director)-afchap08@gmail.com

Alice Renner (Chancel Choir Director)-akrenner@cox.net

Liane Kirmis (Westminster Bells Director)-rkirmis@windstream.net

Dirk Lindner (Organist)-dirk16@cox.netE

Eric Van Sky (Financial Secretary)-eric.vansky@yahoo.com



## 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.

## 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>May</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Income	\$17,748.34	\$186,683.73
Expenses	<u>\$25,411.91</u>	<u>\$154,136.55</u>
Difference	<\$7,663.57	\$32,547.18



## Happenings

### **Bellevue Together** Back to School July 26th Fun Day Mission Project

Help erase the need for school supplies. Donate from now until Sunday, July 21<sup>st</sup>. We can help provide over 300 students get ready to have a great school year

500 Pink Pearl Erasers



550-2pk glue sticks (900 total glue sticks needed)



400-2 pocket folders



100 packets of 24 count #2 pencils



Clothes for boys and girls size 7, 8, and 10 are always needed. You can also write a check to Bellevue Together.

July will be a busy month of meetings and inventory to get ready for the big event. If you would like join us, all meetings are held at New Beginnings Worship Center starting at 6:30 PM. Food is provided.

June 18

July 9

July 16

July 23

Volunteers are needed to help get ready and to work for the event. See Denise Seaman or Jean Lindfors starting June 23rd or register online at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050e4aa4a82ca5f58-back>

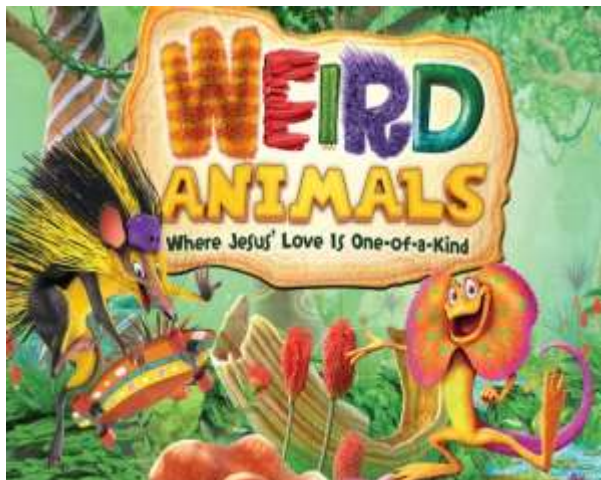


## Happenings

### Intergenerational Sunday School

9:00 AM Sunday, July 7th

We will be making treat bags for police and fire fighters  
Come join us.



### Vacation Bible School July 22nd - July 26th 9:00am to Noon

Join us for **Ladies' Lunch**. We are meeting on the **Fourth Thursday** of each month at noon. In July we are going to meet at La Mesa on July 25th. **Starting in June you do not need to call or email to let the office know you are attending, just meet at the restaurant that day.**



### Annual Picnic

Mark your calendar for July 28th. The Fellowship Committee will be sponsoring the annual church picnic right after the Sunday Worship Service. The main entrée will be Fried Chicken with sides and dessert. This is a free will offering event.

Any questions contact Ricky Holbert at 402-291-7637 or [owlybear@cox.net](mailto:owlybear@cox.net).

**Parking Lot Maintenance** We have called several companies and have agreed to work with Parking Lot Services to come out and repair our front drive. Due to their very busy schedule it will be scheduled for completion some time this summer.





Do you like to clean? If so, we are looking for one or two volunteers that can come in each month and clean out the refrigerator, freezer and clean stove tops and ovens. If this is something you are interested in, please contact the church office at 402-291-1104 or email [admin@bellevuefpc.org](mailto:admin@bellevuefpc.org).



The church office is looking for help **once a month to label newsletters**. It is usually at 9:30am and should only take about 2 hours. If this is something you are interested in, please contact June in the church office 402-291-1104 or email [admin@bellevuefpc.org](mailto:admin@bellevuefpc.org) and she will notify you each month as to what day the help is needed.



Our Waste Removal company is no longer picking up our recycling bin. In order to continue to recycle here at church we need 4 to 5 people who are willing to take the recyclables home. If we get 5 volunteers it would just be once a month per person. If you are interested please contact the church office.

## Directory Address Changes:

**Donna Davis-17400 Elk Ridge Dr #139 Elkhorn, NE 68022**

## CHURCH PROPERTY BEAUTIFICATION PROJECT

GREAT NEWS!!! FPC's goal for Property Beautification during the recent Omaha Gives Campaign was to raise \$5,000. We have now not only reached this goal but have exceeded it thanks to the generous donations of about two dozen families.

A property beautification working group has been formed to plan and carry out this effort. Nancy Blazek has graciously stepped up to be the group leader. Other members are Paul and Nora Boyd, Nancy Shultz, Cathy Talmadge, Jean Lindfors, and Marty Davis. The work has already begun.

Priority will be to landscape and improve the lighting in the areas around the two boulevard entrance signs. Another priority will be to refurbish or replace the picnic tables. The working group will provide periodic updates on their progress. If you would like to help with this effort please contact Nancy Blazek.

Again, to those who are giving time, talent, and/or treasure to this effort, thank you very much for your participation and generosity.

Bob Jeffus  
Chair, Stewardship Committee





## Children's Choir Director

We are currently hiring for the Children's Choir Director position with an effective start date of August 1st. If you are interested please contact Linda Reffert at lkreffert@aol.com.

This position includes the following requirements: (additional requirements are not listed)

- ◆ Coordinate, instruct and lead music ministry for our children ages PreK through 6<sup>th</sup> grade.
- ◆ Provide inspiration and leadership for an enjoyable music experience as part of the curriculum for children enrolled in the W.O.W. program for one hour each Wednesday evening during the program's school year term and children enrolled in the Church School program for one hour each Sunday during the nine month school term, and for 3 hours each day during our one week summer VBS program.
- ◆ Design, develop and coordinate a Children's Christmas program for worship with the Pastor/ Head of Staff, Chancel Choir Director and Organist
- ◆ Provide accompaniment on the piano, CD player or computer during all children's rehearsals.
- ◆ Coordinate with the Pastor/ Head of Staff, Director of Children's Ministries, Chancel Choir Director, and the Worship Committee the schedule for children's involvement in worship or special services.
- ◆ Design, develop and coordinate a Children's Christmas program for worship with the Pastor/ Head of Staff, Chancel Choir Director and Organist.
- ◆ Select music for and rehearse the children's vocal choir.
- ◆ Receive input from the Director of Children's Ministries in the selection of the music to coordinate it with the emphasis of the children's curriculum.
- ◆ Provide input to the Worship Committee regarding budget for music or other needs of the children's music ministry.
- ◆ Coordinate use of materials, music equipment and facilities with other music staff.

## DEBT PAY-OFF CAMPAIGN UPDATE

As of June 16, 2019

First Presbyterian Church's outstanding building loan balance is now down to \$153,733. In July 2013, the balance stood at \$750,000. The monthly loan payment is \$6,372.98. Through regular monthly payments, the loan will not be paid off until the Summer of 2021.

The DEBT PAY-OFF FUND currently contains only \$25,299. With continuing pledged and non-pledged, contributions we should be able to make loan payments for all of 2019 and perhaps the first month or two of 2020 without negatively impacting the Operating Budget.

FIRST PRES NEEDS YOUR HELP. If you have not pledged, or you are not contributing to the Debt Pay-Off Campaign, we prayerfully ask you to do so. Wouldn't it be marvelous if we could have the loan fully paid off by early 2020? Please use the RED pledge card located on the name tag table. Please continue to use the PINK envelopes for your contributions.

Thank you again for your generosity. As a church family we are truly Blessed. If you have any questions, please contact me or Eric Van Sky (Financial Secretary).

Bob Jeffus  
Chair, Stewardship Committee



## Children's Ministry



Linda Reffert

Well, things can change in a month, can't they?! Last month I was all tickled because VBS registration had taken off like a rocket. Well, it is a rocket that stalled out. I have awesome staff lined up and it's a great curriculum. Becca Griffin will do an awesome job with Bible Stories, Nora Boyd with Science

lessons that link faith & science, and Ash Hudson will help the kids have great fun in Games while practicing being good sports. Rob Rose is putting together fun Music. Sue Tabler and her crew are making plans for the Preschool class. Snacks are cute and Mike Tabler has a great crew to help him put them together. Mary Lehr has been up here helping me work out a plan for decorating that is cute and doable, and she is taking on a couple of key areas herself. Jean and Landy Jacobson are decorating the Bible Story room and we will use their waterfall (with some additional jungle theme additions) in Fellowship Hall. Jean Lindfors has been making some adorable hanging critters and Barb Carlson, Jane Hink, Colleen Greiner and Sharon Elliott are making flowers like crazy. Marilyn Parker is cutting out jungle leaves. Things are coming together.

We need kids! As I write this, we have 30 registered and hope to have at least 60. 75 would get us equal to last year. I will be ordering tshirts the week of July 4th, so if you are planning to sign your own kids or grandkids up, do it before then, please. We want to make sure they get a tshirt that fits! And if you have any friends or neighbors you can invite, please do! Ages 3 (and potty-trained) through completed 6th grade are invited to attend. It's going to be an awesome week where the kids will be loved. They will laugh and make new friends in a safe and nurturing environment. And VBS is SO cheap! Even if parents just want mornings off, bringing kids to VBS is way cheaper than any babysitter I know (except grandparents).

Registration forms are available on the table or online at [www.myvbs.org/bellevuefpc](http://www.myvbs.org/bellevuefpc). Scholarships are available and if you know a family who needs help or you do, please let me know. There is absolutely no shame in needing help sometimes and we have people just waiting to sponsor kids!

The God & The Girls Intergenerational Retreat was a big success! I am so proud of how it all came together and of our awesome leadership team: Liane Kirmis, Sharon Elliott, Laura Miller, Jean Lindfors and Joyce Wells. And all the attendees were awesome! We had women from ages 9 to 90+ and it all just flowed so smoothly. I have had multiple requests to schedule another retreat soon and I am looking at fall dates as I write this. I will be checking with my leadership team and if there is anyone else who wants to help in some capacity, please speak up! I would particularly appreciate a Food Coordinator, but you may have ideas for sessions too, or some other aspect and I am certainly open to new ideas.

Our July Intergenerational Sunday school class is July 7th at 9 AM in the Library. We are good at assembly lines and we will be putting together treat bags for Bellevue police and fire personnel. All ages are invited to help! I will also be looking for help (particularly among families with children) to deliver the bags. Let me know if you are interested. I have an idea for our August class, but it's just in the rattling around my brain stage, so if you have a fabulous idea, please feel free to share it with me.

We are still looking for a Children's Music Director. Someone has made a tentative inquiry but it hasn't gone past that, yet. It would be really helpful if the person is a formally trained music teacher, and they need to be an adult, love the Lord and love kids – those are a given! June and I have the full job description if you know someone you can pass it along to. Rob Rose is filling the job through VBS but fall is coming up quickly! And music is an important way of loving the Lord to our kids, so it's a position we really hope to fill.



## Youth Fellowship (YF) News

*"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters."*  
Colossians 3:23



We had a wonderful time at Camp Calvin Crest on our Middle School Mission trip. The youth led morning and evening worship and this year each kiddo picked their own scripture. I will be sharing them in my newsletters the next few months.

The above scripture really came in handy during this years trip. We built a sidewalk to one of the fully accessible cabins so campers in wheel chairs won't get



bogged down in mud. The bags of cement were 60 lbs each and we added 1-2 gallons of water to each bag. Our second day we hand mixed the cement in wheelbarrows which made everything go faster but watching the youth carry bags and dump wheelbarrows that weigh about as much as they do was equal parts funny and frightening. They worked so hard and did such a great job! The camp fix-it man Bob was so impressed by the progress he framed in 20 additional feet and bought another pallet of cement for the second day. Total of concrete poured - 250 square feet using about 200

bags of concrete. We were a tired bunch when we got home Sunday but it was so rewarding to get all of that work done to help them with their campers arriving the next week.



We are heading to Triennium July 15th. It's coming up so quickly and I know everyone is getting very excited. We will meet at our church 9:30 pm Monday night, load the busses and depart around midnight for our drive to Purdue. Please keep us in your prayers. This is a fantastic and inspirational adventure and we thank you for your support which enables 13 of us to attend.

Be a Blessing. Shelli



### July Youth Events

**July 15 - 20** Triennium at Purdue University  
**July 22 - 26** VBS





~ July 2019 ~

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 1:15p Heritage Ridge 2p Harmony Court 2:45p Richmond Village	2 10:30a Staff Meeting (CR) 1p Bible Study (VVR) 6p Foundation Meeting (VVR)	3	4 Independence Day Church Office Closed	5	6
7 Pantry Sunday 9a Inter-Generational Sunday School 10a Worship Service 6:30p Boy Scout Committee Meeting (VVR) 7p Venture Crew 26	8 10:30a PEO (FHWVR)	9 1p Bible Study (VVR)	10 9a P.E.O. (VVR) 6p Finance Mtg (Admin Ofc)	11 7p Troop 467	12	13 7a Private Event (FH)
14 Undie Sunday 10a Worship Service 11a VBS Set-Up	15 7p Venture Crew 26	16 Youth Triennium (5 days) 1p Bible Study (VVR) 1p Welcome School Meeting (CR)	17	18 7p Troop 467	19	20
21 10a Honor Rob Rose 10a Worship Service 11a Fellowship Mtg (VVR)	22 9a VBS	23 9a VBS 1p Bible Study (VVR) 7p Troop 499 Committee Mtg (FH)	24 9a VBS	25 9a VBS 12p Ladies Lunch (La Mesa) 7p Troop 467	26 9a VBS	27
28 Next Sunday Pantry Sunday 9:30a Session Meeting (CR) 10a Worship Service 11a Church Picnic	29	30	31	Notes:		



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## July Birthdays:

- |                      |                   |                      |
|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Dawn Matthews      | 14 C. J. Keene    | 25 Rita Hurlbutt     |
| 1 Randy Reffert      | 18 Brian Stephan  | 26 Heather Glenn     |
| 3 Lila Rickel        | 19 Gary White     | 26 Rick Kirmis       |
| 8 Chuck Clark        | 19 Tara Williams  | 27 Ivna Johnson      |
| 10 Carole Warnes     | 19 John Wallace   | 28 Joe Medakovich    |
| 12 Shirley Hartranft | 20 Ron Lowrance   | 29 Heidi Brink       |
| 12 Will Oxtoby       | 23 Ron Luster     | 29 Lisa Lewis        |
| 13 Donna Davis       | 23 Paul Boyd      | 31 Marilyn Schlafman |
| 13 Betty Kieran      | 23 Marie Zipse    | 31 Marcia Smith      |
| 14 Jackson Griffin   | 24 Patrick Warren |                      |
| 14 Emerson Griffin   | 25 Denny Hilfiker |                      |

