

Hilltop Highlights

A Monthly Publication of First Presbyterian Church

Why are we opening back up?

Because God call us to be together. Being together is what the body of Christ is all about. We live out our faith and grow in faith by sharing with each other. In study, in prayer and in worship.

We are grateful for the technology that has allowed us to safely “distance” from other people. Technologies like Zoom and Facebook have made an impossible situation bearable. But they are not permanent solutions. Everything we do is about relationship and “distancing” is not good for relationships in the long term.



Worship is a very risky business. Risky because we do not know how and when we may encounter God or where God may be calling us to go. During this time of COVID-19, gathering to worship poses additional risks to our health. In order to be as safe as possible we will all have to work together and put the needs and concerns of others before our own. That is what it means to be a congregation who worships together. Reflecting the love of Christ by how we respect each other and care for each other. Here are some ways we can do that as we return to worship:

Strongly consider staying at home and continue to share in worship with us using Facebook Live if:

You are considered to be “at risk”.

You have a fever or do not feel well.

You are uncomfortable about returning to your church family at this time.

You have not been practicing social distance or may have been exposed to COVID.

Maintain social distance of 6 or more feet of space.

Sanitize your hands immediately upon entering the church.

Do not share objects.

Wearing a mask while you are in the building for worship is a requirement. (Masks will not be provided)

Plan for Reopening Church after COVID-19 Closure

- ◇ Social distancing must be maintained at all times.
- ◇ Access to the church will be through the main door only.

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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)

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Alice Renner (Chancel Choir Director)-akrennera@gmail.com

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

Dirk Lindner (Organist)-dirk16@cox.net

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



We Keep in Our Prayers

- ◆ Carl Seaman who is currently in Hospice at home
- ◆ Nadine Buckley for continued healing
- ◆ John Wallace who has been diagnosed with Dementia
- ◆ Virginia Eidenmiller who is now living at Mabel Rose
- ◆ All those affected by the Covid-19 virus

Financial Information

	May	<u>YTD</u>
Income	\$17,838.82	\$206,884.73
Expenses	<u>\$24,304.01</u>	<u>\$149,880.97</u>
Difference	<\$6,465.19	\$57,003.76



Pastor Article, Continued

- ◇ An usher/greeter will open the front door and ensure that all who enter use hand sanitizer.
- ◇ The use of masks while in the building is required by Session.
- ◇ Only the Library, Sanctuary and main floor bathrooms will be open to the public. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult in the restrooms.
- ◇ There will be no nursery or cry room available.
- ◇ No coffee hour will be provided prior to worship nor will the Library or Lobby be used for congregating either before or after worship.
- ◇ The Sanctuary will be capped at 50% capacity and places to sit will be clearly indicated. This will allow for approximately 130 people to worship in person.
- ◇ No bulletins will be available. All worship materials will be onscreen only. The Sunday bulletin will be emailed the Wednesday before worship so worshippers can print their own copy if they desire.
- ◇ Children's worship bags will not be made available.
- ◇ There will be a basket for offerings outside of the Sanctuary.
- ◇ A children's sermon will not be offered on the Sanctuary steps.
- ◇ Friendship registers, prayer request cards, offering plates and communion serving materials will not be used.
- ◇ On Communion Sundays, ushers will use gloves to pass out individual communion supplies to worshippers as they enter the Sanctuary prior to worship.
- ◇ Please arrive no earlier than 10:15. An usher will seat you.
- ◇ At the end of worship, the ushers will dismiss worshippers one row at a time beginning from the rear of the Sanctuary. Please do not congregate inside of the church building.

Yours in Christ, Mike

All services will be in person and online on our Facebook page, beginning July 5th

All in person events other than worship for July have been cancelled unless approved by Session.

If there are any changes we will inform you by email.



This July Newsletter will be the last mailed Newsletter. We will continue to email the Newsletter to everyone on file with an email address. We do have approximately 20 people that do not have an email address that we will continue to mail the monthly newsletter to. Not mailing the newsletters will save the church approximately \$1700.00 a year. We will continue to also post the Newsletter on our Website www.bellevuefpc.org. If you have any questions please contact the church office.

Financial Support of our Church

During this time of crisis it is crucial that you continue your financial support of our church. Here are the ways you can do that:

- ☺ Using your banks bill pay to send a donation using your envelope # in the account number field. If you do not have an envelope number last name is just fine. If you need assistance just call the church office and we will be happy to help.
- ☺ US Mail—Our address is 1220 Bellevue Blvd. South, Bellevue, NE 68005
- ☺ Stopping by the church office to drop off your offering during working hours. Our hours are Monday through Thursday 8:30a to 3:00pm
- ☺ We understand that during these difficult times it may not be possible to fulfill your pledge commitment. If this is the case please let us know so we can make adjustments.

DEBT PAY-OFF CAMPAIGN UPDATE

As of June 15, 2020

More Good News---FPC loan balance currently stands at \$81,812. However, the Debt Pay-Off account contains only \$17,062 which will pay the monthly payments only for the next 2-3 months---without negatively impacting the church's operating budget.

Please continue with your contributions. If you plan to make a significant end of year payment, please consider making it sooner rather than later so we can continue making the required monthly payments through December 2020. And if we can pay-off the remaining debt this year rather than later in 2021, we can save the church another \$1,000 to \$2,000, in interest expense.

Please mail in your contributions or drop them by the office. And, again, THANK YOU VERY MUCH 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

Tonight is the night! I am writing this article on Wednesday, June 24th and it's our first WOW Summer Camp via Zoom. I am excited and nervous. There are so many great people helping put this together, and we are blessed to have the technology of Zoom, but that means there are a lot of balls in the air and I don't want any of them to be dropped!

I want to be sure and thank the leadership team of Cindy Reilly, Nora Boyd, Sue Tabler, Becca Griffin, Liane Kirmis and Nancy Shultz for helping to make this a reality. We have been meeting and researching and planning. I also want to thank the people who have signed on as volunteers to run one or more of the segments of each of our sessions. They are: Sharon & Mike Elliott, Katie Crick, Jean Jacobson, Cathy Talmadge, Ash Hudson and Rob Rose. What a blessing each of you are to the wonderful kids of our congregation!

Our camp runs for 1 to 1 ¼ hour every Wednesday evening through July. If you would like your child or grandchild to be part of this and they aren't already signed on, please email me at lkreffert@aol.com or call the church ASAP. We also have a private Facebook group where videos of some of the sessions will be posted for families who have to miss one or more sessions, or whose kids just want to watch something again. And kids will be able to post what they make. Because we are dealing with minors and names will be listed, the group must be private.

I'm sure proud of being a part of this church! I have been amazed at the adaptations we have made and the challenges we have met during this time of pandemic.

Have we responded perfectly? No. Is there room to stretch and grow in our efforts to grow the Kingdom and to care for those in our midst? Sure. But none of us is perfect. I love the way staff, elders, deacons and members have come together to rise to our challenges! Thanks go out to each and every one of you who have asked "What can I do?" Or who have simply noticed a need and taken care of it, without a word to anyone. You are wonderful! And even if no one else knows what you did, you can rest assured that God knows.

I am continuing to plan for Fall programming. I know it will look different, but it remains to be seen how much different. I am working with some of our CE committee to be ready for the necessary adjustments that will be required in spacing and the types of activities that will be safe to do in Children's Ministry. When we can open, we want to offer a safe and nurturing space for the children of our church. I am on the lookout for full-size clipboards. If you have any you can donate, please let me know. Or if you spot a good deal anywhere, please shoot me an email.

Of course, it's up to our session, but even when we are able to gather again for Worship, it will not be safe to open our Nursery on Sunday mornings. There is just no way to be able to maintain social distancing in the Nursery. Thanks go out to our fantastic Nursery team of Sheila Sloniker and Susan Scranton. They are chomping at the bit to get back into the Nursery to care for our precious little ones and we appreciate them hanging in there patiently.



Youth Fellowship (YF) News



“Wait for the Lord; be strong and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord.” Psalm 27:14

Waiting is not my most favorite thing. Waiting for life to get back to normal,

waiting to see church friends again face to face, waiting. It’s a crazy time of waiting but I hope we are trying to fill our time with positive. The weather has been beautiful, go for a walk or just sit outside and breathe some fresh air.



Sort out your junk drawer or closet or pantry. I’m sure there are some things you haven’t touched in years that someone else could use. Do some

positive things to make room in your life for better things.

I’ve challenged the youth to put time on the calendar each week and stick to it. Maybe it’s 30 minutes, maybe an hour but get away from all technology. Get outside, have a picnic with a friend, read a book, or listen to your favorite music. I think that one thing we have all done to get through the quarantine is depend on technology to amuse, distract, and keep us busy. So many people are talking about what series they have binge watched. If you can watch an entire series, 23 episodes, an hour each, in just a couple of days, that’s too much screen time. We need to unplug. I think putting that time on your calendar helps you stick to that plan. I look forward to hearing what everyone does with their tech free time each week.

I’m excited to say the youth will begin meeting again the first week of July with a trip to the zoo, a cookout with games and a drive in movie night. We will also continue with our Illumizoom meetings. We had a



great time and lots of laughter playing Pictionary via zoom. All the new things we are discovering during this strange time. It has been tough but it has also been fun. I keep thinking of the strength and flexibility we are all experiencing right now.

Speaking of flexibility I heard a great quote recently—”Be flexible in mind, body, spirit and expectations.” This is a time of change and we need to be gentle with ourselves and others, focusing on grace because things have changed and it will be a while before our normal looks like pre-Covid normal.

These little deer are told to wait and be quiet until their mom comes back, they were laying in the grass under the trees during a downpour last week. Even in the torrential rain they waited patiently knowing their mama would come back. I hope we can wait in a similar way not necessarily quiet and still like the deer but with trust and patience.

I’m praying for you all, for strength in the waiting, flexibility, grace, good health and blessings.

Be a Blessing, Shelli

JULY ACTIVITIES

Illuminate through the end of July with ZOOM calls and other activities.

- July 1 or 2** Zoo outing **Masks required inside buildings**
- July 8** Grill and games
- July 15** Illumizoom
- July 22** Drive in movie **some time this week**
- July 29** Illumizoom



July 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
10:30a Worship Ser-vice (In Person &	Church Office is Closed	10:30a Staff Mtg (VVR)	6p Finance Mtg (VVR)			
		5:30p Christian Ed. Mtg (Zoom)				
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
10:30a Worship Ser-vice (In Person &						
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
10:30a Worship Ser-vice (In Person &		6p Foundation Mtg (VVR)		12p Newsletter Due		
26	27	28	29	30	31	
10:30a Worship Ser-vice (In Person &						



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July Birthdays

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Dawn Matthews | 20 Ron Lowrance |
| 1 Randy Reffert | 23 Ron Luster |
| 3 Lila Rickel | 23 Paul Boyd |
| 8 Chuck Clark | 23 Marie Zipse |
| 9 Samuel Highbargin | 24 Patrick Warren |
| 10 Carole Warnes | 25 Denny Hilfiker |
| 12 Shirley Haartranft | 25 Rita Hurlbutt |
| 12 Will Oxtoby | 26 Heather Glenn |
| 13 Donna Davis | 26 Rick Kirmis |
| 13 Betty Kieran | 27 Ivna Johnson |
| 14 Jackson Griffin | 28 Joe Medakovich |
| 14 Emerson Griffin | 29 Heidi brink |
| 18 Brian Stephan | 29 Lisa Lewis |
| 19 Gary White | 31 Marilyn Schlafman |
| 19 Tara Williams | 31 Marcia Smith |
| 19 John Wallace | |

