

# Hilltop Highlights

A Monthly Publication of First Presbyterian Church

## With Thanks

**“Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, because I hear about your love for all his holy people and your faith in the Lord Jesus.” (Philemon 1:3-5)**



Over and over again, Paul, in his ministry and in his letters gives thanks to God for the ways that the people have loved God by loving God’s people through service. I know that during worship we do just that, but I think I need to be very deliberate in giving thanks for the many people who have carried us through these crazy COVID times. Alice Renner has a thank you for our musicians that have helped in worship every week, but I have my own list as well.

First of all, a huge thanks to Bryan, Rick and Liane Kirmis and Shelli and John Dart who have made on-line worship possible. Their dedication and commitment and talent has kept us together as a worshipping community by making high quality worship possible.

Secondly, a thanks to everyone who has kept the building and grounds in perfect condition. Our landscaping crew, the lawn mowing teams, and those who wish to remain unnamed in their service. you know who you are!!!

Thirdly, a thanks to our children and youth for making cards to send to our shut-ins. They are so greatly appreciated.

I also thank you all for continuing to support our church financially and by your generous giving to Bellevue Together and the Bellevue Food Pantry. Thank you Denise Seaman for keeping us focused on helping our community.

So many people have been involved in our various on-line and in-person children and youth activities (WOW camp, youth get-togethers...) this summer. Your help has made such a difference and has helped to ease the disappointment of cancelled mission trips and VBS.

We all owe a very big thanks to Jack Sypfers, aka, “hand-sanitizer man.” Since March, Jack has been working extra diligently, side by side with us in the trenches, keeping things running and doing so much of the leg work to help us return to face-to-face worship and to stay safe. Jack, you are an amazing guy!

Finally, I am so thankful to June Kouba, Linda Reffert and Shelli Dart who have been here every week keeping the office running, keeping our children and youth and adult educational programming alive, on-line and exciting. You three have been such a tremendous help in keeping me focused and most of all sane. You have been a true Godsend to our congregation in these crazy times. [Yours in Christ, 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)

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

- ◆ All of our folks who are unable to leave their homes
- ◆ All those affected by the Covid-19 virus

### Bakersplus.com

We just received the **Second Quarter of 2020** rebate from Bakers for **\$166.73** this is wonderful and 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>June</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Income	\$27,587.84	\$234,472.57
Expenses	<u>\$24,630.48</u>	<u>\$174,511.45</u>
Difference	\$2,957.36	\$59,961.12



**All services will be in person and online on our Facebook page.** All in person events other than worship for August have been cancelled unless approved by Session. **If there are any changes we will inform you by email.**

Dear Church Family,

Thanks to Pastor Mike, all the staff, ushers, Facebook admins, Brian Wells, and Tom Blazek for making Carl's memorial service a beautiful tribute to a man who loved God. We were so blessed to share that service with many of you here and across the country on Facebook. Thank you for all the prayers, cards, messages, flowers, and your presence to honor Carl's life. He loved his First Presbyterian Church family!

**Yours in Christ, Denise, Doug, Jamie, and Donald Seaman**

## **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 July 27, 2020

FPC loan balance currently stands at \$75,691. the Debt Pay-Off account now contains \$24,876 which will pay the monthly payments for August thru November 2020.

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 make the required December 2020 monthly payment. And if we can pay-off the then remaining debt of about \$35,000 by January 2021, we can save the church another \$1,500, 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



## A Joyful Noise

I'd like to give a big SHOUT OUT to all of our wonderful singers and musicians who have been doing the music this summer. A lot of these people stepped up when we shut down in March and they have stepped up again this summer.

So far we've heard from several quartets, Bethany and John Dart, Mandy, Ryan, Makayla and Katie Crick and Sara Renner. Thank you to Mandy who put together a group with Makayla and Katie Crick and Emerson, Jackson and Izzy Griffin, and Maggie and Josh Blazek, who we have been blessed to hear several other times. Liane Kirmis put together a group of bell ringers, and we heard from Sarah, Kathryn and Rob Rose. We also heard a beautiful flute solo from Barb Simmons.

Things to look forward to in August – Lexie Ryks, Brian Wells, Emma Rose, Sharon Elliott, Scott Reffert, and the Men's Quartet.

As always, Dirk Lindner has played some awesome music and made arrangements to work with the soloists. Since we have no idea what the fall brings, we'll be putting together some smaller groups and more from our fine musicians. Thank you all for your wonderful work!

Making a joyful noise, Alice

## Bellevue Together Impact

Thanks to all who helped us reach our goal to provide targeted items for BPS students at the back to school event. We supplied 30 Packages of girls underwear, 28 packages of boys underwear, 290 highlighters and \$100 in cash donations.

This year the event is abbreviated over three days, August 5-7, with strict guidelines for families in an assigned time slot. Mask wearing volunteers are still needed to help set up and assist in three-hour time frames. Contact Denise Seaman with questions or to volunteer.



## Congratulation Graduate

Dillon Dawson has enjoyed being part of First Presbyterian Church his entire life. He has participated in Sunday School, VBS, WOW, and Illuminate. Dillon is a graduate of Bellevue West High School. At West, he played the trumpet in the marching band, concert band and pep-band. He was also a varsity defender for the Bellevue West Boys Soccer Team, and has played soccer since he was four years old. Dillon will be attending the University of Nebraska-Lincoln where he plans to pursue a degree in the College of Engineering.



## Children's Ministry



Linda Reffert

When I wrote last month's article, it was the very day that our Summer WOW Camp began. I was nervous and excited. As I write this, we have finished 5 out of 6 sessions. It has gone so well! I am so thankful to the great team who helped plan and carry it out and to the volunteers who helped on a one-time basis. It was really fun to have Ash Hudson help with a couple of sessions from Montreal! She had hoped to come back this summer and help with VBS. That wasn't possible, but because we ran Summer WOW over Zoom, she could be part of our team. She prepared a really neat power point presentation about college life in Montreal and put things in terms the kids (and I) could really relate to. And she led them in a couple of games. What a great gift!

The Summer WOW kids did 2 mission projects that I'd like to share with you. Cindy Reilly put together a Bingo sheet. Each time a child completed a task on the sheet, they got to mark the box the item was listed in. Every task was positive, helpful and/or encouraging to others. The kids could complete multiple Bingos on their sheets. Each time a Bingo was registered, the kids were to report in and each Bingo was worth \$10 toward a donation to sponsor an animal at the Zoo. The kids chose that particular cause and the cash behind the donation came from an anonymous source. I will have to let you know next month what animal(s) we ended up sponsoring through the kids efforts.

Our other mission project was collecting food for the Bellevue Food Pantry. We sure appreciate the congregation helping with our collection! I didn't see

everyone who dropped off food, but please know we are grateful. And the Pantry clients will appreciate it even more! We ended up collecting **820** items! The last few summers, we have set goals for VBS food collections and when the kids reached the goal, they got to slime one of our VBS leadership team or Pastor. This year we couldn't do the slime, but we had some gift certificates donated that we gave away as prizes for 6 different goals, such as: Most donated, healthiest, most variety, etc. Again, I'll have to wait for next month to let you know who the winners were.

Trying to plan for fall is a challenge! We don't know if we will have Sunday School or WOW in person or via Zoom. I've been polling our families about their preferences and comfort levels. My results will go to the CE committee and then to the session who will ultimately decide our plan. There may be leaders who could use the same plans to teach in person or by internet, but I am not one of them! So, I'm trying to prepare enough to at least get started in any possible scenario. This is hard on me, on our kids and parents and on our volunteers. That said, what hasn't been hard about adapting to changes that are necessary for safety during Covid? That's just the reality. I keep imagining a year or 2 years from now and having Covid behind us. It's a lovely thought that I sure hope becomes a reality!

And finally, I'm starting a Zoom Mom's group for women with kids in elementary through high school. If you are a mom of that age child and didn't receive an invitation, I goofed! Please let me know.



## Youth Fellowship (YF) News



*“Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.”  
Colossians 3:12*

Who would believe that we are still in a time of waiting. I hope you are all dealing with it a bit better than some I’ve seen. People are losing patience with not having an answer, a plan, a direction. That’s why I chose the above scripture. These are all traits that will continue getting a workout I believe in the coming months.



We go back to school this month and each school district seems to have a variation of a plan to get back

to school. It will be a time of change so please, hang on, pray, and persevere. I’m praying for all of you and I hope you continue to pray for me.

We’ve been trying to keep in contact with Zoom and Grill n Games but with some things opening back up like band and sports we’ve missed seeing some folks.

June and July are our months for Mission Trips and I am missing those trips so much. My Facebook Memories keep popping up pictures from Dallas and Triennium and Oklahoma to name a few and I was feeling pretty sad about missing these opportunities. THEN in a meeting with other Christian Educators one church said they did an at home mission trip and their kiddos loved it so I decided we can do that too!

The first week of August we will be having an at home mission trip for the Jr and Sr Highs. I always

make mission trip bags for the kiddos so they will be delivered the week before the Mission trip and we will



have a combination of Zoom calls to kick off the morning and again to recap our day. Like our Mission trips we will share scripture, prayer, games and music. I am so excited to still be able to do Mission and be able to do it in a different and creative way.



Please be in prayer with us as we forge forward on our Mission Trip, as we go back to school, and as we continue to determine what

our Fall programming will look like.

I included this quote last month but I think we need to have it as a reminder—”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.

I’m praying for you all, for strength in the waiting,

### AUGUST ACTIVITIES

August 3 - 7 Illumi-Zoom Mission Trip

9:30 am Zoom daily kickoff

7:00 pm Zoom daily recap and reflection

You can attend all or some as your schedule permits but we hope to see you each day. Info will also be e-mailed daily.



# August 2020

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



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## August Birthdays

- |                     |                         |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Sara Renner       | 15 Don Glenn            |
| 2 Florence Maurer   | 16 Marylou Hegarty      |
| 3 Morgan Fenster    | 17 Nancy Worm           |
| 3 Will Kroeger      | 17 Kathryn Robertson    |
| 4 Mattie Carver     | 18 Nancy Shultz         |
| 4 Matt Fenster      | 18 Linda Reffert        |
| 6 Steve Tamayo      | 19 Gary Marks           |
| 7 Noelle Kilpatrick | 21 Mary Lehr            |
| 7 JoAnne Nielsen    | 22 Dave Norton          |
| 11 Gene Cash        | 22 Mary Jo Schiefelbein |
| 11 Suzanne Zipse    | 23 Walt Griffiths       |
| 12 Elliott Rose     | 25 Marilyn Parker       |
| 12 Steve Renner     | 26 Mike Elliott         |
| 13 Dan Wilson       | 28 Denise Seaman        |
| 15 Val Jean Hansen  | 29 Dan Clark            |
| 15 Dan Robertson    | 29 Blake Urwin          |

