



# Hilltop Highlights

A Monthly Publication of First Presbyterian Church

## Confirmation

*Trusting in the gracious mercy of God, do you turn away from the ways of sin and renounce evil and its power in the world?*

This question is the first of our three Baptismal questions and the first question that we ask our confirmands to answer. Our confirmands (Zach Keaton, Eli Fenster, Ryan Baruth, Abby Reilly and Katie Crick) have spent ten weeks together learning how to answer that question for themselves. We have studied together what it means to be a Christian, what it means to be a Presbyterian and what it means to take personal responsibility for their faith as members of our church.

The goals of our confirmation program are:

- To help our Confirmands experience and recognize God moving in their lives.
- To help our Confirmands grow in their awareness of, and their ability to speak about their faith experience.

To help our Confirmands understand what it means to be a part of church (that is, what it means to be part of a devoted community of faith in which each member has a place, purpose, and a mutual responsibility in Christ).

At the end of the Confirmation program, our youth have the opportunity to “be confirmed” in the Christian faith by claiming for themselves the promises made by others when they were baptized. On Confirmation Sunday, which is May 8<sup>th</sup> this year, join us as we celebrate the individual decision of each of our Confirmands to publicly confirm their faith and join the Church as we joyfully recognize the journey that has brought them to their decision.



Confirmation is not a graduation program from Church School or the church, but rather an opportunity for our youth to explore what the next phase of their faith journey might look like. In claiming the promises made when they were baptized, we are not asking them to continue the faith journey alone, but rather to take ownership of their faith. Our hope is that Confirmation will help them find their place and their ministry in the Church to which they feel called. For we have all been called to share in our One Faith, One Lord and One Baptism as we serve united in ministry. Do you trust in the gracious mercy of God?

**Blessings, Pastor Mike**



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## Staff

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

June Kouba (Church Administrator/Treasurer)-[admin@bellevuefpc.org](mailto:admin@bellevuefpc.org)  
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Linda Reffert (Children's Ministry Director)-[lkreffert@aol.com](mailto:lkreffert@aol.com)  
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Shelli Dart (Youth Ministry Director)-[shelli.dart@gmail.com](mailto:shelli.dart@gmail.com)  
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Dirk Lindner (Organist)-[dirk16@cox.net](mailto:dirk16@cox.net)

Eric Van Sky (Financial Secretary)-[eric.vansky@yahoo.com](mailto:eric.vansky@yahoo.com)



## We Keep in Our Prayers

- ◆ Joyce Ritchey for peace and comfort in home hospice care.
- ◆ Pastor Mike's mom Eileen who is having health issues
- ◆ Jane Hink who is recovering at home.
- ◆ Willis Regier as he struggles with health issues.

### Financial Information

	<u>March</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Income	\$23,675.20	\$125,022.36
Expenses	\$30,227.98	\$100,337.71
Difference	<\$6,552.78	\$24,684.65

If you are interested in becoming a member of this church, please contact June Kouba at 402-291-1104 or email [admin@bellevuefpc.org](mailto:admin@bellevuefpc.org)





VBS is happening in-person this summer! Yippee! It'll run from 9 to noon, Monday through Friday, June 27th - July 1st. Our theme is Rocky Railway "Jesus' power pulls us through" Ages 3 (and potty-trained) through completed 6th grade are invited to join us for a week of fun with science, games, snacks, music and Bible stories. Cost is \$10 per child with a max of \$40 per family and scholarships are available. Our mission project is collecting food for the Bellevue Food Pantry. REGISTRATION IS OPEN at [myvbs.org/bellevuefpc](http://myvbs.org/bellevuefpc). Some classes will have limited enrollment so plan to register early!

## Graduates



**Josh Blazek**-I am graduating from Papillion-La Vista South HS. I was involved in several band activities including marching band, jazz band, jazz combo, and show band. At church, I have helped with Facebook live streams and played trombone with the youth band and for special music. I will attend the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in the fall and pursue a double major in Supply Chain Management with a B.A. in Music.

**Bella Keaton**-I will be graduating from Fremont High School. I have been a member of our church since birth, participating in VBS, Illuminate, luncheons and fundraisers. I have been active playing soccer, basketball, and tennis. I have been in Letter club, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, HAC Leadership Cadre, Spanish Honor Society, National Honor Society, Key Club and PBIS (positive behavioral interventions and supports) Team. This Fall I plan to attend Briar Cliff University to study Special Education and play basketball.



## Graduates



**Makayla Crick**-I went to Bellevue West High School. I was most involved with the band program at school with marching band.

At church I participated in Wow and Illuminate, VBS, and various things with the youth group. My favorite memory from church is the lock-ins we have before youth Sunday and all the games we play.

I plan to go to UNL and major in secondary English education.

**Izzy Griffin**-I'm graduating from Glenwood High School. In high school I've been involved with band, soccer, National Honor Society, and 4-H. I have done youth group, handbells, attended Triennium, and been on a few Calvin Crest mission trips for our church. I will be attending Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa to study actuarial science and Spanish.



**Makayla Coats**– I will be graduating from Bellevue East High School. I participated in marching band, and jazz band at school. At church I've participated in mission trips to Calvin Crest, and youth Sunday(s) and have played flute many times during the Worship Service. I will be attending UNO in the Fall, majoring in Music Education.





## PER CAPITA – PER PERSON

The **required** total per capita amount due from each congregation is a combined request from the Presbytery of Missouri River Valley, Synod of Lakes and Prairies, and the General Assembly. We paid \$39.68 for each active member. Our apportionment for this year is **\$10,118.40 which we paid in February. We are currently over \$3,500 short so the remaining amount came from the General Fund.**

Please include a check for **\$39.68** for each church member in your family and extra if you can for shut-ins and confirmands who are unable to pay. Write your envelope # on your check and please write Per Capita in the memo portion. Leave the envelope or check in the offering plate or the office.

Current Totals: Received **\$7,023.00** Needed Total **\$10,118.40**

## Contingency Fund

\$0	\$15,000	\$30,000	<b>40,365.72</b>	\$45,000	\$60,000	Goal \$75,000
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We are here as of  **April 24th**

## Bakersplus.com

We just received the **First Quarter of 2022** rebate from Bakers for **\$161.77** this is wonderful and includes **43** 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.



## Amazon Smile

Please be sure to go (<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/47-0379376>) when ordering your from Amazon. **We have received \$1,019.82 since inception.** It could be so much more if everyone who orders from Amazon selects a non-profit to support.



Each quarter, the AmazonSmile Foundation will make a donation to First Presbyterian Church.

If you are not an AmazonSmile customer please log in to Amazon.com and go to help and type in Amazon Smile . Click on the Amazon Smile logo and you will be prompted get started and to select an organization.



## Easter Egg Hunt



## 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. We were finally able to have our annual Mother's Night this month. The mom's got to come see what the kids do and how they do it all. They all had a great time! To continue with Welcome School tradition, the 3 and 5 day classes will be having a day at the park on Friday, May 6<sup>th</sup>. Let's hope the rain stays away.

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



## Children's Ministry

The end of the school year is coming up quick, isn't it! We're wrapping up the Sunday School year too. The kids last time to sing in Worship will be on Mother's Day, Sunday, May 8<sup>th</sup> and they are singing a special song for moms. The last day of Sunday School will be Sunday, May 15<sup>th</sup>.

May 15<sup>th</sup> will also be Volunteer Recognition Sunday for Christian Education and we have a lot of people to recognize and thank. I hope (hint, hint!) that all our WOW & Sunday School volunteers who are in worship will come up and be recognized. That morning at 9:30 will be our first Church Grandparent Blessing & Celebration since Covid descended upon us. If you are over age 50, not yet a church grandparent or your church grandchild has graduated out of our youth program, and you would LIKE to be a church grandparent, please let Shelli or I know. There is a need for more male and female church grandparents.

We held WOW graduation on Wednesday, April 6<sup>th</sup>. Our 6<sup>th</sup> graders who graduated into the Youth Program are: Margot Boyd, daughter of Paul & Nora Boyd; Jonathan Highbargin, son of Lowell & Megan Highbargin and Izzy Goracke, daughter of Kim Goracke. They are delightful youth and good friends beside and I am sad for myself and our Children's Program but I am happy for Shelli and tickled to see how well they are already blending into the Youth program.

We have 16 kids registered for VBS already and it's still in April as I write this. Only a couple of the registered kids are our own, others are from Welcome School and a couple from the community. I wonder if we will reach 90 again? Last year I had to close registration first for 3 year and early 4 year olds because that class got full. I anticipate it will fill early again. If you have a 3 or 4 year old child or grandchild and you intend to register them, I would suggest you do it before mid-May. I also had to close

registration for all ages more than a week before VBS because 90 was all we could handle with our staffing limitations. Who knows about this year! Just as a reminder, there are paper registration forms on a table outside the Sanctuary or you can register online at [www.myvbs.org/bellevuefpc](http://www.myvbs.org/bellevuefpc). VBS runs from 9 to Noon on Monday, June 27<sup>th</sup> through Friday, July 1<sup>st</sup>. It's gonna be awesome!

Of course, I still need volunteers for VBS too. I need one more adult in the Kitchen to help with snack preparation and serving, a few more crew leaders and crew helpers, one or two people to do our mission project counting, and I'd love to have a youth or adult that would help with some skits for our Opening one or all the mornings. Do any of these ideas appeal to you?

Finally, I want to thank our faithful WOW and Sunday School volunteers. You are all so precious! WOW Table Parents were: Pastor Mike, Liane Kirmis, Sue Tabler, Kristen Krom, Cindy Reilly, Megan Warren, Megan Highbargin and Nora Boyd. Kitchen Crew headed by Mike Tabler were: George Sayles, Sue Tabler, Rick Holbert, Jean Jacobson, Anita & Plyman Chappel, Nancy Shultz, Carolyn Hess, Tom & Nancy Blazek, Joyce Luster, Jean Lindfors and Don Glenn. Our substitutes in Faith Education and Music were Cindy Reilly and Nora Boyd. Sunday School teachers this year were Nora Boyd and Becca Griffin with Cindy Reilly and Megan Highbargin filling in as needed.





## May Youth Fellowship (YF) News



May 15th is our last Sunday School day and our Grandparent Blessing day. I think it is so beautiful to have these pairs praying for each other through out the year and know this is a blessing for both.

We will be having an outing at the Millers as an end of year, get ready for finals, have some fun on May 14th from 3-6pm. This is for all of the youth including our new 6th grade friends we moved up at our last Illuminate. Wear something comfy as we will be running around, having a super soaker war, and grilling some yummy food. We hope to see you all there.

Happy End of the School Year, Be a Blessing,  
Shelli



### MAY ACTIVITIES

- May 8** Confirmation Reception and Senior Recognition
- May 14** 3-6pm Fun day at Miller's
- May 15** Last Sunday School, Grandparent Blessing

### SUMMER TRIPS

- June 3 - 5** Middle School to Camp Calvin Crest
- July 24 - 29** Senior High to Storm Lake Iowa

*"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock." Matthew 7:24*

I am so proud of the beautiful service our youth presented and even more proud of how they shared their feelings and struggles. The last few years have been difficult for all of us and the service was a great reminder to be compassionate and kind because we just don't know what others are experiencing and to be careful of the words we use. We were challenged to build the foundations of our lives on positive, life giving things and not on the hurt and regret of our past. Beautiful job all of you.

At our last Illuminate of the year we welcomed the 6th graders into the group. One of our traditions is Upside Down Sundaes which are not only delicious but also quite funny. I remind the kids to pick their partners carefully and this is what happens when you get an ornery partner. I just love the laughter in the next picture!



On May 8th we will recognize both our Confirmands and our Graduates. Such big life events for our youth.





# May 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9:00a Sunday School 10:00a Coffee Fellowship 10:30a Worship Service (IP/ FB) 11:30a Deacons Mtg (VVR)	1:15p Heritage Ridge	10:30 Staff Mtg (VVR) 7p Bell Choir Rehearsal	7p Choir Rehearsal	7p Troop 467		10a Prebytery Mtg (Clarinda)
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
9:00a Sunday School 10:00a Coffee Fellowship 10:30a Worship Service (IP/ FB) 10:30a Confirmation Sunday 10:30a Senior Recognition	10:30a PEO (VVR/FH)	5:30p Christian Ed Mtg (CR) 7p Bell Choir Rehearsal	9a PEO (VVR) 4p Finance Mtg (CR) 6:30p B & G Mtg (CR) 7p Choir Rehearsal	6:30p Membership Mtg (VVR) 7p Worship Mtg (CR) 7p Troop 467		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
9:30a Grandparent Blessing (FH) 10:00a Coffee Fellowship 10:30a Worship Service (IP/ FB) 10:30a Teacher Recognition 11:30a Fellowship Mtg (VVR) 6:30p Boy Scout Comm. Mtg		6p Bell Choir Potluck/Polish	7p Choir Rehearsal	7p Troop 467		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
10:00a Coffee Fellowship 10:30a Worship Service (IP/ FB)	5p Organ Guild Dinner			12p Newsletter Due 7p Session Mtg (Zoom) 7p Troop 467		Private Event (Crick)
29	30	31	27	28	29	30
9:30a Coffee Fellowship 10:00a Worship Service (FH) (IP/FB)	<b>Church Office Closed</b>					

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## May Birthdays:

- |                    |                     |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Marilyn Routt    | 13 Barb Simmons     |
| 2 Morgan Braun     | 18 Austin Braun     |
| 2 Mason Braun      | 19 Rachel Monico    |
| 2 Matthew Clark    | 19 Margot Boyd      |
| 4 Hattie Urwin     | 21 JoAnn Carpenter  |
| 4 Gabrielle Keaton | 22 Nora Boyd        |
| 7 Brandon VanSky   | 23 Carolyn Lowrance |
| 8 Deanna Freier    | 25 Fianna Glenn     |
| 8 Landy Jacobson   | 26 Sally Syphers    |
| 11 Ryan Baruth     | 27 Bryan Kirmis     |
| 12 Lexie Ryks      | 29 Mike Tabler      |
| 13 Dave Hartranft  |                     |

