



Hilltop Highlights

A Monthly Publication of First Presbyterian Church

A Greater Righteousness

*“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.” (Mt 5:6)*

“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink.’” (Mt 25:34-35)



Do you hunger and thirst for righteousness? I certainly hope so. That hunger for righteousness is one of the things that marks us as Christ’s own children. To hunger and thirst for righteousness means that we seek and strive to do what Christ asks of us. To love our God heart and body and spirit and to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. In Matthew 25, Jesus talks about the great sorting of sheep from goats at the end of the age. He assures us that our heavenly Father will welcome and care for us by the same measure as we have welcomed and cared for our brothers and sisters in need.

Hunger and thirst is as old as the world. Some of us hunger and thirst for righteousness and some of us just plain old hunger and thirst. With the current state of the economy, the number of those who hunger for their daily bread has never been greater. Food pantries in every town and city across our country have never had to do more with less than they do today. It seems like a perfect storm of need and scarcity, doesn’t it?

Theologian Frederick Buechner writes, *“The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.”* Just chew on that for a moment! I will go so far as to propose that right now, at this moment, there is match made in heaven between those of us who hunger for righteousness and those of us who just simply hunger. Do you feel called to step up and step into the world’s deep hunger? I hope so. Let your thirst for righteousness guide your heart.

I have a challenge for each and every one of you. I ask that you set aside \$10 each week to provide food for the Bellevue Food Pantry. Take that \$10 each week and make the most of it. Use coupons, sales circulars, gas rewards, whatever tool you have at your disposal and turn that \$10 into the best bag full of food that you can. I believe that you all, like Sharon and I, will discover deep gladness and satisfaction with every bag full of groceries that you place in the shopping cart in the church lobby. Then just keep doing that every week. Bellevue Food Pantry has a Facebook page that lets you know what items they need. It is safe to say that Peanut butter, pancake mix (the just add water kind), pasta and sauce, laundry detergent and deodorant are always on the list. Please make sure your items are new, clean, unopened, unused and check the expiration date.

Just like most of you, I have never known physical hunger. I do know what it means to hunger for

Continued on page 2



Inside this issue:

Keep in Prayer	2
Pastor Continued	2
Financial Information	2
Happenings	3
Happenings	4
Happenings	5
Contingency Fund	5
Stewardship	6
Per Capita	6
Children's Ministry	7
Youth Ministry	8
Calendar	9
Birthdays	10

Pastor continued

righteousness though. My prayer is that your own hunger for righteousness will bring to you deep gladness with every empty stomach that you help to fill. One thing I love about our God is that He provides us with daily opportunities to put our righteousness into action, and action is what separates sheep from goats!

I hope that you will accept my \$10 challenge. Please let me know what amazing things you are able to do for God's children in need. I would love to hear your story.

And since you asked, for many years it was Ken Trinkle who brought our food offerings to the pantry. For the last few years, Mel Hess has been doing the job for us. When you see them, give them a hearty "baa baa," I mean "atta boy!"

Grace and peace,
Pastor Mike



We Keep in Our Prayers

- ◆ Please keep in prayer June Kouba who will be undergoing surgery and treatment for lung cancer.

Financial Information

	<u>September</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Income	\$32,609.33	\$254,554.65
Expenses	\$23,861.02	\$259,394.92
Difference	\$8,748.31	<\$4,840.27

If you are interested in becoming a member of this church, please contact June at 402-291-1104 or email admin@bellevuefpc.org



Happenings



Do you love the Christmas story? At each session of **Faces at the Manger**, we're going to focus on a different character or group - Gabriel, Mary, Joseph, Shepherds, the Innkeeper and the Wise Men. We'll begin Tuesday, November 1st at 1 PM and the study runs 6 sessions, through Tuesday, December 6th. We'll use scripture, music, poems, short stories and discussion to explore the individual characters and roles and what we and others imagine their experience might have been. There are no books to buy and no homework for anyone but our volunteer readers (and that will be really easy homework!).

I hope this study will be a delightful way to turn our hearts and minds toward the season of Christmas and the birth of our Lord and Savior! Questions? Call Linda Reffert at 402-676-3230 or email her at lkreffert@aol.com.



The Angel Tree will be ready Sunday, November 13th. Look for more information in upcoming bulletins. We can help more families celebrate Christmas, no matter their financial status.

Each angel on the tree has a gift request and a child's age for your reference. All gifts should be returned, unwrapped to the



Church by Sunday, December 5th so they can be distributed to families the next weekend.

You may put your gift in a shopping bag or a pretty Christmas bag if you choose. Do not wrap. Thank you for your support!



Poinsettia Sales- Be sure to stop by the table in the Library to order your memorial poinsettias. The Worship Committee is ordering beautiful top quality flowers. Ordering will begin Sunday, November 20th and will continue through Sunday, December 4th.



Youth Mission Silent Auction & Luncheon

It is time for our annual fundraising event which begins **Sunday, November 20th**. The proceeds fund our youth mission projects for 2023. We need your help in providing donated craft items, holiday gift items, gift baskets for children and adults, themed baskets, babysitting hours, yard work, books and toys...you name it! Items or descriptions of items will be on display, with bid sheets and the congregation is invited to bid on any items they may wish to purchase.

Sunday, December 11th will be the last day for bidding. The bidding will close 30 minutes after worship service and the winners will be announced at a luncheon, hosted by the youth and youth leaders, following the service. If you would like to contribute or have any questions, please contact Shelli Dart at the church office (402-291-1104). Thank you for your support!



Hanging of the Greens

Join your church family for a time of fellowship, worship, and giving to others in our community. We will gather at 5:30 pm November 27th in Fellowship Hall and have dinner, then we will begin putting up the trees and decorating whatever and wherever we can!

Advent Calendar

Sunday, November 27th– 1st Sunday of Advent

Worship at 10:30am

Hanging of the Greens 5:30pm

Sunday, December 4th –2nd Sunday of Advent

Boy Scout soup lunch at 11:30am

Sunday, December 11th – 3rd Sunday in Advent

Worship and Children's Christmas Program at 10:30am

Happy Birthday, Jesus! Party

Holiday Youth Mission Silent Auction & Luncheon at 11:30am

Sunday, December 18th– 4th Sunday of Advent

No Sunday School

Worship including the Chancel Choir Cantata 10:30am

Christmas Joy Offering received

Saturday, December 24th-Christmas Eve

Pre-Service Music Performances at 6:30 pm

Worship with Chancel Choir, Westminster Bells, Carols and Candlelight at 7:00 (Childcare is not provided)

Sunday, December 25th-Christmas Day

Worship and Carols in Fellowship Hall 10:30am



Troop 467, the Boy Scout Troop that meets at our church on Thursday nights, has a treat for you...**a soup lunch!** The event will take place on Sunday, December 4th at Noon in Fellowship Hall. A free will offering will be collected. This is a fundraiser for the troop to help raise money for camping equipment and fees. Thank you for your support!



Children’s Christmas Program

Please join us as we celebrate the Reason for the Season--**Jesus!**

The Christmas program will be presented during worship on **Sunday, December 11th.**

The children have been busy practicing their songs on Sunday and a dress rehearsal will take place Saturday, **December 10th at 9:00am** in the sanctuary.



Happy Birthday, Jesus

The annual Happy Birthday, Jesus party is on **Sunday, December 11th.** After the children have presented their Christmas program in worship, they will go to the Valley Vista Room where the party will be held. Cupcakes will be provided.

The Christian Education committee will have games and activities as well as a special Christmas gift for each child.



We are so grateful for all of the prayers and card support from our church family as Jean continues recovery from radiation treatments.

**Yours In Christ,
Jean and Landy Jacobson**

Contingency Fund

\$0 \$15,000 \$30,000 **\$45,060.72** \$60,000 **Goal \$75,000**

We are here as of  **October 25th**

Snow days are coming!!

When the Bellevue Public School system closes for bad weather the church office will also be closed and any event scheduled that day will be cancelled. If church is cancelled we will try to have it announced with other cancellations on the local network.



Stewardship Campaign

The 2023 Stewardship Campaign officially kicked off on Sunday, October 16th. To those of you who have already turned in your 2023 pledge, thank you for your response and generosity. If you have not turned in your 2023 pledge, please do so as soon as possible so the Finance Committee can produce the actual 2023 Operating Budget in November.

For any questions regarding the 2023 Stewardship Campaign, please contact me or our Financial Secretary Eric Van Sky.

End of Year Contributions

To comply with IRS regulations, all contributions intended for the current year tax statement must be dated in the current year. These contributions should be turned in as early as possible and at least by the last day of the year. The financial record for the current year will be closed out on the last day of the current year.

Contributions received after December 31st will be entered in the next year's record and will appear on the next year's statement. Contributions received after December 31 cannot be back dated.

If you have any questions, please contact: Eric Van Sky, Financial Secretary, at 402-881-5210

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 will owe **\$39.68** for each active member. In 2023, our apportionment will be **\$9,681.92**. If we don't reach that amount from the per capita request, funds will be taken from somewhere else in our budget to ensure First Presbyterian meets the required per capita assessment.

Next Steps

Take a special per capita envelope from the name tag table. Include a check for **\$39.68** for each church member in your family. Write your envelope # on your check. If you do not have the envelope, please write Per Capita in the memo portion of your check. Leave the envelope or check in the offering plate or the office by February 9th. If you would like to prepay your Per Capita for next year just go ahead and place your envelope in the offering plate by January 31, 2023. Our church must pay our total per capita amount by February 15, 2023.



Children's Ministry



Megan Highbargin

Can you believe that October is almost over already? We have had such a great start to the Fall in Sunday School and WOW. I have loved getting to know the children better and am so thankful for Nora Boyd and Becca Griffin for teaching Sunday School and Lianne Kirmis for leading music.

You have been amazing, and the kids love their time with you.

If you can believe it, we have already started working on the Christmas program, the children will perform on December 11 and then head to their party and celebrate Jesus' Birthday. They will also be sharing music with the congregation on November 13, we would love to have everyone there that day.

In Sunday School, we have been working towards finishing the curriculum that the children started in the spring, the next few weeks will be spent focusing on narrow escapes with lessons from Daniel and Esther. We will then begin a new curriculum from Group Publishing called Kids Own Worship, their winter lessons will align with the Christmas season.

For WOW we have been introducing the Beatitudes by looking at Jesus calling his disciples and an over view of the Sermon at the Mount. We will soon be diving into lessons on Matthew 5:3 "God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him, for the kingdom of Heaven is theirs." I would also like to thank my MANY helpers that have signed up to be table parents and kitchen crew so far this year, the hard work that each of you put in to minister to the kids is seen each week.

We have also had several fun things happen already this year. Our first movie night was a success, we watched Ron's Gone Wrong and made popcorn and candy bowls. There were 15 kids and

11 adults present, I was so happy with the turnout. We also had a wonderful time at Fenster Farm, I saw many of our children there, roasting hot dogs and taking hay rides. It was also an honor to present our 3rd graders with their bibles, I know that they were so excited to receive them. Our 3rd graders this year are Elijah Warren, Ruby Baruth, Ivy Krom, and Samuel Highbargin,

There are three upcoming events for our children to look forward too! On October 26 from 5:30 to 6:30 we will be hosting trunk or treat in the Welcome School parking lot, we have over 20 trunks signed up and it should be a wonderful time. November 27 will be the annual hanging of the greens and on December 16 the children are all invited to a kid's night out, more information will be sent out soon.



November Youth Fellowship (YF) News



“But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: ‘Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.’” Isaiah 43:1

This is a scripture we studied in October. What an amazing thing to realize that God calls us each by name and claims us as his own. I hope it gives you both a feeling of peace and of awe. We really enjoyed our discussions!



We got to go to Bellevue East’s Homecoming Parade and cheer for our friends and get lots of candy the end of September which was so much fun.

We had Fenster’s Farm and movie night in October. I’m so glad we have more opportunities to spend time together as a church family with a variety of different age groups. We look forward to more of these opportunities in the coming months.

We are enjoying a flexible Sunday School schedule on Bell days. It’s great to have so many youth in the bell choir. On those Sundays we meet in the library and are creating cards for our friends who can’t make it to church, plus bookmarks, doing different Bible puzzles and games and chatting about life. When the



bells are done they can jump in and join and not feel so left out. I encourage you to pop over when we are there and check out the lovely art we are creating and if you’d like, create some too!



Nov 6 we will be going to the Miller’s in Iowa for some Fall clean up then a cookout and running amok with the dogs and friends. We had a great time last year and I know it will be wonderful again.

Nov 9 is Illuminate only Wednesday we will have a special meal together and then play all sorts of After Dark games. Feel free to invite friends!

Nov13 the Angel Tree goes up and the 20th Silent Auction tables! I’m asking each youth to bring a theme basket for the auction. If you need ideas, please let me know.

I hope we all remember to take time and be thankful for all that we have and remember to be a Blessing,

Shelli



NOVEMBER ACTIVITIES

- Nov 6 3-6:30 Miller’s Clean up and BBQ and Fun
- Nov 9 5:30-7 Illuminate only After Dark Games
- Nov 13 Angel Tree goes up
- Nov 16 5:30 Thanksgiving Feast for WOW and Illuminate Families - please RSVP
- Nov 20 Silent Auction set-up, bring your baskets :)
- Nov 23 No Illuminate - Happy Thanksgiving Break
- Nov 27 Hanging of the Greens



November 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
		10:30 Staff Mtg (VVR) 1p Faces At The Manger 7p Bell Rehearsal	5:30 WOW/Illuminate 7p Choir Rehearsal	1p Women's Bible Study (VVR) 5:30p Presbytery Mtg (Z) 7p Troop 467		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9a Sunday School 10a Coffee Fellowship 10:30a Worship Service (IP/FB) 11:30a Deacon's Mtg (VVR) 3p Youth Activity	1:15p Heritage Ridge	1p Faces At The Manger 7p Bell Rehearsal	9a PEO (VVR) 5:30 Illuminate 6p B & G Meeting (CR) 7p Choir Rehearsal	1p Women's Bible Study (VVR) 6:30p Membership Mtg (Z) 7p Worship Mtg (Z) 7p Troop 467		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Angel Tree Tags Available 9a Sunday School 10a Coffee Fellowship 10:30a Worship Service (IP/FB) 6:30p Boy Scout Comm. Mtg	10:30a PEO (VVR/FH)	1p Faces At The Manger 7p Bell Rehearsal	5:30 WOW/Illuminate Thanksgiving 7p Choir Rehearsal	1p Women's Bible Study (VVR) 7p Session Meeting (Z) 7p Troop 467		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Youth Auction Items Available 9a Sunday School 10a Coffee Fellowship 10:30a Worship Service (IP/FB) 11:30a Fellowship Mtg (VVR) 11:30a Christian Ed Mtg (CR)		1p Faces At The Manger		Thanksgiving Day		
27	28	29	30			
10a Coffee Fellowship 10:30a Worship Service (IP/FB) 5:30p Hanging of the Greens		1p Faces At The Manger 7p Bell Rehearsal	5:30 WOW/Illuminate 7p Choir Rehearsal			

Staff

Rev. Dr. Michael G. Elliott (Pastor)-pastor@bellevuefpc.org
M, Tu, W, Th 8:30 am to 2:00 pm

Romi Redden (Church Administrator/Treasurer)-admin@bellevuefpc.org
M, Tu, W, Th 9:00 am to 2:00 pm

Megan Highbargin (Children's Ministry Director)-
meganhighbargin@yahoo.com
Monday 9-3, Wednesday 9-3 & 4:30-7:30pm (hours may vary)

Shelli Dart (Youth Ministry Director)-shelli.dart@gmail.com
Tu, Th 10:30 am to 3:00 pm (hours may vary)

Liane Kirmis (Music Ministry Director)-lianekirmis12@gmail.com

Kimberly Pearce (Organist)-singercycler@gmail.net

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

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November Birthdays:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 2 Joyce Luster | 18 Andrew Oxtoby |
| 3 Jim Millard | 21 Isabella Keaton |
| 6 Brooks Brink | 23 Christy VanRyckeghem |
| 6 Margaret Jackson | 24 Ed Hink |
| 10 Linda Kroeger | 24 Don Martin |
| 10 Caleb Highbargin | 24 Bethany Dart |
| 11 John Eidenmiller | 26 Roger Freier |
| 11 Diane Regier | 28 Sharon Elliott |
| 13 Marty Griffin | 29 Jack Reilly |
| 15 Virginia Eidenmiller | 30 Ashley Hudson |
| 16 Rick Holbert | |



Worshipping, learning, and serving together in the name of Jesus

