

January 17, Volume 23, Issue 02

First Presbyterian Church

FOCUS

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

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3rd Sunday
January

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

Reflections

“The Power of Contentment”

⁶Of course, there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment; ⁷for we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it; ⁸but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. ⁹But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains.

1 Timothy 6:6-10

Recently, it has become apparent that much of the rage and hostility in our world is a result of jealousy and envy. For any number of reasons, some people feel they have been cheated out of a better life. Frequently, their anger is focused on groups, ideologies, or other “blameworthy” targets. That mentality is often expressed as rage. The problems they experience are because “fill in the blank group” has taken all the resources and left them without as much as they think they should have gotten. This is a pattern that, once established, tends to feed upon itself and can get entirely out of control. The result is a mindset that is obsessed with perceived enemies and perceived threats. This is the type of mentality that some have sought to exploit to fuel various movements, throughout history. That mindset always ends in disaster for those who are participating.

The practice of “contentment” is an emotion on which we rarely focus. Besides easing the dangers of envy and jealousy, contentment is a powerful source for joy and inner peace. Contentment helps us adopt practices that help us appreciate what we have. It is, in effect, an act of gratitude; intentionally rejoicing about the fact that we have all we need.

For example, when bringing home groceries, what do we think about the process? Frequently, we grumble that we must carry in the bags. Worse yet, we may have to make multiple trips. Then there is all the time putting the food away. That can be aggravating because we may have to rearrange the cupboards to make everything fit. More irritation; more work.

The mindset of contentment should be to appreciate the abundance that has been provided to us and to realize that we have been greatly blessed. God has given you the blessing of wealth and sufficiency. Taking time to recognize the blessing is a gift of “practical worship” that keeps us in a mind of contentment.

Similarly, paying bills should also be a process of giving thanks for what each of the bills represent: light, warmth, water, home, etc. There is often great anxiety in bill-paying for those who are dealing with tight budgets. However, intentionally focusing on what has been provided to us, can go a long way to offset the way we see the world, when we have financial worries.

The whole process of contentment is to remind us that money is the way God provides for our needs. We do not worship money by emotionally and spiritually dwelling in envy or craving more. We dwell in the place of looking around us and saying, “thank you for the blessings we enjoy.” We give thanks for each meal recognizing that God has provided it. And, we practice the enjoyment of realizing that ‘sufficient’ is not just good, it’s actually just what we need.

Peace,
Pastor Jack

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

Coming Up in Worship

01/17/2021

Sermon: "We See Differently"

Theme: As we allow Jesus to free us from our rut of self-deception we see God's love and healing in the world around us.

Purpose: We will become aware of our perceptions of despair and hopelessness as we open our eyes to new possibility of God's work in our midst.

Scriptures: Psalm 139:1-6, 13-28 "You have searched me, and know me." "I will praise you for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."
John 1:43-51 Jesus tells Philip, "Follow me," the disciples tell Nathanael of Jesus.

Questions:

What keeps us from seeing the possibility of God's love and grace in our lives? How do we release our beliefs in despair and hopelessness? How does our unforgiveness and hostility keep us from seeing God's work in our lives? How is it that we are denying God's healing from taking place in ourselves and in the world around us? What do we need to do in order to be right with God?

01/20/2021 Midweek Service

Sermon: The Light Shines Brighter

Theme: Through our commitment to place our relationship with Christ above our resistance and petty self-importance, adversity and trials just make the light shine more clearly.

Purpose: We will realize the way in which overcoming hardships affects our living in Christ's love and peace.

Scriptures: Genesis 1:14-19 God created the lights and gave them roles to create day and night and seasons.
John 1:1-9 Jesus was the Word, and the Word became the light which enlightens everyone.

Questions:

What causes us to shine most clearly with the light of Christ's love? How do we reflect a true light rather than a forced Christian image out of obligation and guilt? How do we truly experience the light coming into the world? What is the sign that the light is shining in our life? How do we tell the difference between light that truly brings meaning to the world and light that is our own good thoughts? What do we need to do in order to be people who receive Christ as the Word become flesh?

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

Coming Up in Worship

01/24/2021

Sermon: "Moving On to the Light"

Theme: Disappointments and troubles only serve to cause the light to shine more brightly as we learn to live by the grace of God and not by our own strengths.

Purpose: We will change the way we see the disappointments and trials in our lives.

Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 "All things are lawful for me," but not all things are beneficial.

Mark 1:14-20 After John is arrested, Jesus calls the disciples to "fish for people."

Questions:

What do you think Jesus and the disciples thought and felt about John the Baptist having been arrested by Herod because John spoke of Herod's sins? How might it have felt to begin a new ministry of proclamation as one whom you respect is being imprisoned and threatened with death? What is the point of telling fishermen that they will "Fish for people?" In what ways do our experiences and our personal traits feed into our roles as those who serve God? What does it mean for us that though all things are "lawful" for us that we will not be "dominated" by anything? How does our knowledge and wisdom play into our personal testimony of God's grace?

01/27/2021 Midweek Service

Sermon: "Being the Light of the World"

Theme: As God's beloved children it is our nature to be light for the world.

Purpose: We will discover the light within ourselves that is there to be shared.

Scriptures: Romans 13:8-14 Owe no one anything except to love one another. Love does no wrong.

Matthew 5:14-16 You are the light of the World.

Questions:

Are we aware of the light that is within us? How do we learn to naturally be God's light and beacon of grace to the world? What is it that we do that keeps the light of the world from being seen within us? In what ways does our serving out of obligation or guilt cause the light be lost? What leads to the "drunkenness and debauchery" that clouds the light from shining? How do jealousy and quarreling lead to losing sight of the light?

01/31/2021

Sermon: "Living a New Life in the Light"

Theme: The gift of Christ's light and grace gives us the power to live a new life, no longer bound by habits or patterns from our past.

Purpose: We will open our hearts to seeing the possibility of renewal and start on a path of transformation.

Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Anyone who loves God is known by him. Knowledge is to wisdom.

Mark 1:21-28 Jesus teaches with authority that confronts the demons and heals on the sabbath.

Questions:

In what ways would we like to break patterns from our past that are destructive of our fullness of life and joy? How do we begin to see possibilities for healing and transformation that we haven't seen before? What gifts are being brought to us by Jesus that may cause us to be changed and released from the past? How do we begin a process of renewal that will result in new joy and healthy relationships? What is the way in which we receive the light of Christ so that it becomes for us a guide to new life?

What is Per Capita?



Per Capita

In the Presbyterian Church USA system of governance, each member of the congregation is assessed a *per capita* amount to support the work of the church through its three governing levels.

The per capita money is divided as follows:

Winnebago Presbytery - 66% Winnebago Presbytery - 66%
Synod of Lakes & Prairies - 14%
General Assembly (the national ruling body) - 20%

This *per capita* covers the cost of operating these three separate entities, various committees and commissions, along with funding the annual General Assembly Meeting.

Our congregation has supported this assessment as an appropriate way to assist in helping to meet the needs of our denomination.

For 2021, the per capita amount is \$37.00 for each church member. First Presbyterian Church will pay this amount regardless of whether you contribute. The per capita amount is a separate charge from the money you have pledged, to the church, for its operations.

You can pay your per capita amount in the following manner:

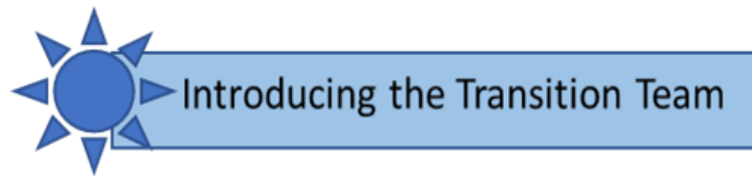
Check (Write Per Capita on the memo line.)
Electronically (Click [here](#) to go to Online Giving.)

Thank you for prayerfully considering the opportunity to help First Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church USA system. We appreciate your generosity.

“Honor the Lord by giving him the first part of all your income, and he will fill your barns with wheat and barley and overflow your wine vats with the finest wines.”

Proverbs 3:9-10 (TLB)

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving



The Transition Team was created, by Session, to guide our congregation through the pandemic journey.

Up to this point we:

- are learning how to fully use the technology available to us
- are involving people of all ages in our on-line worship services
- have created Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve videos with the help of Pastor Jack and volunteers from our congregation
- are working on how to safely return to in-person worship based on CDC and WI Dept. of Health recommendations
- participated in a webinar entitled “The Virus and the Vaccine: What You Need to Know” sponsored by the Winnebago and Milwaukee Presbyteries and presented by Lisa Allgood, the Executive Presbyter of Cincinnati Presbytery, a Ruling Elder, and a trained immunocytochemist.

We learned:

- COVID-19 is 3 times more infectious than other respiratory viruses
- All 50 states are experiencing spikes higher than previously seen
- 40% of those who are infected are asymptomatic, but they are still infectious (they don't know it and neither do you)
- For those who are infected and will go on to develop symptoms, they are more highly infectious for up to 8 days before symptoms emerge (so again they don't know they are infectious and neither do you)
- Vaccine rollout is slower than anticipated in the US
- The majority of the population will not likely be vaccinated before the middle of this year (June-August)
- Presbytery **STRONGLY** urges churches to stay virtual right now

Stay tuned for more updates from our team.

Team Members:

Kristina Arellano
Mary Bacon
Debbie Cooley
Deb Harrison
Sandy Vahlsing

Staff members:

Pastor Jack Harrison
Kris Bartelt



Dear Friends,

There is an impending crisis in our community, and you may be able to help.

There are many people who have lost their jobs because of the pandemic. Those needing assistance with rent and/or utility bills has more than double, compared to last year. We have at least 10 families in Fond du Lac county who are living in their cars. When the eviction moratorium ends, there will be a deluge of families on the streets because they are seriously behind on rent or mortgage payments. We will also see many families without heat or electricity because they cannot pay their utility bills. Our local serving agencies, whose services are already stretched, will be unable to help those in need.

Congress has passed another COVID-19 relief package which provides all tax filers with income below \$75,000 with a \$600 stimulus check. If you thought this money should have been directed toward those who are in greater need, or if you would just like to help, we have an opportunity to make that happen. Please consider passing a portion, *or all*, of your stimulus money to St. Vincent DePaul. SVDP can place your money where it is needed the most.

St. Vincent DePaul is well known for caring for people in the community. Its staff includes 30 to 40 volunteers that work with local families. SVDP also works with other charities such as the Solution Center and the Salvation Army helping with rent, utilities or whatever is needed to keep people in their homes. **One Hundred Percent of the donated money goes to help those in need, as there are no administrative fees!**

Here's how you can help:

- You can mail your check to (Write "Save a Home" on the memo line):
St. Vincent DePaul
Attention: Hartzheim
330 N. Peters Ave.
Fond du Lac, 54935
- If you have a Paypal account, you can donate electronically on the SVDP website by clicking [here](#).
- You can deliver a check directly to their store (at the above address)
- You can send a check to the church office (Write "Save a Home" on the memo line)
Your check will be forwarded to St. Vincent DePaul

Your donation will only be used to pay rent or utilities bills.

Please pray about this opportunity to be part of the healing that our community will need in the months to come.

Your Serving Team,
Cheryl Clarenbach
Debbie Cooley
Sherry Mier
Roger Rigterink
Don Vahlsing

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

Information @ Church

Liturgists Needed

Here's What You Need to Know



EMAIL ADDRESS

To receive liturgy copy
To email recording back to
Worship Coordinator-
kbatelt@fdlpresbyterian.org

VOICE RECORDING APP

On smart phone or tablet
(Apps are free from Google
Play or iTunes.)

DEADLINES

Wednesday Liturgy due
Tuesday End of Day
Sunday Liturgy due
Wednesday End of Day

ZOOM Communion Worship

(First Sunday of the Month)
The individual who records the
liturgy for the Podcast/YouTube,
is asked to read the liturgy "live"
during ZOOM worship.

If you have any questions, please
email:

kbatelt@fdlpresbyterian.org.

Pronunciations:

<https://biblespeak.org/>

Liturgist opportunities
are available !



As we navigate the Pandemic and
go through the Wisconsin winter,
the needs of the Fondy Food Pantry
are on-going.

Since we cannot hold a regular
food drive, the Team is asking all
church members to donate the
most needed items:

- toilet paper
- peanut butter
- macaroni and cheese

Monetary donations are always welcome.

If you would prefer to make a
monetary donation, you can do
so through the church: send your
check to First Presbyterian
Church, 1225 Fourth St., Fond du
Lac. Write Food Pantry on the
memo line. Or, you can electroni-
cally donate directly through the
Fondy Food Pantry website:

[https://
www.fondyfoodpantry.org](https://www.fondyfoodpantry.org)

Thank you for your consideration.



Online giving is easy, convenient
and secure. You can use a credit
card, a debit card, electronic check
or electronic funds transfer,
through your bank. You can
change or cancel your amount at
any time.

Click [here](#) to get your questions
answered and to set up your
account. We think you'll be
pleasantly surprised at how
convenient it is!



Help if You Need It -

If you, or someone you know, is in
a crisis situation, please consider
getting help.

Suicide	800.273.8255
Addiction	800.662.4357
ASTOP	920.926.5395

Crisis Intervention FDL County
920.929.3535



Feed My Starving Children MobilePack Update



It is with great sadness that we inform you we will be postponing the Fond du Lac MobilePack Event until 2022. Feed My Starving Children has not informed us when they will resume MobilePack, and with the uncertainty of events, we felt the best option would be to postpone until next year. We are greatly committed to the event and to the Feed My Starving Children organization.

FMSC has been able to continue packing food through machines and limited packing sessions at their permanent sites. We encourage you to continue to support the organization and to pray for them and the recipients of the food that is packed.

Thank you for all of your prayers and support over the years. We look forward to when we can gather again!

FDL MobilePack Coordinators,
Alisa Roberts and Jennifer Zander

January 20 - Virtual Bingo



Day Wednesday
Date January 20
Time 6:30pm

Please click [here](#) to register.

A ZOOM link will be emailed to you, **after you register.**

Won't you join us?

January 21 - FPC Families



Join us on Thursday, January 21,
at 7:00pm via Zoom for FPC
Families.

We will check in, laugh and
discuss. Contact Jennifer for
the Zoom link or if you have
questions.

Won't you join us?

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

Every Week

Midweek Podcast

Pastor Jack continues to reach out to us via Wednesday Podcasts. You can find the link to our podcast on our website:

www.fdlprebyterian.org
under Church News.

Previously aired podcasts can be found under Pastor Jack's Blog and Podcasts.



We worship "together" as we practice Social Distancing. Every Sunday, our service is on our YouTube channel. It is also provided in Podcast form.

We have a variety of liturgists, hymns, and special music. And, of course, a special message from Pastor Jack.

The links to our worship service and podcast are posted early Saturday evening on our website:
www.fdlpresbyterian.org

Our YouTube channel can be found by clicking on this [link](#).

We hope you'll be able to watch or listen to our services.



Welcome to an exciting faith-filled year of educational opportunities at the First Presbyterian Church. Sunday School is full steam ahead at 10:00am, every Sunday! We meet via ZOOM.

Each week we will offer a virtual education hour that will include Talkback and Church School for children and youth.

We will begin our education time together, all ages. Then, we will separate into groups for Talkback, and Church school.

Watch your email for more information and a Zoom link!



Virtual Coffee Hour

A Zoom link will be emailed to you. It's a great time of conversation and fellowship.



TALKback



A Zoom link will be emailed to you.

Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

In January

Deacon

Amber Summeril
ericksonambere@yahoo.com

Elder

Jim Dassow
jnjdassow@gmail.com

First Presbyterian Focus

Please send submissions for the
Newsletter to:

fdloffice@fdlpresbyterian.org.



**Prayer
REQUESTS**

If you need prayer, or know some-
one who does, please contact the
church office at:

fdloffice@fdlpresbyterian.org.

Prayers and Praises

Homeless and disbursed people,
particularly those who are positive
for the Covid-19 virus and
struggling to find shelter

Pat D.
Dan M.
Peg D.
Gib D.
Arnold L.
Ruth S.
Lincoln D.
Chastity G.
Jesse F.
Silas W.
Pauline W.
Chastity G.
Jerry and Mary H.
Bonnie and Jack H.
Roland Herzig Family
Kay B. - family in California

Jodi, Marc, Liam and Graham

Leisa Wagstaff – PCUSA worker
for South Sudan unsure of when
she will be able to return to South
Sudan

Prayer Partners

Send prayer requests to
fdloffice@fdlpresbyterian.org

Rejoice: The gift of growing
together in the body of Christ.

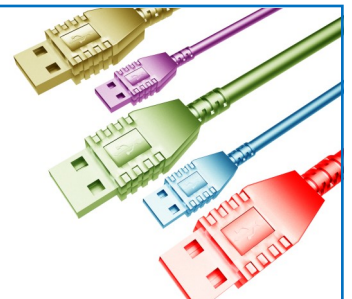
Electronic Ways to Keep in Touch

Website www.fdlpresbyterian.org

Facebook First Presbyterian Church, Fond du Lac

YouTube First Presbyterian Church Fond du Lac

Zoom There is more information on our website: www.fdlpresbyterian.org



Christians Serving, Learning and Loving

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revjharrison@fdlpresbyterian.org

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kbartelt@fdlpresbyterian.org

Mary Robotka
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mrobotka@fdlpresbyterian.org

Deb Zorn
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dzorn@fdlpresbyterian.org

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Dave Weber
Custodian Assistant

Elders on Session

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Social Media and Website



First Presbyterian Church, Fond du Lac

www.fdlpresbyterian.org

first presbyterian church fond du lac