



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

E-Link

April 7, 2021

Worship
Join us weekly on
our website:
Firstprescf.org

This Weekend's Worship

Scripture Reading: John 20: 19-31

Sermon: Doubt, Faithfulness, and Beloved Community
with Rev. Betsy Thompson

Pastor's Ponderings – Matthew 25 Initiative

Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' Matthew 25:45

As we live into the resurrection joy that is the season of Easter, I am proud to announce our participation in the Matthew 25 Initiative of the PC(USA). Session voted to commit to this effort as a way to more intentionally engage our call to actively engage in the world around us, so our faith comes alive, and we wake up to new possibilities. Over the next weeks and months, we will be learning more about this initiative and how the ministries of First Presbyterian can grow from the efforts. Below are listed the three focuses, each a link to more in-depth information. There is also a FAQ document attached to this email.

Building congregational vitality by challenging people and congregations to deepen their faith and get actively and joyfully engaged with their community and the world.

Dismantling structural racism by advocating and acting to break down the systems, practices and thinking that underlie discrimination, bias, prejudice and oppression of people of color.

Eradicating systemic poverty by working to change laws, policies, plans and structures in our society that perpetuate economic exploitation of people who are poor.

The Logo – We will be using the Matthew 25 logo in materials to remind ourselves and others of our commitment to this work. Read about the logo below.

The circular shape represents unity and equality. Like God, a circle has no beginning and no end, and it symbolizes our continuing effort to help one another. The shape also suggests a globe that points to our engagement with the world.

The three interlocking figures represent the equality of all people without gender or race bias. They have their arms around each other, symbolizing friendship, protection and service. The number three suggests the three focus areas of congregational vitality, structural racism and systemic poverty, as well as the Trinity.

Finally, the legend "Matthew 25" below the symbol is the literal identification of the mark. We use a handwritten font to make the point that active engagement in the world requires human effort.



Resurrection joy,

Pastor Julie

Church Birthdays

Apr. 8-David Lemons,
11-Mel Reimer, 13- Julie Erkel Hagee, 14-Lee Nicholas, 18-Carolyn Stephenson

For your prayers...
Evelyn Boice's son Scott 'Pete' McCart

Zoom Meetings

Wed., April 7

11:00 am Working for Justice: Breaking Bias

6:15 pm Elementary aged SHINE.

6:45 pm Q&A with Lakeshore Center about Camp

7:00 pm Chancel Choir

Thursday, April 8

6:30 pm Esther Circle

Easter Sunday, April 11

11:00 am (link below)

Fellowship Hour.

Tuesday, April 13

6:00 pm Bible Study

Wed., April 14

11:00 am Working for Justice: Breaking Bias

6:15 pm Jr. High aged SHINE

Thanks for serving last week:

Worship Leader: John Luzaich

Communion Preparer: Julie Rokes

Organist: Louann Flaherty

Praise Team: Dave Luck, Kirk Eastman, Mason Sealock, Stephanie Marra, Connie Herbon

Pastor Julie Out of the Office

Pastor Julie will be out of the office through April 18. Contact the office if you have a pastoral emergency.

Sundays - Fellowship Hour

Join us on Sundays at 11:00 am.

Topic: Fellowship Hour

[https://zoom.us/j/97475746240?](https://zoom.us/j/97475746240?pwd=RXlwT1FncXhuMTk4MlZ3OGc4NEdDUT09)

[pwd=RXlwT1FncXhuMTk4MlZ3OGc4NEdDUT09](https://zoom.us/j/97475746240?pwd=RXlwT1FncXhuMTk4MlZ3OGc4NEdDUT09)

Meeting ID: 974 7574 6240

Passcode: 504524

To Phone In: 1-312-626-6799

Our Lectionary study will be on hiatus until May!

Tuesdays - The Grand Sweep Bible Study

The Grand Sweep Bible Study class meets via Zoom weekly on Tuesday evenings at 6:00 pm. The last class will be **Tuesday, April 20.**

[Grand Sweep Bible Study](#)

Meeting ID: 822 0157 7459

Passcode: 879309

To phone in: 1 312 626 6799

Wednesdays - "Working for Justice: Breaking Bias"

Join us via Zoom 11:00 am - noon.

[https://zoom.us/j/91795943702?](https://zoom.us/j/91795943702?pwd=bFRHNGhibGcxalJVcHZ6MhHiczl0QT09)

[pwd=bFRHNGhibGcxalJVcHZ6MhHiczl0QT09](https://zoom.us/j/91795943702?pwd=bFRHNGhibGcxalJVcHZ6MhHiczl0QT09)

Meeting ID: 917 9594 3702

Passcode: 234493

To phone in: 312 626 6799

Click to view last week's recorded session:

[Working for Justice Recording April 7](#)

Passcode: dqp=39Dx

Thursdays - Worship Leaders Needed

We are looking for people to lead worship with Pastor Julie on Thursdays at approximately 3:30 pm.

Please sign on the Google doc: [Worship Leaders](#).

Thank You

We continue to be so grateful to be a part of the First Pres family. Your words of concern and prayers have been a real lift. The help of the deacons has been immeasurable. We thank all of you for your love and your hope as we face our cancers. Truly awesome!

With sincere appreciation, Bruce & Pastor "Pete" McCart

From the Session

Effective immediately, the Session has voted to increase the allowable in-person attendance for a group from 10 to 16. Social distancing and masks are still required. This is only for church sponsored groups at this time, not groups outside the church. The kitchen is still closed. You may bring your own 'brown bag' food.

In May, there will be a "soft" or "dry-run" in person worship service that will only include the church leadership (Elders, Deacons and worship leaders) in order to anticipate the needs for an in-person service coming soon. Thanks to the Covid-19 Committee for their ongoing work and recommendations during this process.

Scholarship Opportunity - updated deadline

The Dorothy Horn Scholarship provides financial assistance to women from Presbyterian churches who attend the University of Northern Iowa. Contact the church if interested. All applications must be returned by **June 1, 2021.**

New Book Group Opportunity!

Jill and Mark Mortenson will facilitate a seven week series of Zoom sessions on Tuesdays, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. for a book study focused on social justice. It can be members of our congregation or others who are interested. Contact us if interested. Once we get a group of interested participants a start date will be decided, hopefully sometime in April.

Northeast Iowa Food Bank Challenge

Thanks to the Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa, your financial gift to the Food Bank will be matched up to \$40,000! The deadline to donate for the match is April 30.