



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

October 19, 2023

10:00 am  
Sunday Worship  
[Firstprescf.org](http://Firstprescf.org)



“Jesus asked them, ‘Whose image is this, and whose inscription?’”

Matthew 22:20

SUNDAY, October 22

Theme: Kin(g)dom Treasure

Scriptures: Matthew 22:15-22

**A Trap is Set**

Our Stewardship series is based on the Gospel of Matthew Lectionary passages for October. One very important theme in Matthew is the Kingdom of God. The Kin(g)dom of God is radically different than the realm that the early church was living in. Based on the teachings of Jesus, his followers had radically different priorities.

Jesus gathered the people around him and told them God wants everyone to have all they need and that no one should be harmed or oppressed. In God’s kingdom, there is abundance: more than enough food, money, love, and resources for every child of God to thrive. When there’s enough for everyone, no one needs to fight or oppress anyone else. Everything Jesus taught and did was about breaking down hurtful, oppressive systems and building up God’s kingdom of abundance instead.

So, when some religious leaders decided to set a trap for Jesus, it seemed fitting to look to money to trip him up. They ask, “Is it lawful to pay tax to the Roman emperor or not?” Jesus answered with a question, “Whose image is on the coin and whose inscription?” When they answered that it was Caesar’s image and inscription, Jesus declared, “Then give to Caesar what is Caesar’s, but give to God what is God’s”.

How do we know the things that are God’s? Where does one find the image and inscription of God?

This Sunday we will have a baptism and I will say these words, “...child of the covenant, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit in baptism and marked as Christ’s own forever.” Bearing that inscription is humbling and beautiful. Let’s ponder together what it might mean to honor God through our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness.

Your partner in the journey,

*Pastor Julie*

**Church Birthdays**

Oct 20-Jill Mortenson,  
24-Marsha Flater, 27-Joe  
Sjolander

**For Your Prayers...**

**Brad Jensen’s** father  
passed away early this  
morning, Oct. 19.  
**Jean Boller**

**Coming Soon...**

*Sunday, October 22*  
2:30 pm Interfaith Alliance  
of Iowa Speaker, see  
page 3.

*Sunday, October 29*  
All Saints Sunday  
- UNICEF Noisy Offering  
- Bake Sale for UNICEF

**Sign up anytime online:**

**Worship Leader Sign Up:**  
[Sign Up: Worship Leaders](#)  
*Or sign up in the narthex!*

**Sunday Supper Helpers!**  
[Sunday Supper](#)

## Thanks for serving last week:

**Worship Leader:** Connie Herbon

**Computer Operator:** Kevin Thedens

**Videographer:** Neal Leeper

**Yard Work:** Jim Seeley

**Office Help:** Jane Seeley

**Historic Churches Tour:** Judy & Ray Burfeind, Carol Dotseth, Cyd Grafft, Margaret Clark, Kay Leeper, Phil Batchelder (organist.)

## Mission Giving Opportunity

The Mission Committee is sponsoring a feminine hygiene product drive during the month of October. There will be a tub in the entryway near the food bank box. The products will be donated to two middle schools in Waterloo. We have been made aware that some girls miss school due to a lack of supplies and want to target these students.



## All Saints Sunday, October 29

Next Sunday, Oct 29 in worship we will be celebrating the lives of those members of the Church Triumphant who have shown us in little and big ways what it means to follow Christ. You will be invited to light a candle in their memory.



## Upcoming schedule

### Sunday, October 22

10:00 am Worship, sanctuary  
2:30 pm Interfaith Speaker, sanctuary

### Monday, October 23

6:30pm Worship Team, Zoom

### Wednesday, October 25

6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal, sanctuary

## White Ally Training in the Evenings

If there is sufficient interest, an evening group will be set up.

This offering is open to our congregation as well as the general public. Consider this valuable opportunity and invite a friend!

Sponsored by Working for Justice: Breaking Bias

Facilitated by the CF Mennonite Congregation

There are seven sessions; an evening schedule would be set by the participants.

Contact Sandy Jensen by November 1.

## Community Ministries News

Eye of the Needle Family Services is having its Annual Chicken and Noodle Dinner at Kimball Avenue United Methodist Church.

The meal is Saturday, November 4, from 11:00 am-2:00 pm. The cost is \$12, for 12 years and older.

They will be celebrating their 20th anniversary.

## Sunday Morning, October 29

### CONGREGATION:

- \*Bring money for the yummy Bake Sale fundraiser for UNICEF in the narthex.
- \*Bring your coins for a noisy offering!

### CHILDREN:

- \*Wear your Halloween costumes and help us collect a noisy offering!

**TRICK  
OR  
TREAT**  
FOR UNICEF



# Civility in the Face of Political Harm

*A presentation and discussion  
with Connie Ryan of Interfaith Alliance of Iowa*

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**Sunday, October 22**  
**2:30 pm**  
**First Presbyterian Church  
of Cedar Falls**

*902 Main Street, Cedar Falls*

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Connie Ryan  
*Executive Director*  
Interfaith Alliance  
of Iowa



Join us for a discussion about what it means to practice civility in the face of harm being done to the LGBTQ community, communities of color, religious minority communities, people living in poverty, and more.



## Passing the Plate

“Passing the Plate” has been a tradition in Presbyterian churches for over one hundred and fifty years. The weekly offering became a fixture in American worship services after the Civil War. While the pandemic was the reason we recently changed the practice, our reliance on weekly cash and checks in the plate has been diminishing over the years. Surveys show that 70% of churches no longer pass the offering plate. While older congregations have retained the practice of Passing the Plate, younger members are more at ease with online giving, seldom carry cash and only write a few checks a year, if at all.

The Bible does not mention the practice of passing offering plates during church services. However, it does provide guidance on various forms of giving, such as donating to the poor, giving to God what belongs to God, and supporting ministers who preach the Gospel. In I Corinthians 16:2, the Apostle Paul instructs the church in Corinth to set aside a sum of money on the first day of every week, according to each one's ability, to support the needs of the church and the saints.

In early American history, colonial governments supported certain churches financially with public funds, as had long been the case in Europe. At that time people thought churches served the public good by fostering virtuous citizens with good character and it made sense to fund them through public taxes. It wasn't until 1833, when Massachusetts rescinded its religious tax, that every state church in the Union was officially disestablished. Churches had to come up with new ways to raise the funds they needed for ministry and mission in the free market of 19<sup>th</sup> century America.

So, churches came up with creative ways to raise money. While some Christians today act like they own the pew they occupy each Sunday, many Christians in the 1800s did own their pew (or at least rented it). The most expensive seats were in the front with the cheap seats in the back. Free seats were available in the back or in the balcony, but a free pew carried a social stigma.

On the frontier, church members joined together to build their churches using locally available materials and timber. Then they built a house for the pastor, and kept the pastor supplied with wood, fruit, eggs, produce and meat from their farms.

After the Civil War, people came to see giving as a biblical mandate, a spiritual matter, and an act of worship, and the collection of offerings was incorporated into Sunday morning worship alongside preaching, singing and prayer. By 1900, most American churches took up weekly offerings. Members put their money in prenumbered envelopes, and churches depended on the weekly offering for their funding. A dedicatory prayer preceded the collection followed by the Doxology.

Today at First Presbyterian, there are many options for giving so you can choose the ways that work best for you. Offering baskets are at the back of the sanctuary for those who prefer to give weekly by cash or check. Electronic transfer (auto pay) can be set up through the office. PayPal is an online option that can be done on your phone at home or even in the sanctuary. Some people make an annual contribution from a savings or investment account or transfer stock to the church. Individuals who are 70½ years old or older can donate directly to the church from an IRA account and the donation counts toward your required minimum annual IRA distribution (RMD). Unfortunately, at this time, direct charitable donations cannot be made from 401(k) or 403(b) retirement accounts.

However you choose to give, your offering carries on God's good work in our community and beyond.

II Corinthians 9:7, *“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”*

Stewardship Committee Chair