First Presbyterian Church

Grapevine Newsletter 7/2019

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| Helping our Community Cupboard  Most Needed Personal Care Items:   * Toilet Paper * Paper Towels * Deodorant * Shampoo/Conditioner * Toothbrushes, toothpaste & floss * Feminine Hygiene products * Laundry Detergent   Most Needed Food Items:   * Canned Fruit/Vegies * Hamburger Helper * Noodles/Rice * Flour/Sugar * Jams/Jello * Saltine Crackers * Spaghetti Sauce |
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Tap here to add a caption

# A Message from Pastor Diane

Greetings! It has been awhile since we have produced a newsletter. It is my hope that we will get into a routine of producing one every month. In this newsletter you will find an overview of the Session meeting and Committee reports. Leadership wants you to be appraised of all that is going on and will be going on in our church. This morning during my quiet time I was meditating on Hebrews 12:1-3, “Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.” I don’t know about you, but more often than not I feel as if the race I am running is a marathon; perhaps a triathlon is a better description. Have you ever watched persons running a triathlon? They begin with a lot of energy and as they get further into the race, they become tired and weary. When the runners become tired and face a large hill, or an event at which they are not proficient, they have a choice: quit, stop to catch their breath, or keep on going. Life is like that, both as Christians and as a church. We begin our Christian walk or projects within the church with energy and excitement. But, as we continue in this marathon called life and we face a large hill or other obstacle, we have to make one of the choices runners have to make; quit, stop and catch our breath, or keep on going. I often find myself wanting to quit when I am tired and face obstacles. I do not think I can continue; I am weary and seemingly at the end of my rope. There are times when I make the decision to just keep going; I think this can be just as harmful as quitting. When I “put my nose to the grindstone” and “grin and bear it” I lose my focus and find that eventually I have no more to give. That leads to my becoming disillusioned and then I simply go through the motions. When we, as Christians and as a church, become weary, the best thing we can do is to stop and catch our breath. How do we do that? Through prayer, scripture reading, worship and fellowship. The world tells us to “just do it” and “keep on going,” but our Lord tells us to stop. Stop and spend time with him, get our focus back and gather up our strength. I remember watching a video where a runner became tired and could not go on. A fellow runner came beside that runner and assisted her to the finish line. That is a great image for us. When we see fellow a Christian become weary, we must come alongside that person and help support them. I would encourage you, when you feel weary and as if you can no longer go on, or you become disillusioned, find someone to support you and help carry you. You are not in this marathon alone, and I have learned I cannot attempt to finish this marathon alone, although my pride often tells me I can. Further, as a church we need each other to come alongside our leaders to help support them. Support their work by praying for them, encouraging them, and joining them. We are looking for persons to join various committees, and this is a way you can have a voice in the church and assist us all in continuing in this marathon. I look forward to seeing how God continues to grow me, you and First Presbyterian Church in the next few weeks, months and years. As long as we stop when we need to, focus on Jesus, and help each other, I have no doubt that we will finish the marathon well and we will receive our prize at the end. *Your Fellow Servant of Christ, Diane*

July Mystery Person…

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Contact Us

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I was a Majorette in High School. I once lived on the Crow Reservation. I am a Coal Miner’s Daughter…Who am I??

Ladies BUNCO-the 3rd Friday of every month!

Look for great bible studies coming this fall and winter!

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# SESSION HIGHLIGHTS FROM JUNE MEETING

* Treasurer’s Report: Dave Byerly reported that unrestricted contributions from the Sunday offerings are up as well as expenses.
* Forming Committees: Diane urged all session members to include members of the congregation on their committees.
* Mission Study Update: On July 7th a meeting will be held after church to get final input from members of the congregation. Kathy Goodrich still plans to hold a meeting with people from around the community to get feedback regarding the impression our church makes in Lewistown. Dave will have the final draft of the Mission Study ready for the October Session meeting.
* Banner: By the next meeting Margee will get information about the cost of a banner, t-shirts, vests, aprons, and polo shirts with the First Presbyterian Church name and/or logo.
* Background Checks: Diane will check with Amy about the status of the background checks and find out the name of the company that does the checks.
* Wine at Events: Alcohol use in the church was discussed following a recent wedding where champagne was consumed. This was done without prior consultation. The session agreed that a single document for room use anywhere in the church include an explicit statement forbidding the consumption of alcohol. Charlie will consult with Lynne Ogren, the Lutheran minister at Zion, about their policy and related forms regarding this matter. Charlie will share this information at the Session meeting in August.
* Personnel Committee (Amy Cauffman, chair): Diane informed the elders that the job description for the music director position will be sent out soon so that input can be given. Dave suggested that the job description be shared with the choir.
* Fellowship Committee (Gary Slagel, chair): Gary reported that work is still being done regarding social functions for the congregation.
* New voucher hours will be posted at the office.
* Charlie will get Tim Moline to install a lock on the door in Betty’s Room that opens to the church sanctuary.
* Diane may flex her working hours on Mondays and Fridays as the need arises.

# COMMITTEE REPORTS

Worship Committee (Nancy Barber, Chair; Pastor Diane White, Lisa Sanders, Deb Slagel, Donna Byerly and Kathleen Schaeffer): I hope you have noticed how joyous and upbeat worship has been the past few months. We have incorporated more contemporary songs, skits, videos and Scouts! We are hoping to make each Sunday a joyful experience worshipping our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Kathleen and Donna are organizing our music during the interim period. In recent weeks the choir has introduced some new music to the congregation and continues to revisit old and loved hymns. If you have any favorite music that we’ve previously done or have any suggestions for new music, please let Kathleen or Donna know. If you are interested in being part of the choir, just let us know. There are no try-outs or requirements, just a desire to share in music and faith. We greatly appreciate the commitment, time, personalities and talents of our choir members. It truly is a joy to spend time with them on Wednesday nights and to share music and faith on Sundays. We truly enjoy serving our great God in song.

Financial Committee (Dave Byerly, Chair; Jim Phillips, Don Jenni and Jan Waltenbaugh): It is always awkward to discuss money in a church setting, but this is your church and we always want to be sure those who attend our church know how it is doing financially. First Presbyterian has always had an open-book policy, so our members can see the complete financials of the church-in our annual report, in periodic updates or by request at any time. A few comments on the current financials: 1) The really good news is that our tithing and gifting is up about 10 % through May. 2) The not-so-good news is that we have seen our expenses come in more than we budgeted in some areas, particularly in repairs to the elevator and other needed repairs. We knew payroll would be up as we did not have a pastor for the first part of 2018, but payroll is in line with our budget. 3) Staff and Session are aware of the expenses, and we all will work hard to rein them in wherever possible. 4) We continue to be amazed and gratified by the support of the congregation for this church. This has allowed us to move forward with a full-time interim pastor, and we are excited at what Diane is bringing to the life of our church. We look ahead with great faith and confidence. Our committee again has lined out an annual work plan, which we continue to work as we move through 2019. We would be glad to share this with anyone who is interested. It provides guidance for the essential tasks we need to achieve. At the same time, we do our best to work on those unexpected things-revenues and expenses-as they occur. Thank you again for your continued (and amazing) support of First Presbyterian Church! As always, if you ever have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact any member of the Finance Committee. Thank you!

Mission Study Committee (Nancy Jenni, Deb Slagel, Dave Byerly and Pastor Diane White): The team is planning the wrap-up to our information gathering phase. We will hold a catch-all meeting Sunday, July 8 after church in order to gather input from any church members who weren’t involved in the previous meetings. We have a few key questions about how you feel about the church and the directions we should go, and we hope you will give us your input, if you haven’t already. We plan to facilitate meetings with non-church members/attenders which Kathy Goodrich will conduct to see how our church is viewed in the community. Due to Kathy’s schedule, we have had to delay these meetings but hope to do them in August or September. Our goal: draft a document outlining basic information on our community and where it’s heading, who we are as a church, where we have been, where we are today and where we believe we are going. This document is what PCUSA requires if and when we begin a pastor search. It tells a great deal that a potential pastor would want to know about our church, our congregation and our community. This document also would have value for us. It tells us about where we are today and where we see God calling us in the future, about what we think and what our needs are. We hope to have a draft of that document for the Session to review in September or October.

Outreach Committee (Mike Smith, chair; Curt Cauffman): Our representation at the nonprofit fair was fabulous! We appreciate the help of everyone who was able to be there. It was a popular project. We have not met at this point as a committee but it seems like opportunities are presenting themselves for us to reach out to our community in a variety of ways. We will work with the missions committee to volunteer at SAVES and the Community Cupboard. Hopefully we can get some t-shirts to represent our church as we take our church outside of the 4 walls.

Mission Committee (Margee Smith, chair) Mission committee has not officially met yet but we are continuing with our homebound visits with adjustments as necessary. I am still trying to figure out exactly what the mission committee charges are. I am hoping to plan some community mission work in conjunction with the outreach committee to volunteer at the Community Cupboard and SAVES. We are looking into getting some t-shirts made that congregation members can buy so people start to recognize us in the community when we are volunteering or just hanging out. We hope to get some aprons also. We are looking forward to “moving outward as disciple of Christ”!

Fellowship Committee (Gary Slagel, chair; Deb Slagel) Fellowship committee is new but there is a start. My tremendous wife, along with other ladies, have developed a questionnaire and most groups have had a chance at input. Lots of good responses but no chance to collate responses. The Mother’s Day and Father’s Day brunches were fantastic, fun and well attended.

Building and Grounds Committee (Charlie Brown, chair; Kory Nielsen and Jim Mitchell: B&G haven’t met formally. Jim and I spent time with Brian Ash looking at the basement concerns and trying to get a rough estimate as to costs. We went over what we found at the last meeting. The grant has been submitted for $100,000. The only things on the grant are the elevator and the kitchen. The kitchen project was reduced significantly to get the total cost of the two projects under $100K. Since that meeting, Brian has contacted a Billings company that installed the elevator at the Brewery. There is a possibility that we can get the elevator done for less than the $87,000 that Otis quoted us. Sometime in the next week or so, the gentleman from Billings will be here to look at our elevator and give us a better idea of what we might be looking at. We should know if we are in the running for the grant by the end of the month. (UPDATE\*\*We did not get the grant\*\*) Our two highest priorities are to fix the gutters and drainage issues and repair the floor in the kitchen.

We encourage and invite you to join a committee!