

FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

BOZEMAN



PresbEnews

November 25, 2020

A mid-week newsletter of First Presbyterian Church - Jody McDevitt & Dan Krebill, co-pastors
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Pandemic Response Team Report by John Patterson

Happy Thanksgiving Week! Yes, Thanksgiving Day will obviously be different this year due to the Pandemic as we're asked to meet only as immediate households rather than with extended family. What ever happened to "Over the river and through the wood to Grandfather's house we go," right? Yet, we still have much to be thankful for and we can still join together with family and loved ones through phone calls, Zoom, Skype, Facetime, and more.

Wonderful ways our church family is celebrating Thanksgiving this year are through the Thanksgiving Dinners being prepared by church members and shared with at least 28 individuals and families in the congregation. And, through the Thanksgiving Day Zoom event from 2-3:00 p.m. A time when we can celebrate with each other.

Last Thursday evening Session discussed the Pandemic Response Team report and the Team's activities which are done under the authority of Session. The Session and the Pandemic Response Team want to continue to provide united leadership through this crisis. With this in mind, the Session voted to have the PRT continue to operate as it has and affirmed the priorities that have guided the PRT: public health, the well-being of our staff, protection of the vulnerable and respect for those who work in the health care system.

As Jody mentioned in her sermon on Sunday, Christ is in our relationships. We really want our church members to be and feel connected. Our telephone web is there to help us do that. If no one is calling you, contact Linda Best through the church phone number. She can help you get connected with the telephone web or with how to connect with other activities of the church.

We're looking forward to several wonderful events during the upcoming Christmas Season – A virtual Baroque Music Montana Concert, with a limited number of musicians, will be recorded in our sanctuary on December 6th with that music available for us to use in our worship services.

Plans continue for a December 20th PBS-produced podcast of our previously recorded Messiah performances. The podcast will include interviews with some of the performers, musicians and soloists.

(Continued on next page)

Enhancing Our Conversations with God

"Lord, we know we need a deeper awareness of Your goodness behind the events that unfold around us. We can so easily become overwhelmed by the immediate and overlook the eternal. Help us be so convinced of Your goodness that we are willing to wait until it is revealed."

NRSV, prayer at the end of Genesis

Pandemic Response Team Report continued

Plans are also underway for a very special intergenerational 5 p.m. Christmas Eve service that will include a number of virtual components, including the choir and others performing but really focusing on the children in the congregation.

And, Scott Thrasher and Dan Holland are working on a unique event for us for the service on Sunday, December 27th, which has been our traditional "Blessing of the Animals" Sunday.

Stay tuned for details of all of these Christmas Season events!

As Covid-19 cases continue to rise in Gallatin County it's critical that we care for one another. Part of that is to plan to celebrate Thanksgiving only with your immediate household, remembering that this Pandemic, in reality, will only be for a limited time in our lives. There is good news about the 95% effective vaccines soon to be released and hopefully available to all of us over the next several months.

In the meantime, we need to remember to remain diligent in **wearing our masks, washing our hands and keeping our distance. Stay healthy and stay connected!**

Pandemic Response Team meetings, Mondays and Wednesdays, 4 – 5 pm Congregation members welcome

1. Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/994593614?pwd=amRWVytZNOV3ajNLaGIGSmJyakNYdz09>

Meeting ID: 994 593 614

Passcode: 255160

2. One tap mobile

+13462487799,,994593614#,,,,,0#,,255160# US (Houston)

+16699009128,,994593614#,,,,,0#,,255160# US (San Jose)

3. Dial from your phone

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

Meeting ID: 994 593 614

Passcode: 255160

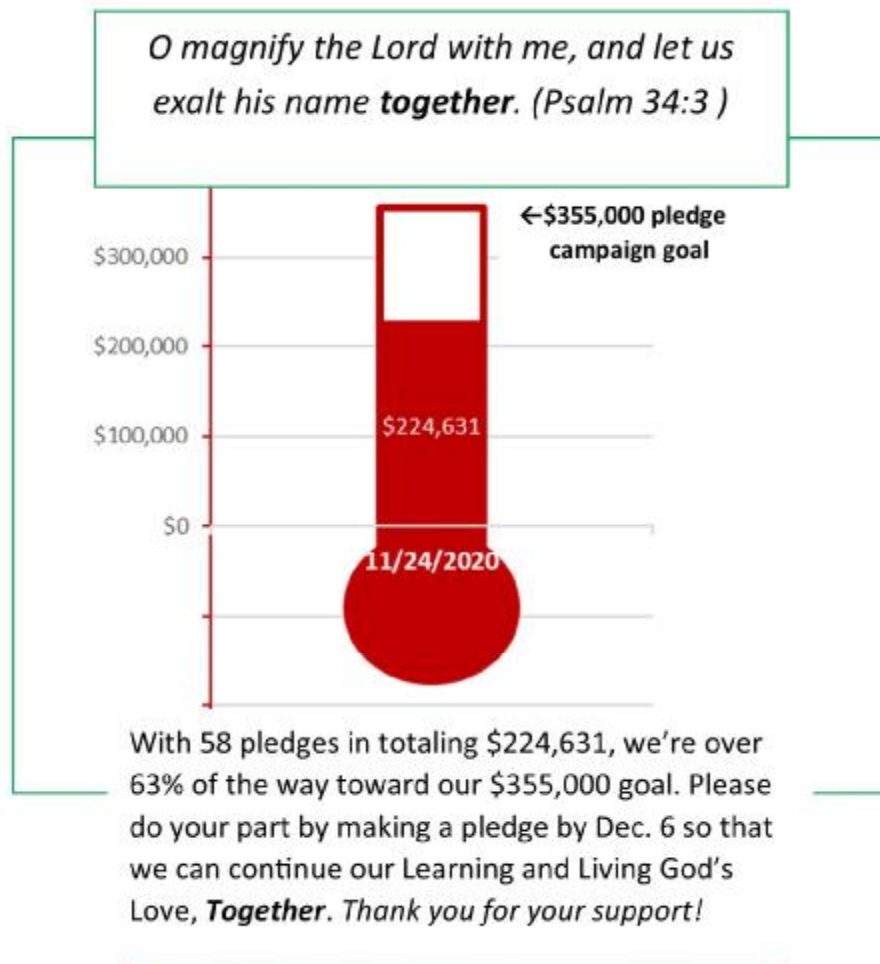
Stewardship in a Pandemic.....

Thank you everyone for your pledges and financial support of First Presbyterian Church during such a difficult year. With Thanksgiving this week, I've been thinking of all the things about our church that I'm thankful for. Here are just a few:

- The missions and outreach the church has been involved in, especially Family Promise and Love, Inc.
- All those who have served on session over the years and on the board of deacons.
- Presby Cats collegiate ministry.
- Sunday evenings at Rockhaven and its ministry to children every summer.
- Russell's direction of our dedicated choir who volunteer so much of their time and talents.
- Kathy's Mainly Music concerts.
- A pastor with an orchestra and choral background who is so supportive of our music ministry.
- A wonderful piano and organ for accompanying talented vocalists and instrumentalists.
- Larry's care for our building, and his musical gifts.
- Our church's outreach to community groups who have shared our building.

I've long been inspired by the example of Christian discipleship that I've seen in our congregation. I look forward to a post-Zoom era when we can all be together again in the sanctuary. Thank you again for your continued financial support of the ministry of First Presbyterian. Please prayerfully consider a pledge this year, if you haven't already done so.

Alison Todd, Elder



Thanksgiving Fellowship - Fellowship, just for fun 2 pm Thursday

On Thanksgiving Day we hope you can join together on Zoom for the First Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hour from 2-3 p.m. All are welcome to enter and have a little chat. Ric Tieman and Susan Gibb will be the hosts. The Pandemic Response Team knows that many of you miss seeing your church friends, so we are hoping this will provide you an opportunity to say hi. You are welcome to stay for the entire hour or just pop on for a few minutes. Attached, you will find the Zoom access information. We are ever thankful for your support during this trying time. May God's blessings surround you this Thanksgiving.

- Join us on Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87436561125?pwd=U0I4OEIDMGN2b3BLR1d3L2VZQjc0UT09>

Meeting ID: 874 3656 1125 Passcode: Turkey

- One tap mobile

+12532158782,,87436561125#,,,,,0#,,278577# **OR** +13462487799,,87436561125#,,,,,0#,,278577#

- Dial from your telephone:

669 900 9128 **OR** 253 215 8782 **OR** 346 248 7799 **OR** 312 626 6799

Meeting ID: 874 3656 1125 Passcode: 278577

Advent Begins on November 29

I will light Candles this Christmas,
Candles of joy despite all the sadness,
Candles of hope where despair keeps watch,
Candles of courage for fears ever present,
Candles of peace for tempest-tossed days,
Candles of grace to ease heavy burdens,
Candles of love to inspire all my living,
Candles that will burn all year long.



--Howard Thurman

Presbyterians Today, our denominational magazine, has traditionally included an Advent and Christmas devotional in its December issue. This year the devotional is online only and is available for free at pcusa.org/2020advent. It is based on the poem by Howard Thurman, "I will light candles for Christmas," and its daily reflections on this poem are coupled with scripture, prayer, and suggestions for going deeper. You can share the devotions on social media, and even send photos of your candles (literal or metaphorical) to be included on *PT*'s social media sites.

Let's light our candles this season, candles that will burn all year long.

Attention Animal Lovers

The annual Blessing of the Animals service will be upon us the Sunday after Christmas (December 27th) and we would like your help in making it happen. We are inviting any and all of you to submit digital photos or very brief video clips of your animals (and you if you choose.) Please email them to scott@rockhavencamp.org or text them to 600-1891. Be sure to include your name and the name(s) of your animal(s).

Sunday School for Children

Preschool through Early Elementary

How to nurture Christian faith at home, with the support of the church, without overburdening parents? Each family has a Spark Story Bible with a calendar of stories and stickers to mark progress. Each week, a short video will be released which will feature a church youth or adult reading that story from the Spark Story Bible. The video includes a "See, Hear, Act" response to the story. Parents, please let Jody know the best way to get the supplies to you.

Faith Formation and Fellowship – Nov 22 - 28

Spark Story Bible At-Home Preschool – Grade 2 Any time

This week's story: Elijah and the Widow Told by Holly Aloise: <https://youtu.be/P2qYtZhCYT4>

Birthdays this week

11/25 Betty Knutson

11/28 Larry Ames

11/31 Oscar Mendoza

Kathy Braun has moved to Billings

Kathy is delighted that she has been able to move to Billings to be closer to her daughter. We all like to thank Kathy for all she has done in our church over the last 30 plus years as Sunday School director, First Bells director, filling in as music director and in the office when ever we needed her.

We will miss her greatly and know she will enjoy her new surroundings.

Her new address is:

1439 Main Street Apt.326

Billings 59105

Financial giving during this time

Since we will not be meeting in person for worship in the coming weeks, please continue to support the church through your financial gifts, pledges and offerings. You can mail checks to the church at P.O. Box 1150, Bozeman, MT 59771. Or consider making your contributions through our church's online giving platform. Simply go to www.easytithes.com/fpcbozeman and choose the "Give Now" option to make a one-time gift, or chose the "Sign In" option if you'd like to be a regular user. The drop down "Fund" menu allows you to direct your gift to a specific fund. The first option, "General Church Budget," is the one to which Sunday offerings go. You can give by credit card, debit card, or by electronic funds transfer from your bank account. You also have the option to make recurring gifts on a schedule you choose.

Smartphone users may scan this QR code to access the online giving portal.

Thank you for your ongoing support of our church.



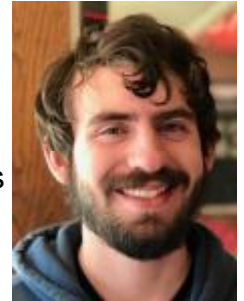
Two of our dedicated Presby Cats graduate

Last Sunday, Montana State University held its virtual commencement ceremony for those completing degrees this fall. Among the graduates are two of our Presby Cats.



Faith Arnett, from Escalon, California, graduated with highest honors, with a B.S. in Psychology. Faith was a counselor at Rockhaven during one of her summers at MSU. Faith has also been one of our peer leaders the last three years and will be greatly missed in that role. However, she plans to stay in Bozeman through the spring and will still be able to participate in Presby Cats.

James Schulz, from Reardan, Washington, graduated with honors, with a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering. James has also been one of our peer leaders the last three years and will be greatly missed. James also volunteered at the Manhattan Presbyterian Church as one of the youth group leaders. He plans to return home while he is seeking employment in his field.



Many thanks to both Faith and James for their faithful participation in the life of First Presbyterian Church during their college career. Please know, Faith and James, that you will always find a church home here when you are in Bozeman.

Adult Studies

Adult Sunday school studies "The Book of Joy"

Beginning Sunday, November 15, the Sunday morning adult class will learn about JOY from two of the world's experts on the subject, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and his good friend, His Holiness the Dalai Lama. In April 2015, these two Nobel Peace Prize winners spent a week together in celebration of His Holiness' 80th birthday. They looked back on their lives to answer one timeless question:

How do we find joy in the face of life's inevitable suffering?

With great humor and honesty, these two spiritual giants compare the ways their Christian and Buddhist faiths and spiritual practices have helped them through fear, stress, anger, and grief. They offer Eight Pillars of Joy, and in their stories and wisdom, they share daily practices which anchor their own lives.

All are welcome to join this Zoom study on Sunday mornings from 11 am – 12 noon. Jody McDevitt will lead the study. Reading the book will not be necessary, but as always, will enhance your participation. The book is available in e-book format. If you would like a copy of the hardback book, contact Jody.

1. Join from your computer:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81926086294?pwd=WmhWcUYrbHgwWTFaLONOSIB4L0xhdz09>

Meeting ID: 819 2608 6294 Passcode: 862914

2. One tap mobile

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OR +12532158782,,81926086294#,,,,,0#,,862914#

3. Dial from your telephone

669 900 9128 OR 253 215 8782 OR 346 248 7799 OR 312 626 6799

Meeting ID: 819 2608 6294 Passcode: 862914

Interfaith Forum December 2 at noon

Norman Huynh and Jon Harney speak at Interfaith Forum on Religion and Public Art

Bozeman Symphony's Music Director Norman Huynh and Symphonic Choir Director Jon Harney will be guests in the monthly Interfaith Forum on **Wednesday, December 2 at noon**. In this virtual forum, Huynh and Harney will join longtime panelists Father Leo Proxell of Holy Rosary Catholic Church, Rabbi Ed Stafman, rabbi emeritus of Congregation Beth Shalom, the Rev. Jody McDevitt of First Presbyterian Church, and Shadmani Amin of the Islamic Center of Bozeman, to address questions rising from the roots of art and music in particular religious traditions. Is there a line to be drawn in public presentations, given the diversity of our population today? And are there artists or musicians whose beliefs obscure the value of their work?

Following presentations by each of the panelists, there will be time for questions from the audience and further discussion by the panelists.

The Interfaith Forum is in its twelfth year of monthly meetings, providing the Gallatin Valley with insights into diverse topics of religious, social, and spiritual interest. The public is invited to attend.

The event will be held on Zoom and also livestreamed at www.facebook.com/fpcbozeman.

- Zoom link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82717202109pwd=YmE3LzdEQWJUam95RHhpTmQwNzBBdz09>
- One tap mobile +12532158782,,82717202109#,,,,,0#,,518801#
- Dial from your phone: 253 215 8782 **OR** 346 248 7799
Meeting ID: 827 1720 2109
Passcode: 518801

Jan 6 *Religion and Public Monuments*

Are there religious monuments which deserve critique and/or dismantling?

Feb 3, Mar 3, Apr 7, and May 5 *TBA*

In order to remain timely in these uncertain times, topics will be announced later.



Holland-days...

by Dan Holland

The calendar tells us this is a week to give thanks, a time to be grateful, but this year it is more difficult than ever to cloak ourselves in an attitude of gratitude. By the time we begin pre-heating our ovens on Thursday morning the world will have recorded its sixty millionth confirmed case of SARS-CoV-2. Over one point four million of those humans will have died. Closer to home, one point two million Americans contracted the disease in the past seven days. Ten thousand of them will never eat another Thanksgiving meal. These are hardly causes to celebrate, reasons to give thanks.

Each week the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services releases a report outlining statistics from all of the hospitals in the state. This census report from last week indicated that Bozeman Health Deaconess Hospital was completely full. There were no spare beds available. St. Vincent in Billings and St. James in Butte were also totally full. Fortunately those numbers turned around this week and no hospitals are even at 90% of capacity. In part that is because more beds have been added, but what good are more beds if there aren't enough front line workers to staff them.

This year I have encountered more than my fair share of health care professionals. Between the medical issues faced by my wife and my father over the course of the past eleven months I estimate I have shook hands, fist bumped, elbow bumped, nodded at, or otherwise been introduced to twenty-four doctors, six PAs, fifty-three nurses, thirty-eight other hospital staff, nine in-home providers, and two chaplains. These encounters occurred in three hospitals (Bozeman Health, St. Patrick in Missoula, and Benefis in Great Falls), three clinics, and two homes. Although I can't recall more than a quarter of the names of those heroes, I am grateful for every last one. I don't remember their names, but I do remember their faces. So when I pray for them it is their faces that I see when I ask God to protect them. I will tell you about one such face.

Intensive Care Units (ICUs) have received quite a bit of publicity since the pandemic began. Both ICUs and ventilators are crucial metrics in the fight for patients' lives as they battle the most extreme cases of COVID-19. My wife spent ten days in an ICU battling complications after open-heart surgery in February. Fortunately it was before the virus had begun its surge through our country, so I was allowed to have unfettered access to the ICU at St. Patrick in Missoula. I became quite familiar with the inner workings of this life-saving wing and came to learn there is one person in charge of the whole outfit. That doctor is called the intensivist. During the entirety of Christine's stay in the ICU, the intensivist never left. The only way I would know that a new day was beginning was when I would notice the intensivist had changed his shirt. He took catnaps in a small office at the end of the hall with a sign on the door that said 'do not disturb.' The door was almost always open. The intensivist spent most of the twenty-four hours in each day making the rounds between each of the twenty-four rooms on the ICU floor, monitoring vital signs, gauging mineral levels, administering medicinal changes, and generally saving lives of the sickest of the sick. He saved Christine's, and for that I am grateful.



Church Facebook page a source of up-to-date info!

Even if you're not a Facebook member yourself, you can still access the church's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/fpcbozeman to get in on regular breaking news. If you'd like to interact with the content and others on the page, click the "Like" button at the top of the page if you're a Facebook member. Facebook—just one more way for us to interact with today's world!



First Presbyterian Church



November 22-30 2020

Rockhaven Chapel

First Presbyterian Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
22 9:30 am Worship 11 am God and the Pandemic Study	23 4pm Pandemic Response Team	24 7 pm Congregational Get Together	25 12:15 pm Worship Team 7 pm Choir	26 Happy Thanksgiving 	27 9:30 am Worship Tech Rehearsal	28 9 am Christmas Decorating
29 9:30 am Worship 11 am God and the Pandemic Study	30 4pm Pandemic Response Team					

In these changing times the events on the calendar have changed too. Until further notice all the services, group meetings and events will be by Zoom until we find it safe to come back together. Please contact the leaders of the group meetings for instructions on how to get on Zoom for the meetings. We will update this calendar each week in the PresbEnews and on the church website as more meetings and events are scheduled. Stay Healthy.