

The DECEMBER Leaven 2023



To all of you at First Presbyterian:
Thank you for making me feel welcomed. It has been a joy to serve you as a Bridge Pastor during this time of transition. My prayers continue with you as you begin a new chapter in your journey of faith and as a congregation.

And thank you for the lovely card and gift for Pastor Appreciation Month. It was very generous of you.

Blessings,

Pastor Bonnie Grabowski

🎵 TIME TO TUNE UP YOUR VOICES & YOUR CARS FOR SOME CAR-O-LING!

We will be traveling to local members to spread Christmas cheer with a few carols and smiling faces. Grab your Santa hat and meet at the church at 12:30 on Saturday, December 16th. Words to the music will be provided 🎵

US312TH ARMY BAND IS PRESENTING A HOLIDAY CONCERT!

7:00pm, Friday, December 8th at the Lewis and Clark Center on Fort Leavenworth. Concert attendees need a drivers license or state ID to show at the gate (visitor passes are not required.)

Concert is free to the public. 🗺

CHRISTMAS CONCERT SLATED FOR MID-DECEMBER

The combined musical talents of the church's Bell Choir, members of Freda Proctor's family and the First City Flute Choir will be on display in the sanctuary during a free Christmas Concert scheduled for Sunday, December 17 at 3 p.m.

DECK
THE
HALLS



Under Freda's direction, the Bell Choir will be performing "We Three Kings" and an arrangement of "Carol of the Bells."

A brass quartet comprised of Proctors will be entertaining concert-goers with "Deck the Hall with Boughs of Holly" and a toccata

on "I Saw Three Ships" for brass and organ.

Two generations of the family, Freda and two of her granddaughters, will team up to play "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear" on their flutes, and three generations will be involved in the presentation of Holst's "In the Bleak Mid Winter."

Finally, trumpet in hand, Nicholas Proctor will perform the Chip Davis arrangement of "Stille Nacht" (Silent Night).

The First City Flute Choir will be featured on selections from Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker Suite," variations on the Hanukkah favorite "I Have a Little Dreidel," and a medley of traditional carols.

PROGRESSIVE DINNER DECEMBER 9

Progressive dinner will be Saturday, December 9 starting at 5:00 p.m. with appetizers at the Wiedower's followed with the main dish at Cathy Corley's and then end up at the church with a sing along and dessert. Nursery will be provided, sign up by Dec. 2.

VETERAN'S DAY PARADE



THE DAY I TRADED MY DULL GREEN TENT FOR A SHINY SILVER SPACESHIP

Willie was watching the twinkling lights on the Blaylocks' back-room Christmas tree two doors to the south when his mother suddenly called out to him from the parlor where the rest of the family was absorbed with the newest board game, "Willie, when it's 11 o'clock you can pick up the phone, dial Phil's number and find out what he got for Christmas ... but not a minute earlier."

That had been on Willie's mind much of the morning, because for the past two years the two boys had traded phone calls on Christmas morning, eager to learn what gifts the other one had received for Christmas. This had become a tradition of sorts, albeit not a long-standing one by any means but a tradition nonetheless. Like setting out a glass of milk and a plate of cookies for Santa Claus to enjoy in the middle of the night. Or popping popcorn to string on the artificial silver tree atop the tea table in the parlor.

Promptly at 11, Willie rang Phil's number and asked the friendly voice on the other end of the line, Phil's mother, if he could talk to his best friend. And barely 15 seconds later he was happily chatting with the bespectacled boy a year his senior who looked, and was, smart for his age. "So what did Santa bring you this year," he put the question to Phil.

"Well, let's see, I was given a new winter's coat, a new pair of pants, a book of Bible stories, a slide rule, a compass, and ... oh, yeah, a miniature Mercury rocket kit," Phil answered matter-of-factly. "I'm anxious to assemble that rocket and try it out. I sure wish it would quit snowing and spring would hurry up and get here."

There was a brief pause in the conversation, then Phil asked Willie, "And what did the big guy drop off for you?"

Willie was quick to respond. "A pup tent. Dad said that because I'll be 10 years old next summer he'll let me camp out next to the house sometime in July or August before I go back to school. I can hardly wait for my birthday to come."

"Anything else?" Phil quizzed his sports-crazy friend. "Sure thing," Willie came back at him. "A new baseball glove for playing center field. And a new sweater, a new shirt and some underwear."

"It sounds like you made out pretty good, Willie," Phil observed.

"For me, this has been the best Christmas ever, but you didn't do too bad yourself, Phil," Willie countered.

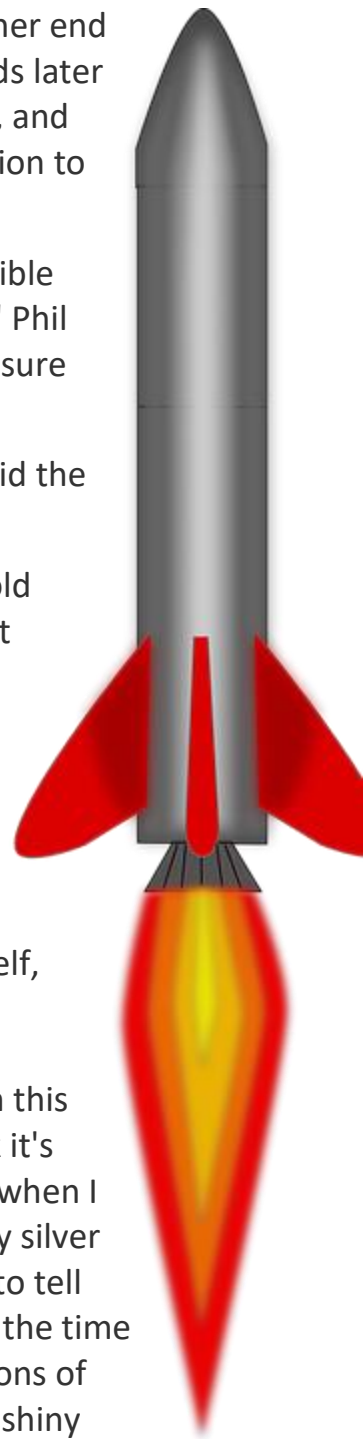
There is no record of the day I traded in my dull green tent for a shiny silver spaceship ... not in this world anyway. And while I really don't think it's important that I can't remember exactly when I traded in my dull green tent for a shiny silver spaceship, I do think it's important to tell you - true confession here - that at the time I didn't fully grasp the lasting ramifications of my decision to trade in my dull green tent for a shiny

silver spaceship.

Now this wasn't the dull green tent me and a couple of other Boy Scouts were in the process of dismantling at the conclusion of camp the summer of 1965 when one of the metal support poles fell over and struck me in the side of the head, bloodying me to the point where I required some medical attention.

Nor was it the dull green tent me, my parents, and my brother and sister struggled to put up and later sleep in on a rare family vacation to Colorado and back in the summer of 1967.

Nor was it the brand new tent purchased at Rusty's in Wichita me and my running buddy peacefully occupied one night during the summer of 1986 when a severe southbound thunderstorm unexpectedly crossed our path in south central Kansas, fracturing one of the three primary



fiberglass support rods for our six-sided home away from home. Because that tent, well, it wasn't a dull green tent to begin with.

Growing up and well into my adult years, then, I was around tents often enough and was well aware of the protection from the elements they afforded me spring, summer, fall and even winter. Spaceships, on the other hand, weren't something I really could relate to because for one thing, I knew I could never afford one, and for another, the science and physics behind them were way over my head, literally and otherwise.

That said, and despite my general fear of flying, when I was in grade school I often imagined myself speeding solo through the Milky Way in some sleek starcraft to get a closer look at my favorite planet, Pluto. That was long before Kansan Clyde Tombaugh's 1930 discovery received a demotion, of course.

There is no indication in Luke's account of the birth of the Christ Child that the shepherds who heard the Good News and responded appropriately were tent-dwellers, but they probably were. After all, Abraham and Sarah, the father and mother of a multitude of nations, lived in a tent when they were visited by three mysterious men just prior to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

It's not clear from the New Testament whether or not the Apostle Paul regularly called a tent home, but we do know from the Book of Acts that he was a tent-maker by trade. It no doubt was Paul's knowledge of and familiarity with tents that ultimately led him to employ the word "tent" in describing the physical body his soul and spirit happened to occupy at the time. Because a tent is subject to a lot of wear and tear over time, just like our human bodies, and for most people in this world, it is a very temporary home, just like our human bodies.

When we are young we tend to think we are indestructible and that our bodies, our tents, if you will, will last forever and never fail us. But eventually we reach a point where we realize that these tents we have been outfitted with by our Creator are going to let us down in the end. And that's when we'll need a spaceship than can instantly transport us to the One who made us and is eager to welcome us to our eternal home.

Fortunately, we have what amounts to a "free" spaceship in Jesus the Christ, whose birthday we are preparing to celebrate later this month. He can transport us directly to the Father, the Creator, the Maker of heaven and earth. In fact, He tells us in John 14:6 that He alone is the only way to the Father and that no one can reach the Father except through Him.

The longer I live the more I am aware that my tent is falling apart and won't last forever. Moreover, Rent-A-Tent (i.e., renting a better tent) is NOT an option at this time. But my consolation is this: my hope is sure, as sure as the sun rises in the east and sets in the west, and my future is secure, sealed in heaven by the Son of God, who has loved me from the very beginning and gave His life as a ransom for me (and for you).

For I have exchanged the perishable for the imperishable, the temporary for the permanent, the mundane for the divine. And this, all this accomplished the day I invited Jesus the Christ into my heart to be my Lord and Savior ... the day I traded my dull green tent for a shiny silver spaceship.

Merry Christmas, Willie P.S. Jesus loves you!

HOLIDAY BELL RINGERS STILL NEEDED

The Salvation Army has assigned our church three days on which to ring bells at Dillons in December to help the "Army" raise money for the benefit of the needy in the Leavenworth-Lansing area.

The designated time slot on Wednesday, December 13 has been filled, but a bell ringer is needed for the 1 to 3 p.m. slot on Saturday, December 9, a bell ringer is needed for the 3 to 4 p.m. slot that same day, two bell ringers are needed for the 1 to 3 p.m. slot on Tuesday, December 19, and two bell ringers are needed for the 3 to 4 p.m. slot that same day.

The sign-up sheet is located in the narthex if you are able to give of some of your time to assist the "Army" in its fund-raising efforts this year.

If you have any questions or need more information, please contact Carl Johnson.



RED SCARVES

Pictured: Merna Roe, Pam Crume, Dody Marsh

Since 2019 the ladies of the Wednesday Craft Group of 1st Presbyterian have participated in the Red Scarf Project, a multi-faceted charity program that benefits foster youth once they "age out" of the system. The participants hand knitted or crocheted scarves in shades of pink to burgundy (mostly red). The scarves were delivered to local Associated Audiologists for distribution to youth on Valentines Day.

PRAYERS

Immediate: Shirley Rockwell, Marge Grafke-Doby, Dixie Orr (Jim Mathison), Joe Hayes & Family (V. Strand), Herbert Montgomery (V. Strand), Frank, Lynne, Cecilia, Mary (Kathy), Anna Hurt, Gaza, Israel, Ukraine, Jami Gleason (Tom & Becky), Lisa Rees

Ongoing: Michele Holland, Richard Cooper (M. Holland), Brianna Hoffman & Family, Rick Nichols, Jim and Lorna

Mathison, Cathy Tillotson, Michael Brock(Cindy S.), Dana Guanciale (Ginnie S.), Patricia Siblee (Cindy S.), Dale (Cindy S.), Scott Williamson (Cindy S.), Abby (Cindy S.), Margie Holland, Maria Gordon (Carolyn T.), Barbara-Sue Rose, John Garner (Carolyn T.)

NOVEMBER FELLOWSHIP TREATS

December 3 – Choir & Bell Choir

December 10 -Circle 3

December 17 -Circle 4

December 24- Circle 5

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1-Lois Chapman **2** -Gerald Bowman **2**-Jim Roe **12**-Freda Proctor **30**-Carol Beall

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

7-Jim and Kum Cha Williams **23**-Howard and Carolyn Anderson **23**-Chris and Jessica Flynn
29-Tim and Debbie Soule

December 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26	27	28	29	30	1 Church Office Closed	2 10:00am Flute Practice 5:00pm - 9:00pm Special Needs Party
3 Fellowship Treats-Choir and Bell Choir Mission Committee Meeting 9:00am Adult Study 9:15am Choir Practice 10:30am - 11:30am Worship	4 7:00am Men's Morning Discussion Group 2:00pm - 4:30pm ESL 4:00pm - 5:00pm Building and Grounds Committee Meeting 7:00pm - 8:30pm Cody Choraliers	5	6 9:30am Crafts & Fellowship 4:45pm Flute Practice 6:00pm Bell Choir Practice 7:00pm Choir Practice	7	8 Church Office Closed 7:00pm Army Band Concert	9 10:00am Flute Practice 1:00pm Reading Group 5:00pm Progressive Dinner
10 Fellowship Treats-Circle 3 9:00am Adult Study 9:15am Choir Practice 10:30am - 11:30am Worship Congregational Meeting	11 7:00am Men's Morning Discussion Group 2:00pm - 4:30pm ESL 7:00pm - 8:30pm Cody Choraliers	12 10:00am Circle 3 6:00pm Circle 5	13 9:30am Crafts & Fellowship 11:00am Deacons Meeting 4:45pm Flute Practice 6:00pm Bell Choir Practice 7:00pm Choir Practice	14 <i>6:00pm Session Meeting</i>	15 Church Office Closed	16 10:00am Flute Practice 10:00am LWV Car-O-Ling 12:30pm
17 Fellowship Treats-Circle 4 Worship Committee Meeting 9:00am Adult Study 9:15am Choir Practice 10:30am - 11:30am Worship 3:00pm Christmas Concert	18 7:00am Men's Morning Discussion Group 10:00am Circle 4 2:00pm - 4:30pm ESL 7:00pm - 8:30pm Cody Choraliers	19 5:00pm - 6:00pm Community Meal	20 9:30am Crafts & Fellowship 4:45pm Flute Practice 6:00pm Bell Choir Practice 7:00pm Choir Practice	21	22 Church Office Closed	23 10:00am Flute Practice
24 Fellowship Treats-Circle 5 9:00am Adult Study 9:15am Choir Practice 10:30am - 11:30am Worship 7:00pm Christmas Eve Worship	25 Merry Christmas	26	27 9:30am Crafts & Fellowship 4:45pm Flute Practice 6:00pm Bell Choir Practice	28	29 Church Office Closed	30 10:00am Flute Practice
31 Fellowship Treats-Deacons 9:00am Adult Study 9:15am Choir Practice 10:30am - 11:30am Worship	1	2	3	4	5	6

POINSETTIAS



The Poinsettia price will be \$10; you need to turn in **order by Dec. 10th.**

POINSETTIAS ORDER FORM

YOUR NAME _____

NUMBER OF PLANTS _____ AMOUNT PAID \$ _____
(Plants are \$10 each.)

Plants will be in the sanctuary sometime the week of December 17

_____ *I will take my plant home.* _____ *Give my plant to someone to enjoy.*

IN HONOR OF: _____

IN MEMORY OF: _____

Submit form and check made out to **FPC.**