

# ***The FEBRUARY Leaven 2023***

Dear Friends,

Lent is coming!

We will begin the season of Lent with our Ash Wednesday Service which will take place on Wednesday, February 22 at 7pm in the sanctuary. Our theme for Lent this year is “**Lent With The Psalms**”. The Psalms were Jesus’ prayer book so we will explore how the Psalms impacted Jesus and how they speak to us today.

The Pastor Nominating Committee has completed the Mission Information Form for our church (it’s the church’s resume) and it is really good. Below you will find the essay questions and how the PNC responded to them. This is what a pastor looking for a church will first read about us and I think it’s very descriptive. Enjoy. Peace - Krista

## **FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH MISSION INFORMATION FORM**

### **Mission Statement**

We will **love** God with all our being and our neighbors as ourselves. We will **nurture** a vibrant congregation **growing** in faith and **servicing** the Lord in our church and community.

### **NARRATIVE QUESTIONS**

*(For each narrative question, please limit your responses to no more than 1500 characters including spaces and punctuation.)*

#### **1. What is the congregation’s or organization’s vision for ministry? Additionally describe how this vision is lived out.**

Oftentimes during worship, when the congregation is standing to sing a hymn, we can hear the familiar shaking sound of Mellow the Service Dog as he rises for the hymn. It is a reminder that all living creatures, including Mellow and his companion, a military veteran, seek to be in a welcoming and safe space.

Embedded in our mission statement are the verbs **love**, **nurture**, **grow**, and **serve**. Embedded in our congregation are retired and active-duty military members, grandparents, foster parents, gay and lesbian couples, activists, spiritual sojourners – all seeking to embody God’s love in an oftentimes conflicted and hurting world. We seek to live out our mission as a small beam of light in North Leavenworth, a crossroads of many people, where we create a safe space to bring our questions, listen to each other, and listen for God’s still small voice.

We seek to live out this mission as we **love** God and neighbor; **nurture** our life in the Spirit together; **grow** in our capacity to be an expansive community of welcome; and **serve** Christ as we journey with Christ. We welcome ALL into our church family: young and old; wealthy and poor; liberal and conservative; all sexual orientations; and all races and cultures.

## **2. How do you feel called to reach out to address the emerging needs of your community or constituency?**

The people of Leavenworth are diverse - long-time Kansans; newer community members; international travelers; active and retired military personnel. Our community includes a large stable population, along with an ever-changing and transient component at the same time.

While we are an aging, mature congregation, we are in the midst of an evolving youthful population. With our maturity comes life lessons of relationships and **love**. We are called to share this **love** by being a stable and welcoming church community for those passing through and our permanent residents, all needing a place to grow and feel authentic relationships.

We **love** our community and working with other churches/organizations that provide a place to sleep for the unhoused. We provide food with monthly community meals - **love** is the smell of cooking and the sound of laughter. We are “backpack buddies” and provide food for children in need and a small, but well-used food pantry.

Our members use their talents of chatting, while knitting items for the sick, those aging out of foster care, and those in need of a prayer shawl. A couple in our congregation took on Zoom and the taping of sermons to keep homebound members part of the worship service during the pandemic.

We **love** through our free community concerts - filling the sanctuary with neighbors, sounds of the city flute choir and other musical talent. And the **love** of God is expressed by small groups studying the word, listening to the Spirit and growing in discipleship.

## **3. How will this position help you to reach your vision and mission goals?**

We are searching for a partner willing to roll up their sleeves with us and help focus our mission and vision on our journey forward. There are many talents each member brings to the church family. We have demonstrated a strong willingness and determination to provide direct mission **service** along with financial support, even during the COVID pandemic. Our members are highly educated and spiritually fed - **served** by positive, thought-provoking worship services that include a strong music program. This allows our members to take God’s work into the week wherever they go **servicing** God in their daily life.

There has been an honest movement in our church toward being an inclusive congregation. We seek a pastor who will help us continue this walk by sharing theological support, guiding thoughtful study of mindful discipleship, and encouraging the realistic use of members' time, talents, and treasures. We strive to be a friendly church family which feels like home to members and others who have passed through our doors. We need someone who will walk with us and share our discernment as we question and explore where God is leading us to **serve** in this post COVID, electronically influenced world.

## **4. Provide a description of the characteristics needed by the person who is open to being called to this congregation and/or organization.**

Our former pastor was in full Halloween costume and opening our church doors to young “trick or treaters” and our interim pastor participated in the church’s annual Halloween community concert by performing in a “duet for two cats” - a song consisting of one word - “meow”. These are examples of key characteristics that work for our church – welcoming, outgoing, and versatile;

compassionate, **nurturing** and a good listener, but at the same time has administrative leadership and guidance skills.

We also want our pastor to be someone our members may turn to for counsel and for support during trying times, including in their homes or in medical care facilities as appropriate.

We would like our pastor to be a strategic thinker with a vision, in partnership with the church leadership, that will navigate us through our challenges and those experienced by organized religion in general.

Other desirable assets include strong communication, especially in preparing and delivering an effective sermon, and a solid understanding of the importance of technology and social media in the promotion and marketing of our church.

We seek a pastor who will help us serve our community and those who need a “family” of caring people - someone who sees the “inside” person, not only the outer covering. Reaching out to other churches in the community who are also attempting to lend a “helping hand” will be important for our pastor.

We welcome someone who can help us **grow** while **growing** with us.

## **5. For what specific tasks, assignments, and programs areas will this person have responsibility?**

We look forward to being inspired by our pastor’s sermons and leadership! Your energy and ideas will help lift up and grow the congregation. Your work with our Session and its programs will cover all key areas of administration, worship, education, and mission/outreach. The deacons are a joyous group working on member care, meals, and shepherding. The Session members and deacons are hard-working, dedicated, and capable, which will ease the work of the pastor. Your input is needed to guide the worship committee and other committees. Members and others associated with the church will look forward to spending time with you during identified office hours.

Specific tasks and assignments include, but will not necessarily be limited to:

- Plan, prepare and direct worship services coordinating with the Worship Committee,
- Provide counseling and spiritual leadership directly to church members and their families, including in home or at other facilities,
- Guide the mission and outreach programs of the church and participate in community activities, when possible,
- Advise the Session and its committees regarding the church’s educational programs and curriculum,
- Provide administrative leadership for the church, including participation in Committee meetings as time allows,
- Provide information to the personnel committee regarding performance of staff.

## **CHURCH HOSTS DAY OF SERVICE EVENT**

*"I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the Promised Land." --- Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., speaking in Memphis, Tenn., on April 3, 1968, the day before he was assassinated*

Our interim pastor the Rev. Dr. Krista Kiger and members and friends of the church welcomed more than 50 boys and girls from Heartland Presbytery churches to Kansas' first city on Martin



Luther King Jr. Day for Day of Service activities honoring the life and legacy of the slain civil rights leader.

Early arrivals were given a tour of the historic 114-year-old church by Krista, who, always on the lookout for good ideas, wanted to know what the youngsters in the group would do with some of the unused space on the second floor. For many years the only way to reach the second floor, an addition to the original building, was to take the east or west staircase, but an elevator large enough to easily accommodate a wheelchair was

installed near the west staircase several years ago. And this efficient mechanical lift, while less than speedy, ultimately proved to be a big hit with the younger set.

A series of icebreakers led by Michelle Phillips, Director of Christian Education and Congregational Ministries at John Knox Presbyterian Kirk in Kansas City, Mo., officially got the morning going, then it was time for the youngsters to fill more than 50 pre-assembled cardboard boxes with food that had been purchased by the presbytery for this Day of Service project. Miles McDonald, the youth leader at Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church in Overland Park, was in charge of the project and was ably assisted by five members of our church, Dick Gibson, Carl Johnson, Linda Johnson, Rick Nichols and Jessica Flynn, along with Kris Doby.

Positioned on either side of tables that collectively formed a big backward "L", the youngsters worked at stations and placed seven items in brown paper sacks to create more than 500 snack packs. A small metal can with chicken breast meat in it went into each sack at the first station, fruit juice at the second, applesauce at the third, a granola bar at the fourth, trail mix at the fifth, cheddar cheese Goldfish crackers at the sixth, and a plastic bag with a plastic fork, a short plastic straw and a napkin inside at the seventh. Each sack received a special sticker at an eighth station, then it was placed in the next available box along Dick's "assembly line." Once each of the sturdy boxes had nine sacks in it, it was sealed shut with tape at the ninth and final station.

The entire process in Fellowship Hall took approximately 45 minutes to complete.

Harvesters - The Community Food Network was going to be distributing the snack packs to hungry people in northeast Kansas and northwest Missouri.

The reading of quotes attributed to the Rev. Dr. King, the quote above among them, followed the production of the snack packs. The quotes were read by most of the boys and girls and some of their adult chaperones. Afterward, Miles led the group in a responsive reading, then offered up a prayer befitting the occasion.

"I was very impressed with the way in which these 50-plus teenagers were willing to spend their 'day off' helping others," Krista said later. "They did it in a gracious, spirited way. They also had a chance to ponder the impact of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and the movement he helped to lead. The youth took turns reading out loud about 40 quotes of Rev. King's and you could hear the impact those words were having on the youth. It was a good day."

Youngsters representing our church (Brittney Maddux, Kiya Doby and Robert Doby) and six other Presbyterian churches, Grace Covenant, Overland Park Presbyterian Church, Covenant Presbyterian Church in Kansas City, First Presbyterian Church of Liberty, Mo., First Presbyterian Church of Lee's Summit, Mo., and Chapel Hill Presbyterian Church in Blue Springs, Mo., participated in the event.

The boys and girls spent the afternoon at Main Event in Kansas City as a reward for their earlier efforts in Leavenworth.

## WHAT A SURPRISE TO SEE Jerry and Miriam Bowman

Jerry was attending the college at Ft. Leavenworth for a couple of weeks and attended FPC a couple of Sundays!

(Pictured: Ginnie Strand, Miriam Bowman,  
Rev. Dr. Krista Kiger and Jerry Bowman)



## NEW MEDIA CENTER



The recent hard work of Dick Gibson and Carl Johnson has resulted in the lovely new media center worshipers will encounter at the back of the sanctuary. Sight and Sound Facilitator Pam Crume is pictured here at the center, which the church will begin to use once the equipment she, Jim Garrett and others will be using on Sunday mornings has come in. Thank you, Dick and Carl, for putting your carpentry skills to good use!

## FEBRUARY 12<sup>th</sup> SOUPER BOWL!

Whether or not you care anything about the football game, please support our effort to collect cans of soup for the Souper Bowl. Just bring your cans or packages to church Sunday, February 12, place them in the basket of your favorite team (Chiefs or Eagles). We will turn the collection over to selected food pantries. Following worship that day will be our pot luck dinner.

**Feb. 12 -Souper Bowl Sunday A-C- Dessert D-K- Main Dish L-Z – Salads, Sides, and/or Bread**  
Thanks,  
The Mission Committee

# **THE LAUGHING CHRISTIAN**

As church attendance numbers fade across the nation and online services become very convenient it's important to remember why church attendance for you and your family matters so much.

You can't serve from your sofa. You can't have community of faith on your sofa. You can't experience the power of a room full of believers worshipping together on your sofa.

Christians aren't consumers. We are contributors. We don't watch. We engage. We give. We sacrifice. We encourage. We pray by laying hands on the hurting. We do life together.

The church needs you.

And you need the church.

## **TIME AND TALENTS BROCHURE AND SURVEY**

An eight-page brochure covering many of the various ways in which members and friends of the church can use their time and talents in advancing the Kingdom of God has been put together for your benefit. Please pick up a copy of this brochure in the sanctuary as soon as possible, then fill out the accompanying one-page survey and leave it in the little basket on top of the new media center at the back of the sanctuary. The information you provide will aid the moderators of the church committees as they make plans for the future. Thank you!

## **CHURCH COMMITTEES**

The following committees have been formed by the Session with the assistance of our interim pastor and will be meeting on a regular basis during 2023:

- (1) Building and Grounds -Moderator, Dick Gibson; 2nd Elder, Carl Johnson
- (2) Finance and Administration (which includes personnel, creation of the budget, and the fall pledge drive) -Moderator, Rodney Schwatken; 2nd Elder, Dick Gibson; 3rd Elder, Virginia Rawlings; 4th Elder, Shirley Rockwell
- (3) Media (which includes communication, social media, and marketing) -Moderator, Tom Stovall; 2nd Elder, Debbie Anderson; 3rd Elder, Jim Garrett
- (4) Endowment and Memorial -Moderator, Debbie Anderson; 2nd Elder, Shirley Rockwell
- (5) Mission and Faithful Discipleship (which includes time and talents, the denominational offerings, and new approaches to the broader term of stewardship) -Moderator, Shirley Rockwell; 2nd Elder, Carl Johnson (This committee meets the first Sunday of the month after worship)
- (6) Christian Education -Moderator, Ann Keeling; 2nd Elder, Virginia Rawlings
- (7) Worship -Moderator, Jim Garrett; 2nd Elder, Ann Keeling (This committee meets the third Sunday of the month after worship)

In addition to the above committees, the church has a standing Nominating Committee that will meet as needed during the year. The current members of this committee are Elders Debbie Anderson and Dick Gibson, Deacon Dennis Goodwin, and congregants Linda Johnson, Merna Roe and Carolyn Anderson. A fourth congregant will be added to this committee during a future called congregational meeting.

Rick Nichols, Clerk of Session

**ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE** will be Wednesday, Feb. 22 at 7:00 p.m.

**Tuesday morning Bible Study** continues in its study of the book of Romans.  
Come join us on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays at 10 a.m.

**Social Media** class will continue to be on Sundays at 9 a.m.

**Rev. Dr. Krista Kiger** will be out of town Thursday, Feb. 2 to Monday, Feb. 6.  
Rev. Jean Murphy will be here Sunday.

## **PRAYERS**

**Immediate:** Jessica and Chris Flynn, Ann Keeling, Kathy and Jim, John Clinton (Linda Barry), Owen Cox and family (Ginnie Strand), Lansing USD #469, Howard Anderson, Dody Marsh, George (Ginnie), PNC, Sidney, Jack (Marti), Joe Hudson, Margie Holland, Elaine Coffman, Brianna Hoffman and Family (Cindy Scircle), Jim and Lorna Mathison, Diann Wooley (Cindy Scircle)  
**Ongoing:** Maria Gordon (C. Tillotson), Shirley Rockwell, Barbara-Sue Rose, Le Thomas, Michael Brock (C. Scircle), Mike Graham (Norma Graham), Greta Sharp, John Garner (Carolyn T.), Richard and Linda Cooper

## **FEBRUARY FELLOWSHIP TREATS**

**Feb. 5**—Circle 4

**Feb. 12** -Souper Bowl Sunday - **A-C**- Dessert **D-K**- Main Dish **L-Z** – Salads, Sides, and/or Bread

**Feb. 19** – Circle 5 **Feb. 26**-Deacons

## **FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS**

**2**- Tim Soule **13**-Linda Thompson **14**-Jessica Flynn **19**-Paige Cox **27**-Joyce Kirk

## **FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARY**

**9**- Rev. Dr. Krista Kiger and Mindy Andrsevits **21**-David and Debbie Anderson

# February 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	31	1 9:30am Crafts & Fellowship 6:00pm Bell Choir	2	3 Church Office Closed 1:00pm ESL	4
5 Fellowship Treats-Circle 4  9:00am Adult Study 9:15am Choir Practice 10:30am - 11:30am Worship Mission Committee Meeting	6 7:00am Men's Morning Discussion Group  5:30pm - 7:00pm OISS 7:00pm - 8:30pm Cody Choraliers	7 10:00am Bible Study	8 9:30am Crafts & Fellowship  11:00am Deacons Meeting 4:45pm Flute Choir 6:00pm Bell Choir	9 <i>6:00pm Session Meeting</i>	10 Church Office Closed 1:00pm ESL	11 10:00am Flute Practice
12 <b>Fellowship Treats-Pot Luck</b>  9:00am Adult Study 9:15am Choir Practice 10:30am - 11:30am Worship	13 7:00am Men's Morning Discussion Group  7:00pm - 8:30pm Cody Choraliers	14 10:00am Circle 3 6:00pm Circle 5	15 9:30am Crafts & Fellowship  4:45pm Flute Choir 6:00pm Bell Choir	16	17 Church Office Closed 1:00pm ESL	18 10:00am Flute Practice 10:00am League of Women Voters
19 Fellowship Treats-Circle 5  9:00am Adult Study 9:15am Choir Practice 10:30am - 11:30am Worship Worship Committee Meeting	20 Church Office Closed	21 10:00am Bible Study  5:00pm - 6:00pm Community Meal	22 9:30am Crafts & Fellowship  7:00pm Ash Wednesday Service	23	24 Church Office Closed 1:00pm ESL	25 10:00am Flute Practice
26 Fellowship Treats-Deacons  9:00am Adult Study 9:15am Choir Practice 10:30am - 11:30am Worship	27 7:00am Men's Morning Discussion Group  10:00am Circle 4 7:00pm - 8:30pm Cody Choraliers	28 10:00am Bible Study	1	2	3	4