

The Leaven *January 2021*

SOULE SEARCHING

Dear friends in Christ,

It's a new year, and I want to extend my best wishes to each of you for the coming year. I am motivated to do this for a couple of reasons.



One is because I'm pretty impressed with what you have done in the year now behind us...2020. I don't need to remind you that this was a difficult year for many reasons. Not since the Civil War has our church closed its doors for worship for an extended period of time. But in 2020 we closed three different times out of caution and love, seeking to do our part to not spread COVID-19 and to care for those most vulnerable to this disease. The first closure was from March 22nd - June 14th; the second was September 27th, October 11th; the third November 22nd - at least January 10th. Yet the congregation has shown remarkable resiliency, creativity and passion. The work of God continued, and it was led, inspired, and challenged by your faith and determination. So, I'm writing to say that you're an amazing group of believers. Thank you for all that you've done in the past 12 months to help so many people through these difficult times.

Another reason for this note is to thank you for what you're going to do in the new year before us. It's exciting, isn't it? As Corrie Ten Boom once said, "We may not know what the future holds, but we know who holds the future!" So true!

I trust that God has meaningful and transformative ministry for us to carry out in the New Year. The year will certainly have challenges (I am writing this just hours after the protest and violence that erupted at the Capital Building in Washington, D.C). The needed resources to address those challenges will come to us from our strong, generous and compassionate God. How do I know that? I've experience it too many times to count. God does not ask great ministry from us without supplying the resources to do the work that needs to be done.

So, Happy New Year and may 2021 be full of blessings for you and those God has given you to love, direct and care for through another year. May God bless our congregation as we seek to faithfully fulfill our mission, no matter what the year may bring.

Grace and peace,

Tim

A Prayer for the New Year

Spirit of God, Spirit of Jesus,
breathe new life into our lives in this new year.

Come from the four winds
to open our ears
so that we can hear your word of peace
to ready our hearts
so that we can feel your word of tenderness.

Breathe life into our many kinds of death
and make of these offerings,
born of our shared yearnings, new opportunities for ministry.

Great Spirit, it was not yesterday
that your care for us began,
but it was, as you say, "In the beginning."
In the beginning you spoke and the story started
and your love for us all began,
and now your love takes us into the new year.

Lord open our ears
to the old story/your story. Let us make it new again.
It is the story about this bread, divine bread,
that comes of the hard labor of poor men and women,
that comes of the hard labor of rain and
earth, and air and fire and time,
that gather into themselves now
all the yearnings of each of us.

In your great love,
we pray for all humankind,
and remind us that you
have called us to be stewards
of your created earth.

Let us always be open to the
awesome Incarnate Word of God,
Jesus Christ our Lord.
Transform us by Christ's love
and direct our paths in 2021 and always.
Amen.

Buenas dias, mi amigos: (Good Day, my friends)

Do you remember that in the summer of 2019, during our three-day Safari festival at First Presbyterian Church, women from The Tamale Kitchen cooked tamales for us to enjoy? We are anticipating their return. When the deacons met January 5 they agreed to a drive-through tamale event January 31 at First Pres. Due to coronavirus precautions we cannot get together for a dinner. But we can enjoy a mid-winter treat of tamales in our own homes. We are inviting First Methodist Church members to order also. We will need a count. Tamales are \$2 each. The varieties are pork, chicken or vegetable. Deadline to order is January 24. The church annual meeting is January 31. The tamale event will follow. This is not a community dinner or a fundraiser. Just a mid-winter treat. Dios te bendiga!! (God bless you)

FIVE GRAND AND CHANGE!!!

Our administrative assistant Arlene Hansroth has informed me that the 2020 Christmas Joy Offering, the last of the four annual denominational offerings the Presbyterian Church (USA) receives, brought in \$880, which was enough to put us over the \$5,000 mark for the year in terms of total contributions to these special offerings. So please give yourselves a hearty round of applause, especially when you consider the fact that I believe all four of these offerings (or at least three of them) technically ended up being received virtually because of the coronavirus pandemic, although I would have to go back and double check the calendar to be sure about that.

Just to review, the first of the four denominational offerings, the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering, generated \$2,505 in gifts to the church, the second offering, the Pentecost Offering, \$1,145, the third offering, the Peace and Global Witness Offering, \$540, and the Christmas Joy Offering \$880, for a grand total of \$5,070.

Because of your generosity, the larger church is in a better position to feed the hungry, help those effected by natural disasters, assist with the growth and development of young people, participate in efforts to pursue peace and reconciliation in the name of Jesus, meet the pressing financial needs of past and present church workers, and enable individuals of color to acquire knowledge and skills that will serve them well later.

So thank you for your generosity, and may God bless you for having shared some of the resources at your disposal in ministering to others through these special offerings.

Rick Nichols, moderator, Faithful Discipleship Committee

BELL-RINGERS BROUGHT IN THE BUCKS!

Nine members and a friend of First Presbyterian Church, Leavenworth rang bells for the Salvation Army at Dillon's over a two-day period last month, raising \$1,322.95 for the then 155-year-old (now 156) charitable organization in the process.

Those who took a turn drawing attention to that red kettle that represents hope in the eyes of the down and out were Chuck and Annette Allen, Chase Allen, Drake Allen, Debbie Anderson, Chris Aus, Jim Mathison, Rick Nichols, and Claude Wiedower and his friend Patricia Domann. Some spent a couple of hours out in front of the grocery store spreading some Christmas cheer Friday, December 11, while the rest were there Saturday, December 12.

"It is because of volunteers like these that the Salvation Army will be able to provide turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, beans and a cake mix for a Christmas dinner plus gifts and toys for 307 families in the Leavenworth area as well as the assistance provided to families in need throughout the year," the church's Carl Johnson, a member of the local advisory board for the Salvation Army, reported December 15 in an email sent to the congregation. "Thank God for those who volunteer and put more meaning into Christmas for so many."

Claude Wiedower and Patricia Domann are pictured here ringing bells as a man places some money in the red Salvation Army kettle outside Dillon's.



Car-o-ling, car-o-ling, Car-o-ling, car-o-ling, Car-o-ling we went!

Saturday morning is for cartoons, but Sunday afternoon is for car tunes or the equivalent thereof, right?

That apparently was the thinking behind a pre-Christmas event organized by the Deacons, Car-o-ling, which had three groups of people comprised of members and friends of the church going off in different directions in their vehicles to share the gift of holiday music with various members and friends of the church who have been unable to come to the church in recent months on a regular basis, if at all, for worship services because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Bent on spreading a little Christmas cheer with the help of some recorded music and homemade signs (e.g., "First Presbyterian Church Loves You and Misses You!"), the car-o-lers called on Marilyn Ferbert, Twila and Cathy Corley, and Bill and Barbara Katzenberger (Group 1), Shirley Rockwell, Bob and Marge Grafke-Doby, Al Pursell, and Norma Graham (Group 2), and Steve and Barb Finch, Linda Barry, Jim and Lorna Mathison, and Bobbie Snyder (Group 3). It had been their intention to also visit Darrell and Margie Holland (Group 1), Judy Jahn (Group 2) and Virginia Rawlings (Group 3) the afternoon of Sunday, December 20, but these four were either not at home or unavailable at the time.



The Group 1 car-a-van consisted of Chris Aus, Carolyn Tillotson and her grandson Clayton and her dog, Whitney Moulden and her dog, Jim and Merna Roe,

and Keri Litewski, the Group 2 car-a-van John and Ginnie Strand, Gerald and Elaine Carder, Lois Chapman, and Rick Nichols, and the Group 3 car-a-van Pastor Tim and Debbie Soule, Carolyn Anderson, Dody Marsh, and Chuck and Annette Allen, Chase and Drake.

In the photograph accompanying this article, the little black box visible on the right was supplying the music Shirley Rockwell enjoyed hearing on a mild blue-sky day just outside the apartment building where she lives.

PRAYER CONCERNS

Immediate: Jeanie (Barbara-Sue Rose), Brianna Hoffman (Cindy Scircle), V. Williams (Barbara-Sue Rose), Ron Bacquet (Cindy Scircle), Nancy (Linda Barry), Shelly (Steve and Barbara Finch), Karen Waddell (Cindy Scircle), John Zillman, Gunnar Hansroth (Arlene), First Presbyterian Church, Oskaloosa on the loss of their pastor (Rick Nichols)

Ongoing: Joe Hudson, Judy Jahn, Barbara-Sue Rose, Maria Gordon (Carolyn Tillotson), Twila Corley, Jayce Ward (Cindy Scircle), Al Pursell, Mary Hickie (Linda Barry), Marilyn Ferbert, Le Thomas, Sandy Bushman (Carolyn Tillotson), Kiara Doby (Great Granddaughter to Bob and Marge Grafke-Doby), Camielle Austin

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

1-Kathy Lemke 1-Linda Barry 5-James Hughes Jr. 6-Kristen Michaels 8-Esther Ray
15-Gregg Scircle 20-Ron Kenton 28-Joe Hudson 29-Dennis Goodwin 31-Andy Michaels

JANUARY ANNIVERSARYS

26-Bob Doby and Marge Grafke-Doby

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION WILL BE JANUARY 31st at noon

(Session members need to get their reports to the office)

CRAFTERS MADE WREATHS

Wreaths were made by the Crafters with some of Judy Wiedower memorial funds. Given to several members of the church.





LEAVENWORTH INTERFAITH
COMMUNITY OF HOPE

12/30/20



Dear Rev. Soule, and FPC

Thank you so very much
for your donation of
\$500.00 to the Leavenworth
Interfaith Community of
Hope.

Your support means a
great deal to us and we
promise to use your funds
well.

Gratefully,
Linda Nicki Perkins

JANUARY 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28 7:00 AM Men's Morning Discussion Group 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM Cody Choraliars	29	30 9:30 AM Crafts & Fellowship	31	1 Church Office Closed	2
3 Worship-Online only	4  Church Office Closed	5 6:00 PM Deacons Meeting	6 9:30 AM Crafts & Fellowship	7	8 Church Office Closed	9
10 Worship-Online only	11	12 10:00 AM Circle 3 6:30 PM Circle 5	13 9:30 AM Crafts & Fellowship	14 6:00 PM <i>Session Meeting</i>	15 Church Office Closed	16 10:00 AM League of Women Voters
17 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM In-Person-Worship 11:30 AM Christian Ed. Committee Meeting	18  Church Office Closed	19	20 9:30 AM Crafts & Fellowship	21	22 Church Office Closed 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM Amateur Radio Testing	23
24 Mission Committee Meeting Worship Committee Meeting 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM Worship	25	26 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM Community Meal	27 9:30 AM Crafts & Fellowship	28	29 Church Office Closed	30
31 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM Worship	1	2 6:00 PM Deacons Meeting	3 9:30 AM Crafts & Fellowship	4	5 Church Office Closed	6