

# The First Epistle



First Presbyterian Church of Moorhead • Established 1872

March 2020

## **The Session:**

Moderator: Robert Drake

Clerk of Session: Kim Kelsh

Treasurer: Chris Swee

Frank Kratky, Walt Worman,  
Kathy McKaig, Peggy Johnson,  
Kim Kelsh, Mary Larson, Chris  
Swee, Mary Skalet, Megan  
Wheeler, and David Lanpher

## **The Deacons**

Moderator: Barb Worman

Jim Gale, Kathy Giddings, Nicole  
Hestbeck, Joni Lordemann,  
John Ortez, Helen Pemble, Deb  
Piekutowski, Elizabeth Swee

*Communion will be celebrated on  
Sunday, March 1st.*

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**Visit our Website:**

[www.firstpresmhd.org](http://www.firstpresmhd.org)

## **OGHS... what is that?**

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is our denomination's (PCUSA) special offering that takes place during Lent each year. This is the "fish offering" -- the one where the children (and adults) can participate by collecting contributions in fish banks.

## **Where does the money go?**

Donations to the OGHS special offering make a difference in the lives of people in need around the world through three highly developed, well-managed, impactful programs:

**Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA)** - works alongside communities around the globe as they recover and find hope after the devastation of natural or human-caused disasters: hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, fires, etc. PDA supports both immediate and long-term recovery efforts. Several times PDA has supported flood recovery here in the Northern Plains Presbytery. Hopefully PDA will NOT need to provide support in our region following any Spring 2020 flooding. website: [presbyterianmission.org/pda](http://presbyterianmission.org/pda)

**Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP)** - takes actions to alleviate hunger, care for creation, and the systemic causes of poverty so all my be fed. website: [presbyterianmission.org/hunger](http://presbyterianmission.org/hunger)

**Self-Development of People (SDOP)** - invests in communities responding to their experiences of oppression, poverty and injustice and educates Presbyterians about the impact of these issues. Over the years multiple SDOP grants and projects have been carried out in our local communities. website: [presbyterianmission.org/sdop](http://presbyterianmission.org/sdop)

Our gifts to this special offering are designed to go above our regular giving so that we can join with other Presbyterians to have a significant impact far beyond the doors of First Presbyterian of Moorhead. So please take some time during this Lenten season to consider what financial gifts you might offer to God's people in need.

Last year's OGHS offering was \$1302.42. Can we make it \$1500 this year? \$2000?

## **Deacons Ministry - you can be a part of this too**

Deacons provide a vital support and connection to church members in times of illness, loss, grief and, yes, celebration. Two important aspects of this are our care card ministry and serving at funeral receptions.

Care Cards are sent to those dealing with various life challenges. Deacons also help celebrate graduations, births, and baptisms. All church members are encouraged to contact any of the Deacons to let us know of people in situations where the deacons might offer support and care through visits and/or cards.

Recently the Deacons had the honor of supporting two of our church families by serving at funeral receptions. It is a holy service that we can offer to families. Yet, at times, due to employment, illness/surgery, vacations, etc., the nine deacons find it challenging to cover this responsibility. We are looking for additional individuals who might be willing to help us with funeral receptions. Please let any of the Deacons know if you are willing to help by providing bars/cookies (store bought or homemade are ok) and/or could help with set up, service and clean up for these receptions. We would like to create a list of these "auxiliary deacon" volunteers that we could contact to help, as needed.

Please contact any of the Deacons to let us know how you might be able to help.

Finally, thank you to these Deacons who recently completed their term serving on the Board of Deacons: Patty Kratky, Jane Tandberg, Kathleen Wilkinson

*Current Deacons: Jim Gale, Kathy Giddings, Nicole Hestbeck, Joni Lordemann, John Ortez, Helen Pemble, Deb Piekutowski, Elizabeth Swee, Barb Worman*



# The First Presbyterian Church of Moorhead

Worship: 10:30 am

2900 Fifth Street South, Moorhead, MN 56560

[www.firstpresmhd.org](http://www.firstpresmhd.org)

218.233.1192

## E-mail Addresses:

Rev. Robert Drake      [robert@firstpresmhd.org](mailto:robert@firstpresmhd.org)

Church:                      [admin@firstpresmhd.org](mailto:admin@firstpresmhd.org)

Newsletter Articles:      [nadineswee@yahoo.com](mailto:nadineswee@yahoo.com)

Find us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/firstpresmhd](http://www.facebook.com/firstpresmhd)

*Our mission is to be a caring community of God's people who live by Christ's teachings, reach out to others to share the love of God, and celebrate the good news of Jesus Christ through worship, prayer, thought, and action.*

## Birthday Thank You

It was wonderful to have so many friends from church join my recent 90th birthday celebration at Bethany. Thank you for all the wonderful birthday wishes - both in person and in cards sent to me.

Thank you!!

-- from Marion DeJong

## ACTION COMMITTEE LENTEN PROJECT

In addition to our on-going food drive, the Action Committee is doing a "Special Needs" drive during lent. We are asking church members to donate paper products such as tissues, toilet paper, paper towels, and diapers. Diapers are especially needed. These items cannot be purchased with food stamps. We will stack the items in the fellowship hall and they will be taken to Churches United for Homeless shelter after Easter.

Let's see how big of pile we can make.



### \*\*\*EMAIL SPAM ALERT\*\*\*

If you receive an email from Pastor Robert (or anybody for that matter) asking for gift cards or money, or saying that Pastor Robert needs your help, DO NOT REPLY TO THE EMAIL. Delete the email right away.

Pastor Robert will NEVER ask you for money in an email, text, or phone call.

702 Communications said these spam emails are interception emails, where spammers create an email account that looks similar to Pastor Robert's account, and then send an email to you. They said there is nothing we can do to prevent this. So please be on the guard for them, and if you receive one, simply delete it, and call Pastor Robert.

## Lilies for Easter

Orders for lilies to grace the sanctuary this Easter are now being taken. You can designate it as a memorial, to honor someone or to the Glory of God. Cost is \$9 and you can speak with Elizabeth Swee 701-446-7479 or leave your order in the church office.



**THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN ME, EVEN THOUGH THEY DIE, WILL LIVE**

We are saddened to report the following deaths of our FPCM family members. The vitality of our church has been greatly increased because of their commitment and faithfulness. We are saddened by our loss, but overjoyed that they are now with our Lord. Please keep their family members in your prayers.

**Virginia C. Burley Kolba**, 95, died peacefully on January 9th, 2020 at the Good Samaritan Village in Sioux Falls, SD.

Virginia was born to the late Arthur Cleve and Mary Burley on February 25, 1924 in Gardner, ND. She graduated from Hunter High School and moved to Fargo, ND where she worked before she met and married the late Joe Kolba in 1944. Virginia and Joe lived in Moorhead, MN and raised their family there.

Virginia is survived by her children Michael (Atsumi) of New York, NY; Kathleen, of San Francisco, CA; Rebecca, of Santa Rosa, CA; and Jon (Denise) of Crooks, SD. Also survived by her grandchildren Sonya of Norwalk, CT; Joe (Lacy) of Anchorage, AL and Jeff of Sioux Falls, SD. The latest joy in Virginia's life was being a great grandma to Amelia and Lily Kolba.

Virginia was predeceased by her loving husband Joe in 1977.

Virginia's talents were many and she enjoyed giving to and helping others. She worked with the Camp Fire Girls in Moorhead, MN and in the Chaplaincy Department at St. Luke's Hospital in Fargo. She was a member of the 1st Presbyterian Church in Moorhead. She was an avid crafter with skills including stained glass, sewing and candle making. Virginia loved butterflies, recycling flowers and big, big hugs. She enjoyed travel to Japan, Alaska, Hawaii, New York and California. After moving from Moorhead in 2011, she enjoyed her community and activities in Sioux Falls, SD.

The funeral service was on Wednesday, January 22, 2020, at 1:00 P.M., with visitation from 12:00 to 1:00 P.M., at Wright Funeral Home in Moorhead. Interment will be at Riverside Cemetery in Moorhead.



**Dolores J. Johnson**, 94, of Moorhead, MN, died Sunday, February 9, 2020, at Lilac Homes Assisted Living in Dilworth, MN.

Dolores was born August 14th, 1925 in Wheaton, MN, to Edla and Leonard Kerling. She was born a triplet with Darlene and Donald. Dolores was raised in Forman ND, with 10 brothers and sisters. Dolores moved to Fargo, ND, and met Steve Johnson, they were united in marriage on April 3rd, 1959.

Dolores had a daycare for many, many years and many, many children. She loved taking care of everyone. She was an active member of First Presbyterian Church of Moorhead, also a volunteer with RSVP. Dolores and Steve put on a "Christmas Party" for disabled and underprivileged children for 28 years. Dolores so loved angels and helping people.

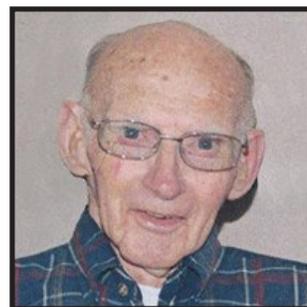
She is survived by her children Pam (Ryan), Ron (Peggy), Deb, Jeff (Stephanie) 8 grandchildren, 5 great-grandchildren, sisters Darlene, Mavis, Joann (Terry). Preceded in death by her husband, her parents, 4 sisters and 3 brothers. Dolores spent her last days at Lilac Homes in Dilworth which she very much loved, and felt at home.

Visitation was on Thursday, February 13, 2020 from 5:00-7:00 PM with a prayer service beginning at 7:00 at Wright Funeral Home, Moorhead, MN. Memorial Service was on Friday, February 14, 2020 at 11:00 AM with a visitation one hour before the service at First Presbyterian Church, Moorhead, MN. Burial will be in Wildwood Cemetery, Wheaton, MN, at a later date.

**Vernon A. Bancroft Sr.** 91, Moorhead, MN, died Sunday, February 16, 2020 in Eventide on 8th, Moorhead.

Vernon Albert Bancroft Sr. was born October 16, 1928, in Tracy, MN, to Albert and Gena (Haugen) Bancroft. He attended school in Tracy, graduating from high school in 1946. After high school, Vern attended the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. Following college, he worked as an accountant for a local farm implement dealer. On July 8, 1950, he was united in marriage to Elizabeth Moncelle in Amiret, MN.

Vern joined the Minnesota Army National Guard in 1948 and served on active duty during the Korean Conflict. After his honorable discharge in 1952, he and Elizabeth moved to Moorhead. Vern was employed in the lumber business during his working career. He worked in Fargo, for Twin City Hardwood Lumber Company from 1952-1969, and then for Simonson's Lumber Company as an Estimator, from 1969 until his retirement in 1990.



During his retirement years, Vern enjoyed spending time with his family and woodworking. He has been a member of the Masonic Lodge for 64 years, Sons of Norway for 25 years and has been an active member of 1st Presbyterian Church in Moorhead for over 60 years, serving as elder, deacon and sharing his talents on various committees. He always enjoyed participating on the church's softball and bowling teams. A highlight of his later years was taking the "Honor Flight" for veterans to Washington, D.C. accompanied by his son, Wayne.

Vern will be remembered and missed by his wife of 69 years, Elizabeth; their five children, Gail (Kim) Christianson, Carolyn (Jon) Lybeck, Patricia (Russ) Conrad, Wayne (Lana Jacobson) Bancroft and Kurt (Karla) Bancroft. In addition, he is survived by one daughter-in-law, Gloria Bancroft, along with 13 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents; one son, Vernon Jr.; and one sister, Marie Bancroft.

A Memorial Service was held on Thursday, February 20, 2020 at 2PM in 1st Presbyterian Church in Moorhead, MN. Visitation was held one hour prior to service.

**ANNUAL REPORT PASTOR'S MESSAGE**

*The following are from the Annual Meeting, held Sunday, February 9. The first is Pastor's Robert's opening remarks, and the second is Pastor Robert's Moderator Report.*

For many of you here today, this church has been home to you for your entire life. This might be 20-some years, 40 years, maybe even 70+ years.

For others here today, this church has been home to you for one year, maybe 2, 5 or 10 years.

No matter which is the case for you, I have some questions to ask. If you feel comfortable doing so, please raise your hand if the following pertain to you, as it relates to this church:

- Raise your hand if you feel anxiety as it relates to church
- Raise your hand if you feel separated from church.
- Raise your hand if you are unsure who we are today.
- Raise your hand if you would love to see our church be who it was in 1965... 1975... 1985... 1995...2005...2015...
- Raise your hand if you have felt emotional pain because of church.
- Raise your hand if you like your current church home.
- Raise your hand if you think our church structure—the way we do things—fits who we are today, fits the size of us today.
- Raise your hand if you are tired or overburdened as a result of volunteering at church.

As we listen to the reports from various committees, I want you to keep something in mind, something I explain further in my Moderator's Report.

Every organization has a soul, a soul very much of the same nature as our individual souls.

The soul of an organization is NOT the culture of that organization, it is NOT collective leadership, it is NOT even the spirituality of the organization.

The soul of the organization is that original divine spark that gave birth to the organization.

As with our own souls, the soul of this congregation responds and reacts to internal and external forces.

Throughout 2020, we are at a critical juncture where each of us who call this home will need to listen to the soul of this church.

How do we do that?

Remember all those questions I asked at the beginning, to raise your hand if you feel anxiety or exhaustion or joy?

Before anything can happen with FPCM going forward, each of us will need to silently listen to the soul of this church speak to them.

**2019 MODERATOR'S REPORT**

February, 9, 2020

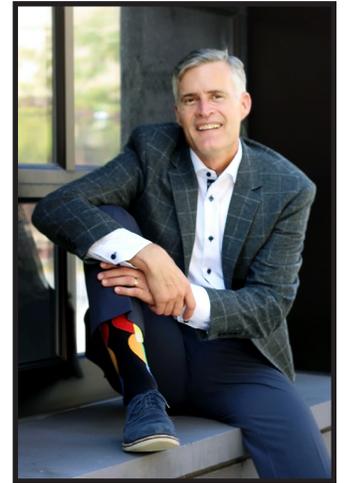
"There is a sweet spot between the known and the unknown where originality happens; the key is to be able to linger there without panicking."

—Ed Catmull (President of Walt Disney Animation Studios)

Like American religion in general, and like the Presbyterian Church (USA) in particular, First Presbyterian Church of Moorhead is in a liminal season.

A liminal season, as defined by church consultant and author, Susan Beaumont, is more than just a period of transition. Well, actually, it is something far *less than* a period of transition. A transition is the period between where an organization was and where an organization is going. The key to transition is that the organization knows where it is going and has a clear plan of getting there.

In contrast, the key to a liminal season is that the organization does not actually know where it is going; it knows where



it was, but it does not know where it is going next. This is the major difference between transition periods and liminal seasons.

As defined by Beaumont, a liminal season is:

“... where something has ended, but a new thing has not yet begun. Seasons where watching and waiting can be difficult, over planning can be futile, and it simply isn’t helpful to pretend that we understand what happens next.

“Liminal seasons are challenging, disorienting, and unsettling. We strive to move forward with purpose and certainty. Instead, we feel as though we are trudging through mud, moving away from something comfortable and known, toward something that can’t be known.

“Liminal seasons are also exciting and innovative. The promise of a new beginning unleashes creative energy, potential, and passion. All truly great innovations are incubated in liminality. God’s greatest work occurs in liminal space.”

Sounds pretty scary, doesn’t it?

Here are some symptoms of a church in a liminal season:

- Rise in anxiety among members and the congregation
- People question their attachment to the church
- Attendance drops off
- Old conflicts re-emerge
- Personnel and volunteers are overloaded
- Systems are in flux
- Disagreements arise about previously established policies and procedures

Although living through a liminal season is not easy, it is something that eventually happens with every organization. It is a normal period of the life of an organization. In fact, it is also a normal period in the life of every person.

If you look at the quote from Ed Catmull at the top of this report, you will also see that the liminal season is a potentially beneficial season. It is where creativity and re-birth occurs.

It is only in liminal seasons that a long-established congregation like FPCM (which turns 148-years old this year) enters the spiritual zone where it can explore new identities and new possibilities. Beaumont calls this the “reorientation” period, describing it as, “A reforming period in which the person, group, or social order adopts a new identity, is granted new status, and designs new structures more appropriately suited to the emerging identity.”

Only in the uncomfortable space of liminality is a congregation unsettled enough to explore the new future God intends for them.

This is our call, and has always been our call—to discern what God has in store for us no matter what that future looks like.

If we accept this season of liminality, the next question becomes, “How do we get there, how do we move forward, what are we going to do?”

I don’t know.

In contrast to my Pastor’s Annual Report for the annual meeting last year, I freely confess that I don’t know.

I am unsure where FPCM is heading next. I am unsure what we should do next. I am unsure what our future will look like next.

My confession of uncertainty is, according to Beaumont, exactly what is needed from the leader of an organization going through a liminal season.

First, there is a difference between not knowing and ignorance. I am not ignorant to our situation. But I do not claim to know where God is calling us next. This space between ignorance and unknowing is exactly what it means to be in a liminal season. It’s also the space where we are most accessible by God.

*(Continued on next page)*

*(Continued from Page 5)*

Richard Rohr, author, lecturer, spiritual coach, and Franciscan friar, describes the benefits of unknowing this way:

“It’s the realm where God can best get at us because our false certitudes are finally out of the way. This is the sacred space where the old world is able to fall apart, and a bigger world is revealed. If we don’t encounter liminal space in our lives, we start idealizing normalcy. This threshold is God’s waiting room.”

Second, when leading a congregation through a liminal season, a pastor must (at least according to Beaumont) avoid premature exercises and activities like visioning; starting big, bold ideas; focusing on growth. They must also avoid the temptation to restore the status quo, to return the church to its glory days of large attendance, or to relieve the discomfort that naturally comes with the liminal season.

All of the above leadership practices Beaumont describes as “traditional leadership” traits, and while productive for an organization that knows where it’s heading, they are harmful to an organization in a liminal season. The harm occurs because traditional leadership patterns short-circuit the spiritual processes God intends a congregation to go through during its liminal season.

Leading in liminal season is not easy, and is, in fact, dangerous. Beaumont writes:

“Leading in a liminal season is incredibly dangerous work because people are generally not happy with the individual who guides them through the hard work of loss, grief, and letting go. People often want to reject leaders that are doing effective liminal work because those leaders are making them uncomfortable.

“It is much easier to be the kind of leader that strives to restore what was, the leader who makes people feel safe and happy. But that leader rarely takes the organization any place meaningful in a liminal season.”

Are we in a liminal season? I think so.

If you agree that we are in a liminal season, are you prepared for the hard, spiritually exhausting work of walking with God through FPCM’s liminal season?

These are the two questions each congregational member must answer for themselves in 2020.

Throughout the next twelve months, I invite each and every one of you to reach out to me and help us answer these two questions.

-- Pastor Robert Drake

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## **EVER WONDER HOW TO FILE A HEALTH CARE DIRECTIVE?**

*Church member, Elizabeth Swee, recently filed her health care directive. If you’ve been wondering how to do it, it’s easier than you think. Just read what Elizabeth says...*

You have talked about it for years with your significant other, what to do in the event of a medical emergency, how you want to be treated or not. Now you just have to get it on paper. So you go to five wishes on the internet inserting all the information only to be told it will cost \$8...there has to be a better way to make your wishes known and your health care personnel will remind you that they are waiting to put it in your file.

There is a better way- simply take the health care form from your provider. Wait a minute there are slightly different rules for North Dakota and Minnesota. You may have to designate two secondary people in North Dakota. Go back to the clinic and get the proper state form. Refill the entries and take to the bank for a notary, but do not sign on the notary’s page as that will invalidate the signatory page. Go back to the clinic and refill the form. The bank may not have two witnesses on the notary page, but that may not be needed depending on the service or bank you use. You may have to get your own witnesses.

Present the health directive form to be put in your file and your surgery is ready to go.

These are your wishes and you don’t need to get into a discussion with a secondary person, unless you want to about whether to discontinue care if you are dying

Remember the person you choose is not alone, but part of a team who can help make decisions for you if needed..

A note about adult children and travel abroad. Unless they have an health care directive, the embassy or overseas hospital cannot release HIPAA information about you child over 18 so make sure there is a health care directive or power of attorney.

### PASTOR ROBERT'S VACATION SCHEDULE

Pastor Robert is taking a vacation! Finally! We've been telling him he needs to take a vacation, and he finally listened to us.

He will be out of the office starting March 10, and will be back in the office on March 30. Where's he going, you ask?

"I have a friend who is studying for his Masters of Theology at the University of Bonn, in Bonn Germany. It's a beautiful school and so I decided to go and visit him before he graduates later this spring. We'll also take a trip to Amsterdam and Paris for a few days."

When asked if he is going anywhere else, Pastor Robert said, "Well, actually yes. I have another friend who lives in Budapest, in fact, he's originally from there. I met him at Princeton Seminary, when he was a visiting Fulbright scholar. I'll be staying with him for a few days, after that, I'm heading to Krakow, Poland, where I'll tour the Auschwitz museum." Let's wish Pastor Robert a well-deserved and fun vacation.

### EMERGENCY PASTORAL CARE PHONE NUMBERS

If you have a pastoral emergency, Pastor Robert has lined up the following local pastors to help out.

March 10-21 Pastor Cathie Bishop 712-490-8333

March 22-29 Pastor Paul Campbell 712-490-0961

You can also call Deacon Moderator Barb Worman for questions and concerns 701-367-9498

### SUNDAY PREACHING SCHEDULE

March 15 Jean Taylor

March 22 Rev. Sue Koesterman

March 29 Dave Lanpher

### Children's Worship

As we begin Lent and look forward to Easter our Bible stories this month will focus on major events in the life of Jesus - stories of healing, feeding, teaching, loving. Children's Worship is an opportunity for young children to encounter and worship God. This includes biblical stories, prayers, and creative response activities that help children begin to understand scripture and experience God's presence. Following the children's sermon each week, children (ages 3 years through grade 2) gather in room 10 for this developmentally appropriate worship time.

### Dorothy Day Food Pantry

Non-Perishable Food Grocery Shopping List

**NOTE: PLEASE NO PUMPKIN PIE FILLING OR JELL-O**

- Peanut Butter
- Jelly and Jam
- Cooking Oil
- Boxed Potatoes
- Canned Tuna
- Canned Chicken
- Cereal (NOT high sugar cereals) Bagged or Boxed
- Rice - Bagged or Boxed
- Canned Fruit
- Soup
- Applesauce
- Sugar
- Bisquick
- Flour
- Ketchup
- Mayonnaise
- Spices: Pepper, Salt, Lawry's Seasoning, curry powder, garlic powder, chili powder, dried oregano, cloves, ground ginger, cinnamon



First Presbyterian Church of Moorhead  
2900 Fifth Street South  
Moorhead, MN 56560

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

# *Inside this Issue:*



*One Great Hour*

*Lenten Project: Churches United*

