

The First Epistle



First Presbyterian Church of Moorhead • Established 1872

August 2018

The Session:

Moderator: Robert Drake

Clerk of Session: LuAnn Buehre

Treasurer: Chris Swee

Tim Nelson, Ineke Justitz, Frank Kratky, Scott Dobovsky, Walt Worman, Kathy McKaig, Peggy Johnson, Kim Kelsh, Mary Larson, Chris Swee

The Deacons

Moderator: Elizabeth Swee

Pegi Ecker, Jim Gale, Kathy Giddings, Patti Kratky, Joni Lordeman, Arlene Munighan, John Ortez, Helen Pemble, Jane Tandberg, Kathleen Wilkinson, Barb Worman

Communion will be celebrated on Sunday, August 5th.

Like us on Facebook:

[facebook.com/firstpresmhd](https://www.facebook.com/firstpresmhd)

Visit our Website:

www.firstpresmhd.org

Outdoor Worship

Worship on July 22 was held outside on the church grounds on a glorious day. People were encouraged to bring lawn chairs to sit in and dress casually. Joni Lordeman and Tim Ortez provided the music and they did a wonderful job as always. We did a "turn-n-talk" sermon! What happens in a "turn-n-talk sermon" is that after the Scripture is read, everyone turns to their neighbors and talks about the Scripture passages mean to them. Many meaningful conversations could be heard on the lawn. It went very well. Coffee and other drinks were provided at this informal service. After the service people enjoyed a picnic potluck thanks to the New Life committee.



Night to Unite - Volunteers Needed!

Join with other members of Moorhead Presbyterian Church in making "Night to Unite" a success, volunteer!

Whether it is helping Robert distribute door hangers, setting up, grilling hot dogs, distributing pop and chips or helping clean up afterwards, your help is needed to make the evening a success. Night to Unite is a national event sponsored locally by the Moorhead Police Department. Contact Rev. Drake, Scott Dobovsky or Erik Swee to volunteer. If you are unable to help, we encourage you to join us, Tuesday, August 14.



Session News

Upcoming summer and fall changes: Session approved the placement of soccer nets on the grassy area on the north side of the church. The soccer nets were a cooperative venture by the Moorhead Parks and Recs and our church. Signage will be placed welcoming anyone to use, along with a few guidelines for use. A media coordinator and Church School Instructor have been hired. The media coordinator will assist with the website, Facebook entries and marketing items. Please welcome Kylee Johnson. The Children's Education Instructor will be teaching Sunday School along-side Scott Dobovsky. Please welcome Andrew as he works with our youth on Sunday mornings.



The First Presbyterian Church of Moorhead

Worship: 10:30 am

2900 Fifth Street South, Moorhead, MN 56560

www.firstpresmhd.org

218.233.1192

E-mail Addresses:

Rev. Robert Drake robert@firstpresmhd.org

Church: admin@firstpresmhd.org

Newsletter Articles: nadineswee@yahoo.com

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.

Find us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/firstpresmhd

Thank you

Thank you for all the caring notes, prayers, and thoughts during my surgeries. Your support really made a difference in my recovery.

Gratefully, Patti Kratky.

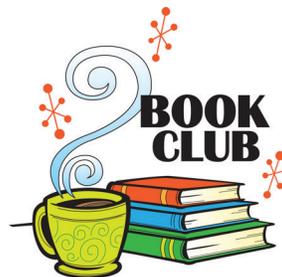
An INVITATION for you! (or perhaps a challenge?)

Let's revive the 4th Tuesday Book Club starting in September with volunteer facilitators. I volunteer to be the facilitator for September 25 and choose the book "Building a Good Life for All" by Shannon Jung. This is the book which will be used at Synod School this year in a course taught by Shannon and Grant Lowe.

Here are the dates to consider: Oct. 23, Nov. 27, Jan. 22, Feb. 25, Mar. 25, and April 25.

There will be a list posted near the mailboxes. Just put your name and book title you want us to read. We'll figure out the logistics as we see how many participants we might have.

Please consider this seriously as an important opportunity for us as a faith community to extend thoughtful conversation to more in our community.



Candid Camera

One thing is for sure, Moorhead Presbyterian members know how to have fun together. If you have fun photos of yourself, your family, or fellow church members, please send them to the newsletter team. Make sure to get permission first, and give us a short caption for the picture.

In this picture, taken back in May of this year, Marilynn and Dagne try and take a picture with a "fancy" camera.

Senior Spotlight

On Wednesday, June 13, Pastor Robert and I had a lovely visit with Dorothy Nelson.

Dorothy has lived in Clay County all of her life. She and her husband, James, were farmers for many years. They farmed just south of Moorhead. Since Dorothy moved into the city of Moorhead a few years ago, her son, Jimmy, and her grandson, James, farm the land now. It is nice to see farming traditions passed down through the generations.

Dorothy has five children, four daughters and one son. From those five children, she has 13 grandchildren, 22 great-grandchildren, and one great, great grandchild. Her extended family lives far and wide across the USA. Dorothy says, "I try to send each and everyone of them a birthday card." That's a total of 33 birthday cards each year--that's a lot of postage stamps!

Dorothy is a "snowbird," spending her winters in Surprise, Arizona. "It's nice and warm there," Dorothy comments.

Being a physically active person, she enjoys going on a three-mile walk daily around the neighborhood with her friends, water aerobics, and yoga. "I just can't sit all day, you have to stay active," Dorothy advises.

It seems you're doing just that, Dorothy. Thanks for the visit.

Submitted by Jane Tandberg



Pastor Robert and Dorothy enjoy homemade donuts





Girls singing inside during Vacation Church School at the downtown church.

Mystery Solved

Thanks to Glenn Gullickson, who tracked down the names of the four girls in this photo that appeared in the July newsletter. From left to right: Debbie Felde, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Norm Felde; Shelley Lund, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Alvie Lund; Claudia Aaland, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Aaland; and Laurie Henderson, daughter of Rev. and Mrs. W. James Henderson. This photo first ran in the Moorhead weekly newspaper called the Red River Scene on June 13, 1963. Church member and newspaper reporter Syb Gullickson ran a story on Moorhead Presbyterian's summer Vacation Church School.

Dorothy Day Food Pantry Needs Your Help

As you can tell from the sad photo, the Dorothy Day Food Pantry needs your help. Food insecurity is such a serious issue these days, that the shelves are frequently bare at the pantry. Dorothy Day serves 2,139 each month, giving away 34,308 pounds of food each month. As you can see, there is a lot of need. If you, or your organization, would like to volunteer at the food pantry please contact Marilyn Woods. As always, please drop off donated food items in the grocery carts located in the Fellowship Hall.



Moorhead Presbyterian at MSUM

For the very first time, Moorhead Presbyterian will help welcome new students at Minnesota State University Moorhead. Our brochure will be part of 1000 welcome packets delivered to new and returning new students. In addition, we will have a booth at MSUM Sidewalk Cafe, which is an event where new students get a chance to see all the businesses, restaurants, churches, and volunteer options in the Fargo-Moorhead area. This is a perfect opportunity for our church to let MSUM students know who we are, where we are, and what we do each Sunday. It is also a good opportunity to let Presbyterian youth, who might be moving a long way from home, that they have a welcoming Presbyterian congregation only blocks away from their new campus dorm.

Applications accepted for Presbyterian Women's 2019 USA Mission Experience

Presbyterian Women A group of Presbyterian women will travel to the Finger Lakes Region of New York in July 2019 for the fifth USA Mission Experience. They will explore the history that Presbyterian women have in the women's and civil rights movements, and will also have the opportunity to learn more about themselves and about some of the issues that confront the people of the Finger Lakes Region, including migrant workers and Native Americans. Applications to participate are being accepted until Aug. 15. Details are available at "2019 USA Mission Experience."

Contact Lana Schultz of Casselton for more information.



Celebrating 1968-2018: “Everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!”

(2 Corinthians 5:17, NRSV).

On behalf of First Presbyterian Church of Moorhead, thank you for celebrating with us the 50th Birthday of our church in its south Moorhead location. We will continue to honor this anniversary year in our monthly newsletters. And on Sunday, November 18, we will gather for a rededication service exactly fifty years after the service of dedication when the building truly became the house of God.

As you know, it was not easy to abandon our downtown sanctuary to be demolished, but our congregation did not despair because they knew that “the church is wherever God’s people are praising,” sung on November 17, 1968 by the youth, directed by Mrs. Robert Brummond. It has been very inspiring to learn of the love and support for our church shown by so many individuals and families over the long history of our church in Moorhead. Sharon Hulett conveyed these sentiments in a gracious note, which we want to share with you:

Dear First Presby Family,

Congrats and Happy 50th Anniversary! I and my family have many fond memories of camp, youth group, Cherry Pie suppers, great friends, spiritual growth, and much more.

Best wishes for continuous growth and inspiration to others.

- Sharon Hulett, Tim, Aaron

Last but not least, we thank the following persons for their generous gifts, totaling \$5,000, in support of our church and its mission on the occasion of our 50th anniversary:

Anonymous donor

Nancy J. Emerson

Dagne and Bill Forbes

James and Stephanie Gale

Robert Gerke

Sharon, Tim, Aaron Hulett

Ineke Justitz

Patti and Frank Kratky

George and Kit O’Neill

Cynthia Sillers and Pat Torgeson,

in memory of Margaret and Douglas Sillers

Milt and Kathleen Wilkinson



*Memorial Day Weekend Retreat at
Northern Pines Camp, Park Rapids, MN.*

Peace and Blessings,

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IT’S A MATCH!

Last month two anonymous donors stepped up to match \$1000 gifts, making for a combined gift of \$2000. Believing in the generosity of our congregation, we announced in last month’s newsletter that we wanted to try and do it again.

Congratulations! Two equally generous members stepped up to match \$1000 gifts. We want to formally thank these two anonymous donors for stepping up and helping Moorhead Presbyterian grow into its future.

In only two short months, we have raised \$4,000 through the “It’s a Match” campaign. As you will read elsewhere in this edition of The First Epistle, these donations will be added to other donations for the Birthday Fund. This fund will help offset the budget deficit, and, more importantly, will help offset the costs associated with growing our church.

There are so many good things happening at Moorhead Presbyterian, such as Concordia students preaching and singing with us in worship, Concordia music faculty playing organ, MSUM students coming in as Sunday School teachers, NDSU graduate students assisting in our garden program, college outreach events, neighborhood children find a church home, the inauguration of SNAP at the Moorhead Farmers Market, and an increased public presence in the Fargo-Moorhead-West Fargo community. All this activity points to a vibrant future for our church as we approach our 150th anniversary in 2022.

Thank you to everyone who supports our church, and thank you to the four donors supporting the “It’s a Match” campaign.





Pastor Reflections

Are you seeing a lot of changes? I am.

Some good, some bad, some inconsequential. Some local and some national. Some congregational and some denominational.

Some promising and some discouraging.

As you read through this month's issue of the First Epistle, you will see signs of change. We created two new staff positions; the first is Media Coordinator and the second is Children's Education Instructor. We found two very qualified people to fill these positions; Kylee Johnson and Andrew Lenz. You can read about them in this newsletter.

Another sign of change is the wonderful response to our Birthday Fund requests. We raised \$5000 in only two months. Although this money will not come close to addressing our budget deficit, it goes a long way to supporting a positive, upbeat, and realistic approach to our future.

Change, both positive and negative, is nothing new in life. Neither is it new in our Presbyterian tradition.

In Ineke Justitz's article in this newsletter you will read about a man named Rev. Dr. Eugene Blake. He was Stated Clerk of the United Presbyterian Church in the USA (this is what we were called before the 1983 merger) from 1951 to 1966.

He was also instrumental in forming and ratifying the Confession of 1967.

Have you ever read this confession? Most likely you have not; I never had until I was required to read it in seminary.

It is radical. It is revolutionary. It is simple. It is rebellious. It is everything Jesus Christ was.

It represented—and continues to represent—change.

Built around 2 Corinthians 5:19, it reminds us that through Jesus Christ, God reconciled the world back into a right relationship with God. It also reminds us that God “entrusts the message of reconciliation to us.”

Ok, all this is well and good; nothing new here, right?

If we delve into this confession, we will, indeed, find some new ideas and we will, indeed, find some distinct changes.

For instance, the Confession of 1967 helped answer the question, “Is the Bible the infallible Word of God?” Infallible means, “incapable of error.” So, for the Bible to be “infallible,” every single word must be direct from God with no human interaction between God and the printed letters in your Bible.

For the very first time in Presbyterian history, the Confession of 1967 refutes this inaccurate belief about the Bible. It says that the words of the Bible are in fact, the “words of men, conditioned by the language, thought forms, and literary fashions of the places and times at which they were written.” In other words, the Bible is a product of human beings. Certain men (most likely all the authors of the Bible were, unfortunately, men) recorded their interactions and experiences with God. By obvious necessity, the interactions and experiences of these men are naturally conditioned by, and reflective of, the era in which they lived.

Yet, as we all know, times change. Everything changes. Roman citizens no longer own slaves, religious leaders no longer stone people to death (at least in most countries), and none of us expects to see Lake Superior part in two so that we can walk across.

Things change.

The Confession of 1967 also addressed the racial tensions of 1960s America. It called the church to strive for the “abolition of all racial discrimination.” It even admitted that racial discrimination is sometimes subtle, rather than always overt. It said that anyone who excludes people based on race in effect “resists the Spirit of God.” Imagine that, we have the power to resist the Spirit of God!

The Confession of 1967 radically recognized the changes in America's social fabric during the turbulent 1960s. As we move forward in our celebration of our present church building turning 50 years old, let us remember that Moorhead Presbyterian has always lived in a spirit of positive change.

As we look forward to our sesquicentennial four years from now, let us honor the traditions of our founding elders, and remember that they initiated a history of responding to the changing needs of the people who called the Red River Valley home.

Hospitality Team

Are you part of the hospitality team for July August and September? Please check the bulletin board to get your ideal selection to help, keeping in mind those vacation days. Sign up now and get the best selection! Questions about hospitality? Contact Elizabeth or Erik Swee.

Meet Andrew Lenz

Meet Andrew Lenz, the new Children's Education Instructor. You will probably find him spending most of his time in the CE wing teaching Bible lessons in the Sunday school classrooms. He now is a student at MSUM majoring in English and Mass Communication. His home roots are from the Marshall MN area. During his high school years he was on the board of SWMN LYO (SouthWest Minnesota Lutheran Youth Organization) and has filled in for his home church pastor at St. Lucas. In his spare time he enjoys fencing, robotics, reading, gaming, choir and spending family time.



Meet Kylee Johnson

My name is Kylee Johnson, and I am so excited to be the new Media Coordinator! I'm a senior at The University of North Dakota, and will graduate in August with a double major in marketing and entrepreneurship, and a minor in communications. Aside from business, I have a passion for dance, photography, art, and baking. I'm looking forward to meeting some of you, and being back in my hometown of Moorhead!



Cheers to the BEST!

We appreciate all you have done for our church and our members this past year. The Personnel Committee treated the church staff to an Appreciation Luncheon to thank them for all they do. May God Bless their work.



Pictured are Diane Wray-Williams, Music Director, George O'Neill, Personnel Committee, Kylee Johnson, our new Media Coordinator, Kathy McKaig, Chair of Personnel Committee, Rev. Robert Drake, and Scott Dobovsky, Christian Education Director. Staff members not pictured include; Joni Lordeman, Organist, Clement Sambo, Custodian, Scott Ecker, Youth Director, Kathy Shark, Secretary, and Andrew Lenz, our new Christian Education Teacher.

The nuts and bolts of building a church



Awarding the Bid, March 29, 1967

Front, left to right: Jack Evert, Don Jefferies, Beverly Manternak (Moorhead Plumbing), George Rutter (Architect), Oliver Pederson (Edling Electric), John Stoutland (Gen. Contractor Stoutland Construction).
 Second row: D. Benjamin Carr (Interim Pastor), Howard Bristol, John McCann, Court Marty, Vernon Bancroft, Sr.

REPORT OF BUILDING FINANCE		
October 25, 1967		
Estimated Total Cost		\$300,000. ^{*1}
Loan arrangement with Northwest Savings & Loan	\$ 20,000.	
<u>Short term loan (5 yr.)</u>		
1st payment due - 6/1/68	80,000	
Interest rate 6 3/4%		
Monthly Payment	\$1,575.30	
<u>Long term loan (20 yr.)</u>		
1st payment due 6/1/68	120,000.	200,000.
Interest rate 6 3/4%		
Payment Schedule \$13.20 ^{*2}		
Total Monthly Payment - 1st 5 years		
Total Monthly Payment	\$2,488.40	
thereafter	913.20	
Balance Required ^{*3}		\$100,000.
^{*1} Cost Breakdown		
Soil Investigation	\$ 445.	
Property		
Black-top & Land-scaping & Misc.	13,000.	
Land	18,500.	
General Contract	200,500.	
Mechanical Contract	26,970.	
Electrical Contract	18,600.	
Architect Fees	18,731.	
Total Estimated Cost	\$296,836.	
^{*2} Add city special assessments, still to be determined		
^{*3} Add interest payment on withdrawals from Loan Fund		
First Payment due 12/31/67.		

Report on Building Finance, October 25, 1967

FPCM welcomes the Rev. Dr. Eugene Blake, the “Apostle of Christian Unity”!

Earlier this year, I went through The Church Register of the First Presbyterian Church of Moorhead, with its membership data and session minutes, looking for information for an article celebrating the 50th birthday of the sanctuary on 5th Street South. I came across an intriguing entry for August 2, 1965 and decided to do a little research to find out whether there was a bigger story to be told.

The entry by Eugene L. Oakley, Clerk of Session, noted that the Rev. Dr. Eugene Blake, the Stated Clerk of the United Presbyterian Church in the USA, would be in our church on Friday, Sept. 17th. (The Stated Clerk is the national counterpart to our own Clerk of Session. His or her role is to maintain the church's records and assist the moderator in guiding the denomination.)

The Red River Presbytery would also meet that day in Moorhead.

In the morning, Dr. Blake was to “speak on constitutional matters” and in the afternoon on the “Proposed Confession of Faith to be effective in 1967.” Supper was scheduled for 3:00 p.m. and, expecting a crowd of 200-250, was to be by reservations and tickets only. Dr. Blake's visit continued in the evening at “Fargo Presbyterian Church” with a discussion of the “Blake-Pikes proposal involving the merger of six churches – The United Presbyterian Church in the USA, Protestant Episcopal Churches, The United Church of Christ, The Methodist Church, Disciples of Christ Church and Evangelical United Brethren Church” (p. 225).

Who was Dr. Eugene Carson Blake (1906-1985), and why was he visiting FPCM and Fargo on this September day in 1965?

Church historians best know the Rev. Dr. Blake for his vision and tireless work to return unity to a scattered Protestant Church. He was a leader in the PC(USA) and in the National and World Councils of Churches. A close associate of Dr. Martin Luther King, he fought for racial justice and equality. Dr. Blake has been called “a Prophet,” an “Apostle of Christian Unity,” and even “the Protestant pope,” labels that suggest a man who felt called and deeply committed to the cause of unity in the Christian church.

From December 1960 to his death in 1985, Dr. Blake dedicated himself to “a united Protestant church,” which, had his vision become a reality, would have had well over 22 million members (“Protestants Call For Plan of Union,” New York Times, April 8, 1965, p. 15). In 1965, Dr. Blake travelled the country far and wide to explain and seek support for the “plan of union” and for the proposed confession of faith. Thus we find him at First Presbyterian Church of Moorhead on Friday, September 17, 1965. It is likely that Jim Beattie, a member of Session at the time, and his wife, Myrna, were there to welcome Dr. Blake on behalf of our church.

While the union of churches proved unattainable, 11 Christian communions joined in Churches Uniting In Christ in 2002, and pledged “to live more closely together in expressing their unity in Christ in the midst of war, terrorism, disasters, economic collapse, strident political polarization, and increasing wealth disparity.” The organization is “a framework for showing to the world what we truly are – the one Body of Jesus Christ” (<https://churchesunitinginchrist.org/about-us/>)

Dr. Blake was also instrumental in shepherding the proposed Confession of 1967 through a nine-year process from inception to inclusion in the newly created Book of Confessions. In 1967, it was approved by a large majority of presbyteries (165-19). In 2002, it was reworded with inclusive language, which is available at the website of Presbyterian Mission: <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/resource/inclusive-language-version-confession-1967/>

The creation of the Confession of 1967 coincided with the intense debates of the 1960s: the Vietnam War, racism, poverty, women's rights, the nuclear arms race, environmental justice, etc. Throughout, the Confession demands that the church engage in the debates by speaking “boldly about ethical issues in politics and society”* and by calling “all people to be reconciled to God and to one another” (9.07).

Given the contentious nature of the 1960s, there were controversies surrounding the confession. Some objected to the statement that, “The Scriptures, given under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, are nevertheless the words of human beings.... As God has spoken his word in diverse cultural situations, the church is confident that he will continue to speak through the Scriptures in a changing world and in every form of human culture” (9.29).

Others believed that the document reflected a pacifism that might threaten national security or objected to the assertion that a church which “identifies ... any one way of life with the cause of God denies the Lordship of Christ and betrays its calling” (9.45b).

Almost a decade in the making, the Confession of 1967 speaks to many of the concerns that continue to resonate today. It remains a beacon that calls and guides us to be “emissaries of peace and seek the good of all” (9.25). I imagine that Dr. Blake, who visited us in 1965, would be pleased to know where First Presbyterian Church of Moorhead finds itself today.

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*Earl S. Johnson, Jr., “The Confession of 1967: Fifty years and still counting.” *The Presbyterian Outlook*, 11-29-2017. Quotations are from the inclusive language version of 2002.



The March on Washington, 28 August 1963; Dr. Martin Luther King linking arms with the Rev. Eugene Carson Blake to the right in the picture. Eugene Blake, representing the National Council of Churches, was one of many organizers of the March as well as a speaker that day. His address may be found on the website of The King Center, thekingcenter.org

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Inside this Issue:

Introducing our two newest staff members.



*Kylee Johnson,
Media Coordinator*



*Andrew Lenz,
Children's Education Instructor*