

# The First Epistle



First Presbyterian Church of Moorhead • Established 1872

August 2020

## The Session:

Moderator: Robert Drake

Clerk of Session: Kim Kelsh

Treasurer: Chris Swee

Kathy McKaig, Peggy Johnson,  
Kim Kelsh, Mary Larson, Chris  
Swee, Mary Skalet, Megan  
Wheeler, Dave Lanpher, and  
Diane Wray-Williams.

## The Deacons

Moderator: Barb Worman

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

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## ANOTHER GREAT OUTDOOR SERVICE



# 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

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

## **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)

*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.*

## **WHEN WILL WE BE BACK IN CHURCH?**

“That’s the number one question on everyone’s mind right now,” says Pastor Robert, “and based on my conversations with church members, it’s also a question on our hearts! That’s for sure. The answer is up to three different groups in our church.”

Let’s see who those groups are, and when they think we’ll be back.

“The worship team talks about this every Monday, during our worship creation meetings. We all want to be back inside. For the time being though, we feel it’s best to wait until the end of August, and just watch and see what happens with COVID numbers in the FM area,” says Dave Lanpher, moderator of the Worship Committee.

Joni Lordeman concurs, “We want everyone to be safe, we don’t want anyone to get sick. So, we recommended to session that we wait until the end of August.”

The other group is the newly created COVID Re-Opening Task Force, consisting of Mary Skalet, Mary Larson, Garrick Larson, and Pastor Robert. They meet at least once a month, and sometimes more often to address building usage during COVID, such as funerals.

“For our July meeting, we recommended to session that we wait another 30 days, until the end of August, and then take a look at how things are going in our area,” reports Mary Larson.

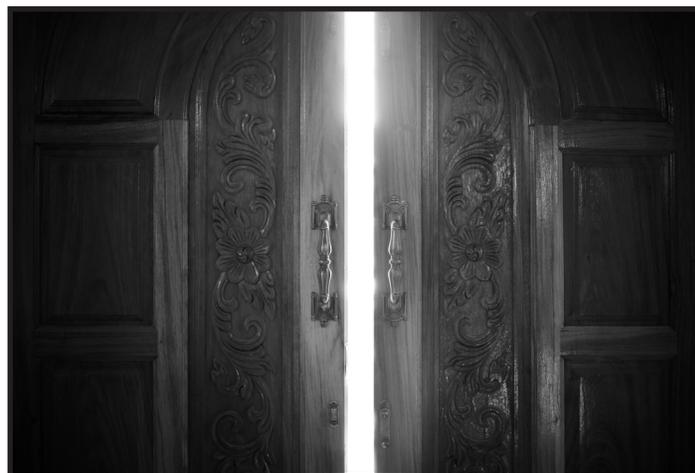
In its July meeting, session then listened to these two recommendations, and did its own analysis of the situation, including what other churches are doing, what members think, and advice from the national level of PC(USA).

“We talk about it at every meeting,” says Kim Kelsh, “we each say what we think, plus what other people tell us. We look at it from all angles.”

Following the recommendations from the other two groups, session decided against allowing indoor worship, at least until the end of August. They will revisit this decision again at the August meeting.

“As you can tell from this process, the Presbyterian system of self-governance involves many groups and lots of people. It’s not just one person or one group,” Pastor Robert says, reminding us that the US constitution is modeled on this same overlapping system.

So, there’s our answer: We will be online or outdoors until at least the end of August, when all three groups will take another look at how things are going.





### PASTOR REFLECTION

At our last outdoor service, July 26<sup>th</sup>, I delivered a sermon about “blessings and curses,” and how neither blesses nor curses come from God. Instead, God brings us *potential* blessings and *potential* curses; and which way the potentiality swings depends on us, depends on our attitude, our behavior, and our responses to physical and spiritual moments.

The coronavirus pandemic is a perfect example of my thoughts on blessings and curses (notice that I said, “my *thoughts* on ...”, that’s because my understanding of faith and how God wants us to walk our life of faith is always in flux, always a journey, always a life of continual learning; and so that’s why I say these are my *thoughts* about our life of faith, rather than “my permanent beliefs ...”).

So, the coronavirus pandemic is a perfect example of how we can turn this challenging event into either a curse on our lives or a blessing for our lives.

Here’s a case in point: Every Monday evening, the Worship Team made up of Joni, Tim, Diane, Nadine, Dave, and me gets together via Zoom, and we discuss the theme, mood, message, and music of the upcoming Sunday video service. When we have an outdoor service, this Zoom meeting also includes Dan, who runs the sound equipment.

In the beginning of the pandemic, we were totally operating “by the seat of our pants”! The Worship Team was thrown together, we were not sure exactly what to do, or how to do it, or what to sing. If you look back at our videos way back in March and early April, you will see that we were still learning a lot about how to record high-quality videos with good sound and appealing visual backgrounds.

The very first videos that I recorded were in my Moorhead apartment, which, as you all now know, is void of any artwork or photos on the walls. Joni played piano in her house solo, Tim played guitar in his basement studio solo, and Dave read Scripture in his house solo. We were all solo. But we were not alone. We carefully planned each service.

Slowly, as we went through each week, we added something new, we changed something, we bought new sound equipment, we recorded in the church, safely and standing 6 feet apart. We got better. Eventually, after a few months, we realized that what we had done was to bring a completely new style of worship to our church. Granted, it is a new style born out of necessity, and it is not a style that we will retain permanently, but there are many aspects of our new worship that have allowed us to uncover some really exciting, new ways worshipping God.

We discovered something new!

This is an example of how we as a Worship Team took a very unfortunate event—coronavirus—and turned it into a blessing by discovering a new format and a new way to worship God.

Your willingness to support your church and your Worship Team as we experiment in the midst of the pandemic is also an example of how each of you are turning this pandemic into a blessing. Every week, I receive phone calls, texts, and emails, letting us know how we’re doing, what you like, what you don’t like, and why you love this church. When I read and listen to your thoughts and encouragements, I am 100% reminded that we will not only get through this crisis, we will actually grow as a result of this pandemic.

Let me say that again, because of how you are responding to your church, how you are supporting your church, and how we are all sticking together, Moorhead Presbyterian Church is growing financially and reaching new potential members.

We are turning what easily could have been a curse, into a definite blessing. Thanks to all of you, and thanks be to God. Amen.

- Pastor Robert Drake

### A Stream of Consciousness Message for Your Amusement, by Juneve Givers

By the way, I am gardening with the Rognes again this summer and the squash are among the first fruits harvested by us. Two plants would have been sufficient, but all six of the assorted seeds sprouted. You want any dropped off at the church for your use in the coming weeks?

I am finding my concentration of late not there listening to Pastor Robert's spoken homilies, or anyone else's talkings for that matter. Are print ones available on line? Reading is better for me right now.

Perhaps foolish, but yesterday, desperate for reading material, I put on my usual mask and braved going into a thrift store in quest of books. I came away with a dozen or so in a bag. A notice prominently displayed suggested the preferred method of payment to be credit/debit cards for less personal handling. ARC is a good organization so I just dropped a \$20 dollar bill on the counter and said to keep the change. Worked for me. There were a few other shoppers, half wearing masks, one wearing it over mouth, but not covering nose. Staff people were masked, and they have a fund-raiser going of homemade masks available for purchase at \$7 each.

Quite an assortment of books from thoughtful ones to fantasy/sci-fi to Louis L'Amour to Sue Grafton's Y is for Yesterday, one of hers following the alphabet I had not yet read. I would have selected a few more if I had had the foresight to take a cart, but my arms were full by the time I stopped looking.

I started reading a good thick paperback, *The Navigator*, by one Morris West 1977, rather expecting it to be a summer fluff. A third of the way into it, it is nothing of the kind. South Pacific tale, with the protagonist being the son of a Norwegian seafarer and his Polynesian wife. Quest for the ancient island of his ancestors. Quite a good thoughtful tale thus far.

I just took the casserole out of the oven. Observations for future are to use 350° temp, 30 minutes, grease the bowl with butter first. It will be a good dish served cold. Yes. Be of good cheer.

Now for coffee.

Juneve

### Summer Squash/Cashew Nut Breakfast Casserole ala Juneve

Into the oven at 330\* F.

Mix in the baking bowl.

Two chopped summer squash. Gail, I used one zucchini and one striped kind. 1 1/2 cups total chopped.

1/2 cup chopped onion

1/2 cup chopped roasted salted cashew nut pieces. No almonds, Gail, so I decided to try cashews instead.

Few shakes of salt and pepper.

Hmmm. Two shakes of ground nutmeg.

1/4 cup of ground almond/rice flour sprinkled over the vegetable mix. Why? Well, why not. It was there and caught my eye.

Stirred up.

Whisk together three eggs and 1/4 cup whole milk (I use it instead of half and half sometimes in my coffee, so had it in the refrigerator.) Pour over vegetable mixture.

Unsettled Upper Midwest weather. Thunderstorm rolled over my apartment around 3 a.m., wonderfully noisy and fine big lightning show, with a downpour ensuing. I wanted to watch, but fell back asleep. Prescheduled lawn sprinklers spraying wildly at the same time between 5 a.m. and 6 a.m. Go figure. Water and energy cheap for now — commentary aside. Water standing in the low spots all around.

Andy, my grandson, turns 17 on Saturday! Many of his friends' families have not been social distancing and he is getting a little fussed by losing out on their fun. I wonder about the mental health issues that are ensuing within this age group during these usually sociable times of their lives.



## Introducing the Grateful Garden and SNAP Coordinator for 2020!!

Hello everyone! My name is **Jane Swanson** and I am the Grateful Garden coordinator for the 2020 growing season. I'd like to share a little bit about me... I am from Pelican Rapids, Minnesota. I like to spend my free time outdoors; biking, spending time at the lake, and hiking. I also enjoy reading and spending time with family and friends.

**Education and Work Experiences:** During my undergraduate education I studied psychology and exercise science. Most of my work experience is in healthcare; I have worked as a certified nursing assistant in the emergency department and in long-term care. After deciding that I wanted to focus on improving the health of populations, I knew that public health was for me. Currently, I am a graduate student at North Dakota State University in the Masters of Public Health (MPH) program studying Community Health Sciences and will complete my degree Spring 2021.

**Master of Public Health Practicum:** My initial plan for this summer was to go to Sardinia, Italy for my MPH practicum experience and study the Blue Zones with my advisor, Dr. Mary Larson. If you haven't heard of them, the Blue Zones are regions of the world where people have healthier lives (physical, social, psychological, and spiritual), and subsequently live longer.

The emergence of COVID-19 changed my plans and I decided to apply for the Grateful Garden Coordinator at the church and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) EBT coordinator for the Moorhead Farmer's Market. SNAP is a federal program that provides financial benefits to help low income families purchase healthy food. Another part of my practicum is volunteering with Growing Together, a group of community gardens throughout the Fargo-Moorhead area. Participating in Growing Together's Leadership team has provided many opportunities in which I've learned so much about gardening, leadership, and the benefits of community gardens and I've met many wonderful people.



I appreciate the support and help from all the gardeners at the Grateful Garden and my practicum site supervisor, Dr. Bill Wood!

**Expansion of the Garden:** This year at the First Presbyterian Grateful Garden we were able to expand the garden to double its size, which is so exciting. I deeply admire the work First Presbyterian of Moorhead is doing to address food justice in the community, from offering SNAP EBT for participants at the farmers market to the ongoing commitment to the community garden. This position has only ignited my passion for community health and I know that this garden and community will continue to grow in the coming years. I'm so grateful to have the opportunity to be part of this work.

**Everyone is welcome** to attend our gardening sessions; no experience necessary. We would love to have you join us! At the least, just stop by and check out the garden! We garden on Wednesdays from 6-8 pm.

jesus loves you

## 2020 marks the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the Grateful Garden!!

We are ***Grateful*** for so many things this year:

1. This is the 4<sup>th</sup> year that we have used DREAM Grant funds from the Presbytery to hire a fabulous coordinator for the garden.
2. This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> year that the garden coordinator is using this experience as a practicum for the Master of Public Health degree from NDSU.
3. This is also the 2<sup>nd</sup> year that Dr. Bill Woods is serving as the site supervisor for the practicum.
4. This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year that we are partnering with the City of Moorhead with the Farmers Market in order for people who participate in the SNAP program to access fresh, wholesome foods from local farmers and vendors.
5. Our partnerships are growing...we have a new partner this year that funded the garden expansion. Concordia College received a Bush Innovation grant that is led by Dr. Ken Foster to improve community resilience. They heard about our garden and food justice efforts in the community and provided funding to double the square footage of the garden!
6. The Bush Innovation grant funds, through the work of **Gabrielle Lommel** who is coordinating the promotion and expansion of the community gardens in Moorhead, are paying for two signs on church property to promote the garden, playground and picnic areas, and soccer playfield! The church has a small task force dedicated to developing the signs.
7. We have many people who are gardening with us again this year as well as many new faces who are sharing in the work and the harvests.
8. We continue to donate shares of produce with the Dorothy Day House, Moorhead Food Pantry, and Churches United.



### Congratulations to the 2020 group of high school graduates!

Although we could not celebrate with these four young people at church this spring, we are very proud of them. We could not be together in person, yet we still wish them all the best as they end their high school careers and move on to new adventures. May God bless them always in their journey!



Greta Larson will be attending Concordia College-Moorhead in the Fall of 2020 studying Nursing and Spanish. If not nursing in the future, Greta loves the idea of Education working with grade school children. Greta graduated from Oak Grove. Her parents are Mary and Garrick Larson.



Sylvie Zaamsa hasn't slowed much since graduation from Fargo South. She has been training for her CNA this summer and will be attending NDSU this fall, studying biology with the hopes of a career in medicine. Her parents are Clement and Maggie Sambo; grandparents are Erik and Elizabeth Swee.

# *Congratulations!*



A graduate of Moorhead High, Sana (Rukhsana) Ghauri will be attending NDSU in the Fall. She is undecided right now on what she would like to major in but she knows she wants to study Spanish and go to Spain. She has friends and family all over the world so traveling is something she really wants to do. Sana's parents are Sajid and Amanda Ghauri; grandparents are Tom and Diane Wray Williams.



Micah Pemble also graduated from Moorhead High School. Due to covid issues, he will take a gap year to work and then plans to attend M State. If you shop at Hornbachers at Azool, Micah is the one of the really tall cashiers. Patty Pemble is Micah's mother; grandparents are Rich and Helen Pemble.



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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

# *Inside this Issue:*



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