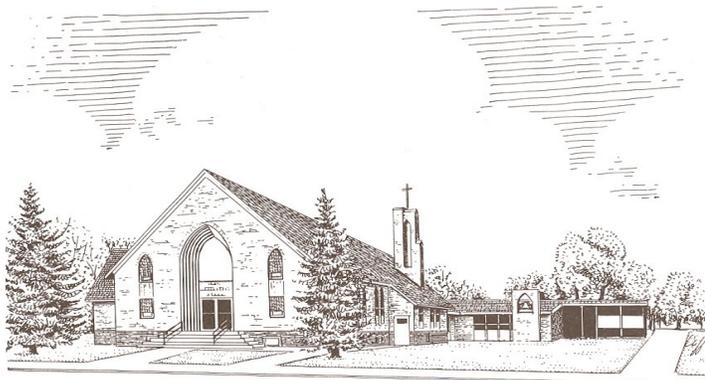


FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

123 4th Ave SW
Conrad, MT 59425
(406) 278-3043



December 2021 Newsletter
www.conradfirstpres.org
conpres@3rivers.net



Sunday Worship at 11:00 AM
Sunday Bible Study at 10:00 AM

Wednesday Night Church School,
Youth, & Adult Program
6:00 PM to 7:15 PM



Office Hours are Monday through Friday
9:30 AM to 12:30 PM

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS NEWS

Sunday worship services during Advent will begin with the Lighting of the Advent Candles following the prelude.

On **November 28st**, the First Sunday in Advent. Harper Sanders, Sophie Sanders, and Shae Shepherd will light the First Advent candle in morning worship.

On **December 5th**, the Second Sunday in Advent, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be celebrated in morning worship. Mary DiBiase & Lisa Schmidt will light the Second Advent candle.

On the Third Sunday of Advent, **December 12th**, the Wednesday Church School will present the annual Christmas Pageant. Kale & Megan Martin Family will light the Third Advent candle.

The **Giving Tree** is set up in the narthex. It is part of a community effort to provide the needy in our community with Christmas gifts. We thank you for your support of this wonderful way of sharing with others at Christmas time! Please bring your gifts to the church by **December 15th**.

In Sunday morning worship on **December 19th**, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be celebrated. Matt & Pam Wittmier Family will light the Fourth Advent candle.

On the evening of **December 24th**, we will hold our annual Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 7:00 PM. We are hopeful that the service will feature special music and music from the choir. Christmas carols will be sung. James & Nikki Dupree Family will light the Christ Candle. The service will close with singing *Silent Night* as the light is passed to one another with hand held-candles. You will want to bring your friends, family and house guests to this beautiful and joyful celebration of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

On **December 26th**, we will celebrate the First Sunday of Christmas with lessons and carols.



FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I should probably offer my apologies for being late a few days in wishing you Happy New Year! By the time this letter reaches you and the Thanksgiving celebrations are behind us, I don't suspect I bring news to anyone in writing that Christmas is coming. The last Sunday of November this year is our first Sunday of the church season we call Advent. The green paraments (cloth decorations in the church) designating ordinary time have been interrupted with white for Christ the King Sunday, and the blue (sometimes purple) cloths will guide us through this season until Christmas Eve. The first Sunday of Advent, also, marks the beginning of the church year. (If you're keeping track, we're now in Year C of the three-year lectionary cycle.) Again, Happy New Year! Perhaps, we can get a head-start on our resolutions for the new year.

Easter was actually the first holiday celebrated by the early church, but it seems Christ's death and resurrection are a bit harder to commercialize, so it tends to get less attention in our culture. The birth of a baby, the gift giving by the Three Wise Men, and other images of Christmas seem to be easier to adopt into our culture. It doesn't appear that Jesus' birth was celebrated on December 25 until over 300 years after Jesus was born.

Advent means coming, and there are two "comings" that we celebrate for Advent. The first is obviously Jesus' birth, which is celebrated on Christmas. In the weeks of Advent, we anticipate the celebration culminating with Christmas. We celebrate the one God arriving in human form as Jesus the Savior. We celebrate the gift of a newborn to all of humanity through a couple, Mary and Joseph. We celebrate God coming not in strength and power and riches — all of which he possessed — but coming as a helpless baby born to a very poor couple living under foreign occupation and under difficult family circumstances in the midst of travel. In remembrance of God's very humble and sacrificial coming, we remember those in our world who look and live more like Mary and Joseph than many of us — those who wonder from where their next meal will come or whether they will last the day due to difficult travel, war, or violence or those this world might ostracize because of circumstances outside their control or for consequences of choosing one difficult option out of only difficult options.

But Advent, also, and perhaps, primarily points to the second coming for Jesus' first coming is now old news, though, news more dramatic than any other occurrence in the history of



the universe that humans have witnessed. The second coming will be just as significant news. When Christ comes, God will again dwell with his people in Jesus the Savior. (We have the Holy Spirit so that God does dwell with us today as well.) As Jesus returns, the world will be made perfect, God's judgment will be upon us, and what remains in this renewed world will be entirely good according to God's perfect plans and definition of good.

We remain in the time between the times — between when Jesus was crucified and resurrected and when he returns — between when Jesus begins to make the world good and perfect and when the world will be absolutely good and perfect. While we wait, though, for this transitional period to come to completion, we're left with work to do. God has invited us — even commanded us — into his work of transforming this world into the good world Jesus will complete in his coming. We are called to be made perfect and sinless but, also, called into the work of eliminating evil and its effects in the world. We're called to address people like Mary and Joseph who live without necessities and wants that we expect and with danger and challenge that we rarely, if ever, experience. We're called to bridge the gap between the Kingdom of Heaven and its perfection and the kingdom of this world and its problems just as God did for us 2000 years ago. This is the very mission of the church; without it, we fail to be a church. It's part of the very nature of the church — not what it does as projects but what it does day-in and day-out.

How can we as First Presbyterian Church in Conrad, MT, address the problems of the kingdom of earth here in Conrad and beyond? What is your role, and what is our church's role?

I wish you a Happy New (Church) Year, a transformative Advent, and a wonderful and Merry Christmas.

Grace and peace,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Andy".



DECEMBER LAY READERS

Dec. 5	Phil Springer
Dec. 12	Kim Cooney
Dec. 19	Gary Klette
Dec. 24	Amy Zimbelman
Dec. 26	Jan Carter & Martha Orcutt



DEACON'S LIST

Dec. 5	Barb & Della
Dec. 12	Elsie & Jeanne
Dec. 19	Bonnie & Dale
Dec. 24	Volunteers
Dec. 26	Amy & Karla

ADVENT WREATH LIGHTERS



Nov. 28	Harper Sanders, Sophie Sanders, & Shae Shepherd
Dec. 5	Mary DiBiase & Lisa Schmidt
Dec. 12	Kale & Megan Martin Family
Dec. 19	Matt & Pam Wittmier Family
Dec. 24	James & Nikki Dupree Family

ANNUAL REPORT

Annual reports are due in the church office *the week after Christmas*. The office will be open the following week beginning December 27th. If the office is not open when your report is ready, you may put it in an envelope and slip it through the mail slot or you can email your report to compres@3rivers.net. We need as many annual reports in as early as we can, so that the office can publish our annual report booklet in time for members to take it home and read it before the annual meeting in January. So please, bring in your reports as soon after.



CHANCEL CHOIR

Choir is starting Up again! **SINGERS!!** please join us. You know who you are. There is no audition. The only thing we ask is that you are vaccinated against COVID if you want to sing. We will pay attention to the COVID count, but as long as it remains low, we will proceed. Our first rehearsal will be December 2nd (Thursday) from 7:00 - 8:00 PM in the Sanctuary. If you know of anybody who would like to join us, please encourage them to call me. Susan Emrick, Choir Director. 503-387-5298.



DONATIONS

Many people in our community are in need of warm clothing. Please consider donating winter coats, caps, gloves, boots, and socks in good condition to the Food Pantry. If you have any questions, please call Jeanne Stordahl at 406-460-0306.



FINANCE/STEWARDSHIP NEWS

The 2022 Stewardship Campaign is now underway. By now you should have received a letter containing a stewardship letter, brochure, and estimate of giving card with return envelope in the mail. Thank you to those that have already returned their giving cards to the church. To those who have not replied, prayerfully consider what you can give to the church for 2022 and return your estimate of giving card as soon as possible. Thank you!

YOU ARE WHERE YOU NEED TO BE

You got hammered at the bar on Saturday but came to church on Sunday....

You can sit with me, you're right where you need to be.

You're a drug addict but came to church on Sunday....

You can sit with me, you're right where you need to be.

You're divorced and the last church you attended condemned you for it....

You can sit with me, you're right where you need to be.

You've had an abortion and it's slowly eating away at your heart but you came to church on Sunday....

You can sit with me, you're right where you need to be.

You've been unfaithful to your spouse but came to church on Sunday....

You can sit with me, you're right where you need to be.

Here's the thing, people don't come to church on Sunday for you to sit in the pew and quietly judge them because you feel that you're somehow better than them.

People come to church because in their deepest, darkest, most painful moments they heard about a man named Jesus that could save their soul and they'd like to know him.

The man that just snorted cocaine off his kitchen table isn't a bigger sinner than you who told your boss a lie on Monday so you could leave work early.

The woman that had an abortion 10 years ago isn't a bigger sinner than you who flipped a man off in traffic last week because he cut you off.

The drunk man laying on the bar isn't a bigger sinner than you who occasionally has too much to drink at home in private.

The woman that just got caught cheating on her husband isn't a bigger sinner than you who had sex with your now husband before you were married.

Stop judging others because their sin is different than yours.

Romans 3:23-24 says "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus."

There isn't a person in this world too bad, too broken, too mean, or too damaged for Jesus to save.

Romans 10:13 says "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."



PW HOSTESSES FOR 2022

January 13 th		September 8 th	No-Host Luncheon
February 10 th	Jeannie S and Karen B	October 13 th	Carol D and Jean B
March 10 th	Carol B	November 10 th	Arlene N and Esther F
April 14 th	Bonnie F and Carol M	December 8 th	
May 12 th	No-Host Salad Luncheon Barb P		If you have not signed up to be hostess yet, please let Carol D. know.

CHURCH SCHOOL



The Church School is moving along. Our next big project is to prepare for the presentation of the Annual Christmas Pageant. The Pageant will be held Sunday, December 12th during the 11:00 AM church service. We will be including the upper-level students in the planning, preparation, and presentation of this year's pageant. We would love to have any other members of our church family who would like to participate in this yearly tradition to let Carol Dayrider know. You can contact Carol at 279-3769 (don't forget the 406) or at c_dayrider@hotmail.com. We hope that you will join us for this special performance.



YOUTH GROUP

Wednesday, December 15th the Youth Group will gather at the church at 6:00 PM for dinner and will leave from there to go to the Extended Care at PMC at around 6:30 PM to go caroling. Please dress warmly.

The Youth Group program would like to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year. We want to thank all of the staff who give so generously of their time. We have been blessed with a wonderful group of youth and a great staff and are so grateful for everyone who volunteers when we need help. Thank you so much to everyone for your prayers and all you do to help make our Youth Group program successful.



DEACONS

Monday, December 20th at 10:00 AM the Deacons will meet in the kitchen to prepare plates of home-made cookies, which we will deliver that afternoon to some of our church family members & friends who may be mostly home-bound or alone for the holidays.

We're asking for your help with the baking of cookies. If you would like to bake a batch of cookies and bring them to the church kitchen by 10:00 AM Monday, December 20th, that would be great. One batch of your favorite cookie recipe should suffice, if we all chip in.

Please call Amy Zimbelman 406-899-9522 and leave a message of what type of cookie you want to make. We would like to have a nice variety of cookies so please do not be offended when you call if you are asked to make a different cookie than your first choice.

We are excited to provide a lovely plate of a variety of family favorite cookies to those in our church family for whom the holidays may be a lonely time. Please call Amy if you have questions.

Additionally, the Deacons are preparing Christmas gift bags for our family and friends who reside at the Extended Care Center, Beehive Home, and Horizon Lodge. The Deacons will also deliver these gift bags on the afternoon of December 20th.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Presbyterian Women met on Thursday, November 11th at 10:30 AM, with Arlene Newmiller and Esther Finlayson as hostesses. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and corrected, changing the word "dinner" to "lunch". The budget was handed out and approved. Under new business it was decided to change the time for the luncheon on December 9th to 1:00 PM. Esther will bring treat cups, and Carol D. will find a game or activity for the group to do. Please let the Church office know by December 6th if you will be attending, and whether or not you will bring a guest. We will be ordering from the menu. The hostess list was passed around, and new hostesses were assigned for 2022. It will be our turn to work at the Blood Drawing in February. The meeting was adjourned, and the ladies prepared for the Bazaar on Friday, November 12th.





FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CONRAD



Session Highlights - November 2021

1. Pastor Smothers reported that he and several other members of the congregation attended a seminar on ‘Discerning Paths Forward for Small Churches’ by Rev Dr Loren Shellabarger in Shelby on Friday, Nov 12th. Those that attended said they did feel hope for smaller churches after listening to Rev Shellabarger.
2. Pastor Smothers is planning a new member class for January 2022.
3. Pastor Smothers will be having a Sunday morning Bible study. Everyone that is interested is asked to attend a meeting on Sunday, Nov 14th to selection a study.
4. Pastor Smothers will be on vacation December 25th thru January 7th, 2022 .

The Church Finances:

October 2021:

Operating Income:	\$	9,435
Operating Expenses:	\$	10,479
Balance:	\$	-1,044
Year-to-Date Balance:	\$	-247

The Finance Committee reports:

1. The Committee will be mailing the Stewardship letters, brochures and giving cards out on or about November 16th.

The Property Committee reports:

1. The spruce trees have been trimmed and Karen & DJ Burditt and Bonnie Flesch have cleaned up the leaves in the church yard along with some stray branches the big winds have blown out of the trees.

The Worship Committee reports:

1. Communion was served on Sunday, Nov 7th and will be served on Nov 21st and Dec 5th & 19th.
2. The choir will begin practicing again Dec 2nd and a schedule of singing during worship services will be decided between the pastor and choir director based on COVID cases in the community/county.

3. Upcoming Church Events:

- a. November 17th – Thanksgiving Service
- b. November 21st – Remembrance Service
- c. November 28th – First Sunday of Advent
- d. December 12th – Children’s Christmas Program
- e. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

The next Session meeting will be Monday, December 20th, 2021 @ 7:00 PM.



NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for January’s newsletter is Wednesday, December 22nd.

If you have any articles or information you would like to submit, please send them either by email to conpres@3rivers.net or mail to:

First Presbyterian Church
123 4th Ave SW
Conrad, MT 59425



KID'S CORNER



Bible Pathway Adventures

WORD SEARCH

THE MAGI

X T T S Q T Q M R Q P M G L O W L Q B W
Z S H P H V O F A M K T Y J V E W M E I
T A O L L J U D E A I O N R G Q E V T S
O I R V Z C D U X A N Q Y K R O O A H E
R O S M H L Z I I R G N L Y F H E T L M
A I E Y H E D E K S H X E P R E F J E E
H O S Q K H R V Y R E E K B A W T J H N
T O K J E L T Q L B R M I K N R M U E Z
E B Z H I N P A D V O L N X K I L E M O
A Z Z Y P N O V A Z D D G Y I T W W Y N
C N S R J E R U S A L E M K N M N F P L
H G Q Y B V S J G I Y A A Z C F H R R W
E O J E L A W Q M F V M K H E T O R O R
R L H S I F L R I I P F E J N B D S P E
S D Y H M Y F A C N I B R F S X V K H X
T G W U S V I O A Y M V O S E S S R E M
Y J G A H V I R H M U V U O G T E S C S
P I Q B T G E D K U M L H Y Q A Q N Y S
P A R T H I A D I R A U V W H R R P N X
Q O D M K J O U R N E Y U H U O N X G W

KINGMAKER

MYRRH

TORAH TEACHERS

GOLD

BALAAM

JOURNEY

KING HEROD

FRANKINCENSE

BETHLEHEM

PARTHIA

PROPHECY

JERUSALEM

HORSES

JUDEA

WISE MEN

STAR

YESHUA

MICAH

Coloring Time



December 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 6:00 PM Church School, Youth & Adult Group	2 7:00 PM Choir		
5 Worship 11:00 AM 2nd Sunday of Advent Communion 10:00 AM Bible Study 	6	7 1:00 PM PNC Meeting	8 6:00 PM Church School, Youth & Adult Group	9 7:00 PM Choir 1:00 PM PW Christmas Dinner 	10	11
12 Worship 11:00 AM 3rd Sunday of Advent Annual Christmas Pageant 10:00 AM Bible Study	13 11:30 AM Worship Committee 2:00 PM Deacons' Meeting	14 9:30 AM Finance Meeting 1:00 PM PNC Meeting	15 6:00 PM Church School, Youth & Adult Group	16 7:00 PM Choir 	17 	18
19 Worship 11:00 AM 4th Sunday of Advent Communion 10:00 AM Bible Study 	20 10:00 AM Deacons' Workshop 7:00 PM Session	21 1:00 PM PNC Meeting	22 	23 7:00 PM Choir	24 7:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 	25
26 Worship 11:00 AM 1st Sunday of Christmas 10:00 AM Bible Study Pastor Andy on leave from December 25th through the January 7th	27	28 1:00 PM PNC Meeting	29 	30 7:00 PM Choir	31 	

First Presbyterian Church
123 Fourth Avenue SW
Conrad, MT 59425-2302
www.conradfirstpres.org
Address Service Requested



Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #1
Conrad, MT 59425
406-278-3043

December Birthdays

- 1 Elin Hohman
- 2 Llew Jones
- 4 David Oien
- 5 Bernard Ries
- 7 Tyrell Kallstrom
- 8 Jay Hould
- Ethan Wittmier
- 11 John Baringer
- 13 Shawn Mellinger
- Annabell Wittmier



- 15 Burns Brown
- Amy Weis
- 16 Charleen Utterback
- Dylan Kellogg
- 18 Carol Miller
- 19 Jerry Cowie
- Michelle Finlayson
- 21 Phyllis Hammermeister
- Jerry Bishop
- 25 **CHRISTMAS**
- Daniel Jones
- Carol DayRider

December Anniversaries

- 2 Andy & Anita Vandolah
- 11 Bill & Linda McFarland
- 20 Roma Lee & Ralph Fuson
- 23 Gary & Bobbi Yeager
- 27 Terry & Charleen Utterback
- 31 James & Tonya Sanders

