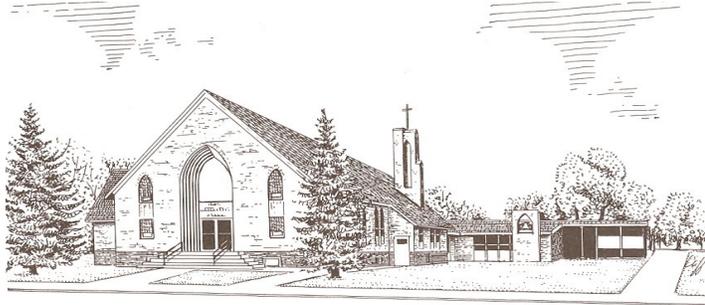


FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

January 2022 Newsletter
www.conradfirstpres.org
conpres@3rivers.net



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



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

ANNUAL REPORT



Annual reports are due in the church office. 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 may email your report to the church email, conpres@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, January 30th. So please, bring in your reports as soon as possible.

FINANCE/STEWARDSHIP NEWS

The 2022 Stewardship Campaign is winding down with most of Estimate of Giving cards being returned. There is still time to return your cards if you have not done so. Thanks to all who participated in support of our church for 2022.

PER CAPITA FOR 2022

For those of you who wish to pay your per capita for 2022, the amount remains at \$62.00 per member. Per Capita is the way our congregation is assessed for denominational support, which furthers the mission of the whole church, regional and national. It is called "Per Capita" because our fair share of support is determined by the number of active members in our congregation. We thank you for your willingness to make your giving to our congregation go further by including a gift to cover the per capita for each member in your household.

CHURCH SCHOOL & YOUTH GROUP

December was a momentous month for our Church School and Youth Group. On December 12th, during the 11:00 AM church service, the two groups combined to present the annual Christmas pageant. The pageant began with our littlest participants reciting the finger play "Five Little Candles." The Christmas story followed. Narrators were Shae Shepherd, Harper Sanders, Sophie Sanders, and Jackie Dupree. Jasper Sanders and Roslyn Martin were Mary and Joseph. Quinn Dupree, Lillian Sanders, and Bella Dayrider were angels. Finn Martin was the shepherd and Amelia (Millie) Martin was the sheep. The Wise Men were Hunter Dupree, Liam Martin, and Eli Hecht. To close out the program, the four older girls sang a Christmas version of the song "Halleluiah" and the younger children acted as the chorus.

On Wednesday, December 15th, the Church School joined the Youth Group in going caroling, along with many adults. They visited the Beehive Homes, where ornaments were given to the residents. They also caroled for Corleen Norman and Helen Elliot. When they were finished, they returned to the church where they were served chili and cinnamon rolls, along with hot chocolate. They watched the movie "A Charlie Brown Christmas" and Pam Whittmier explained the religious significance of the well-known cartoon. The children had a Chinese gift exchange to finish the evening.

The students and staff of the Church School/Youth group want to wish the congregation a Merry Christmas and best wishes for a wonderful 2022.

Church School, Youth, & Adult Group starts up again on Wednesday, January 5th at 6:00 PM.



FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I'm writing this while we are still making our way through Advent and look forward to Christmas. Again, in Advent, we celebrate and contemplate those who anticipated the first coming of Jesus 2000 years ago, but we anticipate and contemplate the second coming of Jesus yet to come.

When you receive this, though, you will likely be anticipating what 2022 will bring. At the New Year, many of us have a practice of reviewing the previous year and setting intentions — resolutions — for the new year. I read online that the most common resolutions are exercise more, lose weight, get organized, learn a new skill or hobby, live life to the fullest, spend more or less money, quit smoking, spend more time with family and friends, travel more, and read more.

Any of these may be very good resolutions if not made into idols; they also focus on physical, financial, and emotional health. As you envision what 2022 might look like for you, I'd like to invite you to consider what you need to nourish yourself spiritually and what you need to do to worship God.

Worshipping God is an external focus. We gather on Sunday to worship God — not to experience something but to give something. If we focus on experiencing something, we're really worshipping ourselves. We're looking to receive and not to give. We need to worship God; we've been created for it. As a result, worshipping God — focusing on God — gives us nourishment.

Our church, also, needs our members in worship. As I've noted to those in worship and to our boards, this congregation has seen a steady decline in worshippers for many years. We need more people to gather so that they can be sent out into the world rejuvenated to do Christ's work — to share Christ with the world in lovely service and in lovely words about him. We don't go to worship to receive, but our merciful, gracious, and loving God surprises us in what he does give us in worship.

Spiritual disciplines are essential for the Christian. One of these is that of study. We study the scriptures to know God and to know God's expectations of us. You might consider a commitment to read the Bible over the course of 2022 or over the next couple years. In our Alpha Course, I've handed out a guide to some recommended translations and Bibles; please contact me if you would like a copy, also. Another discipline is prayer, and several of you joined in 2021 to read *Kneeling with Giants* by Gary Neal Hansen. Maybe you'd like to review this book and attempt one or more of the prayer practices again. Other disciplines are presented in *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth* by Richard Foster and *Soul Feast: An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life* by Marjorie Thompson.



To the believer, Christian fellowship is essential as well. It is life-giving but commitment-requiring. It is deep, and it is intentional. Our scripture passages in January will include two Sundays on 1 Corinthians 12. Here, the Apostle Paul, writes of spiritual gifts given to every Christian by the Holy Spirit. The church needs everyone to exercise those gifts and to appreciate and value the gifts of others. The full participation of every member is essential to the smooth operation of the church just as the human body needs every part of the body to function well. These gifts allow members to function in a variety of roles, and the list Paul provides is far from complete as our scriptures have a few different lists. Here, Paul, lists roles such as apostles, prophets, teachers, deeds of power, gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, and various kinds of tongues. We are made to exercise these gifts, and abundant life is experienced when the correct people are exercising the various gifts the Holy Spirit has given them.

I invite you to take some time at the beginning of the year to reflect on your participation over the last year in worship, spiritual disciplines, and church callings/roles. What would you like to make of 2022; where will God lead you?

Grace and peace,

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

DEACON NEWS

The Deacons received a request for assistance to help with medical and travel expenses for Tristan West who is the grandson of Andy Vandolah and Betty Olson and son of Deena Vandolah. He has been diagnosed with Nutcracker Syndrome which is a rare vein compression disorder and can be fatal, so he needs to have surgery as soon as possible. It only can be done at the Mayo Clinic or the University of Pittsburgh. We have decided to see if the Lutheran Church would like to do a spaghetti dinner fundraiser with us and they agreed, and it will be held at their church. A date has not been decided yet, but it will be sometime during the week of January 17th.

DEACONS' THANK YOU

The Deacons would like to thank everyone who contributed such a wonderful variety of cookies for our cookie plate gifts to some of our congregants & Beehive Home. Lovely plates piled with beautiful cookies surrounding a Santa mug, with a hand-crafted Christmas card, were wrapped and delivered.

We also put together & delivered 7 Christmas gift bags to our church members residing at Extended Care and Beehive Home. We pray our small gesture of friendship brightened the day of the recipients this Christmas.



INTERESTED IN CONTEMPLATING CHURCH MEMBERSHIP?

Pastor Andy is planning an Inquirer's Course for prospective new members. If you are not currently a member but would like to learn more about our faith in order to make a decision about joining the church, plan to join Pastor Andy after coffee hour on Sundays, January 16th and 23rd for 1.5 to 2 hours each Sunday. Among other topics, we'll learn some history and theology from the Reformed faith while studying our denomination's structure. This is an opportunity to ask your questions about the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), our congregation and its ministries, or other, similar topics. Attending the class does not demonstrate a commitment to join but to learn more about our church in order to make a decision about joining. Lunch will be provided. Contact the church office to sign-up for this class and to obtain a bit of advance reading.

CONFIRMATION CLASS BEGINNING FEBRUARY 2nd

Pastor Andy is planning to teach a Confirmation Class on Wednesday nights starting February 2nd as a part of our Wednesday night discipleship program. This is the class that typically leads to church membership for our youth and will be offered in place of the class we have held for these ages this past fall.

We are working to try to accommodate some older youth who have not completed the class while, also, including our younger youth as usual. All of our youth in Middle School and High School on Wednesdays will take the same class offered in two tracks. Classes for all will be based on a portion of the SparkHouse reform curriculum, which teaches the basics of the Christian faith - appropriate for both those joining the church and those who don't elect to join the church at this time.

Those who intend to join the church this spring will be on the confirmation track and will have additional responsibilities including writing a faith statement, attending Sunday worship regularly and completing brief questions on the sermon, and attending this class regularly on Wednesday nights. Youth may miss up to one class and up to two Sundays in the 10 week program. Youth who are out-of-town on a Sunday can attend a Christian worship service in another community and bring their bulletin and sermon answers to class to have the service counted as a non-absence for up to 2 Sundays.

We have had a separate class this fall for those in grades 5 and 6. As we don't have many in these grades, we're also willing to welcome those in these grades to this upper-level class. They are, also, very welcome to remain in the class for grades 5 and 6.

Particularly if your youth is in Middle School or High School and has not completed the confirmation class, we would invite them to be a part of this program, which may lead to church membership. In normal circumstances (outside a pandemic and with a permanent/installed pastor), the class has been offered every two years. More information will be sent out to parents on record in January. If you would like to **register your youth for the Confirmation Class**, please call Wendi in the church office at 406-278-3043.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN



The Presbyterian Women held a No-Host Luncheon at the Branding Iron on December 9th at 1:00 PM. We had an excellent turnout; 19 women met to spend time in fellowship. Barb Perry presented a letter from Jean Baringer, who was unable to attend due to health reasons. Jean gave us some important things to think about. We wish her a speedy recovery. Barb also read a short story and had some trivia questions for us to answer. Esther Finlayson made some adorable treat cups that were filled with goodies for us to enjoy. The Branding Iron did a wonderful job of hosting our get-together, and the waitress was very efficient. It was a wonderful way to end 2021.

Our next meeting will be held on January 13th, 2022, at 10:30 AM. There are still spaces available for anyone who wishes to act as hostess for the meetings; just let Carol Dayrider know by calling 406-279-3759 or talk to her at church some Sunday.

Presbyterian Women want to wish everyone a happy and prosperous New Year.

JANUARY LAY READERS

Jan. 2	Carol & Bella Dayrider
Jan. 9	Marie Ahmed
Jan. 16	Phyllis Hammermeister
Jan. 23	Julie Katana
Jan. 30	Jean Baringer



DEACON'S LIST

Jan. 2	Carol & Barb
Jan. 9	Della & Elsie
Jan. 16	Jeanne & Bonnie
Jan. 23	Dale & Amy
Jan. 30	Karla & Carol

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CONRAD

Session Highlights - December 2021

1. Pastor Smothers is planning a new member class to be held on January 16th and 23rd after coffee hour. A meal will be provided for those attending.
2. Pastor Smothers plans to start a confirmation class beginning the first Wednesday in February. All youth currently attending the Alpha program on Wednesday evenings will be invited to attend.
3. The annual meeting of the congregation will be held January 30th, 2022.

The Church Finances:

November 2021:

Operating Income:	\$	9,951
Operating Expenses:	\$	11,783
Balance:	\$	-1,832
Year-to-Date Balance:	\$	-2,079

The Finance Committee reports:

1. We have received 46 Pledge cards so far and more are expected to come in.

The Property Committee reports:

1. A buzzer will be installed for persons to notify the deacons to assist with elevator.

The Worship Committee reports:

1. Communion was served on December 19th and will be served on January 16th.
2. The choir will sing on December 19th, 24th and January 2nd; there will be special music on December 24th.
3. Gary Klette will lead the service on January 2nd.

The next Session meeting will be Monday, January 17th, 2022 @ 7:00 PM.

January 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><i>Pastor Andy on leave from December 25th through the January 7th</i></p>	<p><i>Happy New Year</i> </p>					1
<p>2 Worship 11:00 AM 2nd Sunday of Christmas Guest Speaker Gary Klette</p>	3	<p>4 1:00 PM PNC Meeting</p>	<p>5 6:00 PM Church School, Youth & Adult Group</p>	<p>6 7:00 PM Choir</p>	7	8
<p>9 Worship 11:00 AM Baptism of the Lord 10:00 AM Bible Study Ordination and Installations</p>	<p>10 11:30 AM Worship Committee 2:00 PM Deacons' Meeting</p>	<p>11 1:00 PM PNC Meeting</p>	<p>12 6:00 PM Church School, Youth & Adult Group</p>	<p>13 10:30 AM PW Meeting  7:00 PM Choir</p>	14	15
<p>16 Worship 11:00 AM 2nd Sunday after Epiphany Communion 10:00 AM Bible Study 12:45 PM Inquirer's Course</p> 	<p>17 7:00 PM Session</p>	<p>18 1:00 PM PNC Meeting</p>	<p>19 6:00 PM Church School, Youth & Adult Group</p>	<p>20 7:00 PM Choir </p>	21	22
<p>23 Worship 11:00 AM 3rd Sunday after Epiphany 10:00 AM Bible Study 12:45 PM Inquirer's Course</p>	24	<p>25 1:00 PM PNC Meeting</p>	<p>26 6:00 PM Church School, Youth & Adult Group</p>	<p>27 7:00 PM Choir</p>	28	29
<p>30 Worship 11:00 AM 4th Sunday after Epiphany 10:00 AM Bible Study Annual Meeting of the Congregation</p>	31					

First Presbyterian Church
123 Fourth Avenue SW
Conrad, MT 59425-2302
www.conradfirstpres.org
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January Birthdays

- 1 Samantha Mellinger
- 2 Shawnee Redd
- Mike Naylor
- 4 Ralph Stordahl
- Wendy Mobely
- 5 Patricia Keil
- Jane Arends
- Patty Ries
- 6 Molly Jimmerson
- Cory Kellogg
- 7 Keith Kallstrom
- 8 Kristine Ries



- 8 Dolores Wittmier
- 11 Bert Rigby
- 13 Carly Behr
- 15 Fred Bergstrom
- 17 Gerald Bruner
- 18 Linda Keil
- Bill Jimmerson
- 19 Marla Bruner
- Jenny Silvernale
- 21 Dale Keil
- Mellissa Kallstrom
- Joseph DayRider
- David Ahmed
- 22 Kenn Hohman

- 23 Nikki Brummond
- 25 David Meyer
- 27 Roma Lee Fuson
- 28 Adam Sullivan
- 29 Bonnie Flesch
- 30 George Yeager
- Skylar Orcutt
- Dan Nelson



January Anniversaries

- 11 Ray & Kim Bouma
- 15 Cooper & Wendy Martin
- 21 David & Val Elings