



Rev. McConnell

THE TIES THAT BIND

Since I graduated from high school, I have never been geographically close to my family. College took me 500 miles away from my folks and when in seminary almost the same distance. My brothers were scattered here and there and that hasn't changed, mainly due to the nature of our profession, the Presbyterian ministry, which operates on a call system, meaning you can end up anywhere in the country, like many

other jobs and professions in life. My father was a good example, serving churches in multiple states, including Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, Delaware, and North Carolina. After my mother passed away in 1987 at the age of 63, my father remarried a wonderful woman whom we immediately appreciated and admired, including her three sons, living in three different states, with whom we instantly connected. And then my own children have lived in a variety of areas, including the Congo, Iowa, Washington, D.C., Kansas, and Seattle.

I say all of this because there was a wedding in February that brought almost all of us together for a weekend. After our visit with members, Dr. Palmer and Marti Meek in Naples, Florida where we received their gracious and generous hospitality, we headed up the coast to Sarasota where the daughter of my youngest brother was joined in marriage to a fine young man. In addition to the weather being about as perfect as one can possibly imagine—high 70's, sunny, with a slight breeze---Jennifer and I were a part of an almost perfect exchange at the hotel poolside when everybody seemed to arrive at the same time on a late Friday afternoon before the Saturday wedding. After years of not seeing one another, there was joy and happiness in the air as family members greeted one another and shared their affection and warmth with family, many of whom we hadn't seen in many years.

It is yet another illustration of the centrality of family and how this has always been the heartbeat of our life together. No matter the generation, no matter the civilization, no matter the culture, it is the family that brings us together in ways that would otherwise not be possible.

In this season of Lent, let us not only recall the passion of our Christ, but also the passion of our families, which continues to be the golden thread that holds our morals, principles, and happiness together.

As the 19th and 20th Spanish philosopher, George Santayana, said: "The family is one of nature's masterpieces."

Faithfully,

Cam



COMING UP SOON

See inside for events and schedules

March 4: A Light Lunch

March 11: The Light Bowl Making Day for "Empty Bowls"

March 12: First Academy Special Edition

March 15: Men's Bible Study begins

March 19-26: Spring Break for USD 383 and KSU

March 25: Palm Sunday (See inside for events and schedule)

March 28: Special Wednesday P2 "Easter Egg Scavenger Hunt"! 6:00-7:15 p.m.

March 29: Maundy Thursday dinner and Seder Ritual

March 30: Good Friday service

April 1 Easter

"HE IS RISEN!
ALLELUIA!"

HOW DO YOU SERVE?

A quote I read several years ago during "National Volunteer Week" says it well. "Volunteering is at the very core of being a human. No one has made it through life without someone else's help." Our church provides many opportunities to volunteer and help others. This simply fulfills a need that I have to do what I can to lend a hand.

When helping to prepare and serve breakfast or dinner here at First Presbyterian it feels good to be a part of a team of Christian people who are simply extending the hand of God. I love the unity and camaraderie that is felt among our teams of volunteers and the feeling of family among our guests.

Hebrews 13:16 – And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

-Member, Missy Cox,
Community Breakfast
Coordinator

First Presbyterian provides an endless number of ways to serve, from helping the food insecure in our Food Pantry to visiting the homebound through Bridge Builders.

For information about service and mission opportunities, contact the First Presbyterian Volunteer Coordinator, Taylor Roberts, at secretary@firstpresmanhattan.com or 785-537-0518.

IN OUR CHURCH

Every second and fourth Tuesday of the month, eight to ten men from First Presbyterian gather at Meadowlark Hills for lunch and a small group study. If you would like to join the group, contact the church office.

Pictured right: First Presbyterian Men's Small Group enjoying lunch.



BIBLE DONATION

Thank you to all of those who donated Bibles to First Presbyterian in January and February. We have successfully delivered them to the Topeka Rescue Mission and Shepherd's Crossing.

We appreciate your participation in this important mission. It is easy to find yourself with a shelf full of Bibles or books in general that you don't use anymore but don't want to throw away. Donating them is always a great way to share the joy and knowledge you gained!



If you still have Bibles to donate, feel free to call the church office for information about where to take them.

OFFICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Julie Londeen (pictured right) is joining our staff as bookkeeper and liaison with our accountant. Julie is a University of Nebraska graduate, but has called Manhattan home for 30+ years. She and her husband, Eric, have two grown daughters, Kirsten and Emily. Her office hours will be Tuesday and Wednesday mornings, and she can also be reached via email at julie@firstpresmanhattan.com. Julie will work about 8 hours per week.



As of March 1, 2018, Sarah Diamond will transition from part-time in the church office to full-time. Sarah will serve as the Director of Operations and Development. In her new role, Sarah will continue overseeing the operations of the church and will be instrumental in development and stewardship initiatives with First Presbyterian. Sarah will also lead the effort to establish an endowment fund at First Presbyterian. She will no longer be directly involved in working for the accounts payable at the church. The more our new bookkeeper, Julie, grows into her role the less will be needed of our accounting services.

THE LIGHT, A NEW WORSHIPING COMMUNITY

February was filled with meaningful messages and inspiring music at The Light! As part of our Blessing of the Pets, we gathered baskets full of towels and blankets to donate to our local animal shelters. We had an officer from animal control speak to our kids and adults about how they help connect with the shelters and how we can help as community members. The Presby Kids made dog toys from t-shirt scraps and said a blessing for our own pets, the pets in the shelters, all of the people who care for them and for their “fur-ever” home.

Coming Events

Sunday, March 4th, Worship with Communion and "A Light Lunch: Greens, Eggs and Ham"

Sunday, March 11th: Interview with Dr. Charles Stark: We'll visit about how his faith impacts his career in training the next generation of farmers in the USA and around the world.

"Bowl-ing" at the MAC, 4pm, fellowship event in preparation for the Empty Bowls Fundraiser, April 7th

Sunday, March 18th: Rev. Cam McConnell and Rev. Kati Collins will swap pulpits

Sunday, March 25th: Hosanna! Palm Sunday!

We have been having fun this month celebrating Valentines Day and beginning Hoop It Up basketball clinic!

On February 9, Parents Night Out (PNO) met at the church to enjoy an evening of Valentine-themed fun. Kids ate Valentine-themed food and played games while parents went out and enjoyed some time to themselves. Pictured top right are "Conversation Hearts from God" made at PNO. Kids were encouraged to think of what God would write on the heart-shaped candies if He were in charge of their messages! The hearts were hung up in the narthex for all to enjoy.

April PNO will be on April 20.

Beginning on February 17, kids ages 4--6 began attending Hoop It Up Basketball Clinic. Sixteen kids have registered with Coaches Chrissy, Savannah, Nate, and Josie leading a talented team of volunteers.!

The clinic will run four consecutive Saturdays and conclude March 10.



Special Presby KIDS Holy Week and Easter Events

Sunday, March 29: Palm Sunday

•**Breakfast for all Sunday school classes and their families, 8:30-9:15 a.m.**

•**Walk with Jesus 9:15-10:15 a.m.** Experience the events of Holy Week from Jesus and the disciples arrival in Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, to finding Mary at the empty tomb on Easter Sunday. Each station of Holy Week will be represented throughout the C.E. Wing where Biblical "characters" take you through the events as they happened the last week of Jesus' life on earth. There will be activities at each station related to each event of Holy Week: Palm Sunday, The Last Supper, Garden of Gethsemane, The Crucifixion, and Resurrection.

Wednesday, March 28: P² Scavenger Egg Hunt (This will be the Easter egg hunt for 4th-6th graders).

•**P² will not meet on March 30** (Good Friday).

Sunday, April 1: Easter services

•**No Sunday school for Presby Kids:** Nursery available (for ages 4 and younger) at 9:15 and 10:30 services.

•**World's Greatest Easter Egg Hunt** (following the 10:30 service) Ages 1-4 years old & Grades K-3rd

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FOOD PANTRY

In January, our Food Pantry served 35 adults and 10 children. We partner with the Flint Hills Breadbasket to help those in our community who are food insecure. The First Presbyterian Food Pantry serves our community on *Fridays from 9:30 a.m.-noon.*

Community Meals

During the month of January, we served 184 dinners, 81 breakfasts, and 66 sack lunches.

FRIDAY FELLOWSHIP

Please join us for Friday Fellowship on **March 23 at 11:00 a.m.** in Fisher Hall. **Doug Tippin** will speak on "The Military Road from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Riley during the 1850's and 1860's". Come hear about this interesting work, which earned him the 2017 History Project Award. A delicious lunch, prepared by Hospitality Coordinator Julie Hayes, will be served at noon.

FIRST ACADEMY SPECIAL EDITION

Our second First Academy Special Edition will be on **Monday, March 12 at 6:30 p.m.** featuring our own **Lyle Butler**, speaking on the role his faith plays in his position as executive director of Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce. Come for an enlightening and inspirational evening, beginning with hors d'oeuvres at 6:00 p.m. in the narthex, followed by the program in the sanctuary.

