

# FPC Messenger

February | Volume 83 Issue 2

**For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was  
thirsty and you gave me something to drink,  
I was a stranger and you welcomed me.**

**Matthew 25:35**

Dear Friends,

Much good news to share this month! On Saturday, January 16, our session had a very productive retreat (especially considering that we met by Zoom!). In light of our church's mission statement (Loving God, loving neighbors, and living with purpose) and our commitment to being a Matthew 25 Congregation (an initiative of our denomination, the Presbyterian Church USA), we approved THREE goals for 2021:

We want to be a church that FEEDS people, both physically and spiritually, so . . .

**Goal #1: 100,000 Meals.** We want to serve at least 100,000 meals this year. Everything counts: the food we distribute on Wednesdays from our parking lot (we currently average about 1,000 meals a week just from this one ministry), donations to Doorstep (1 pound of food = 1 meal), Blessing Box fill-ups, loaves of bread, Shrove Tuesday pancakes...

**Goal #2: 100,000 Prayers.** If 200 members would pray once each day for 300 days, that's 60,000 prayers! Everything counts: private prayers, prayers in worship, prayers at meetings, prayers at the dinner table. Prayer is POWERFUL—so let us pray, and see **how** the Spirit transforms us!

**Goal #3: 1,000 Invitations.** Let's get better at "welcoming the stranger" by exercising our "inviting" muscles! If 200 members would invite 5 different people (who do not already have a church home) to any church activity (online worship, a Zoom Bible Study, helping with food distribution, helping with Silver Wings deliveries, etc.), that makes 1,000 invitations. If even a tiny fraction of those folks became involved in the life of our church, imagine the impact!

But wait...there's MORE. We're still fine-tuning a fourth goal related to building relationships within our congregation. We're also working on all the ways to MEASURE and communicate our progress towards each goal. These are big goals, but we can achieve them through the power of the Holy Spirit, if we work together.

I am excited to see where God takes us in 2021!

Yours in Christ,



Sandra Brown

P.S. On page 6 of this issue of Messenger you'll find a Matthew 25:31-46 poster. You are encouraged to display this sheet somewhere in your home or office as a reminder of the work we are doing as a church to serve God.

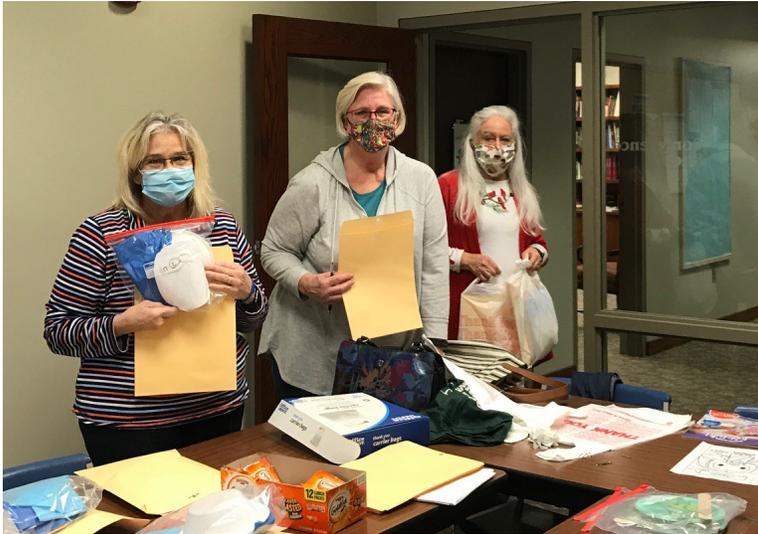
## Greetings from Eldon and Katie Beery

*(Eldon was an interim pastor for our church in the 1990s, just prior to Neil Weatherhogg)*

"We are adjusting well to our relocation to Glacier Hills Retirement Center. We look forward to receiving vaccinations so we can engage in better contact with our friends. Katie has been with Arbor Hospice care for over a year now. They are very compassionate. Multiple Myeloma still causes much weakness, but she lives each day with appreciation for life. We often go for a ride to keep our quarantine live a little broader. Eldon received favorable reports as to the effectiveness of his latest cancer radiation. We are very fortunate to be able to enjoy Zoom visits with our 28 family members, First Presbyterian Church, and Rotary. With our love, Eldon & Katie."

Address: 4001 Glacier Hills Dr., #46, Ann Arbor, MI 48105. Email: ebeery@juno.com Phone: (734) 997-9678.

# Photos from January Happenings



Packaging up Sunday School packets for delivery.



Wednesday afternoon food box distribution ministry.



Filling up the Blessing Box.



Delivering pizzas to the staff at Williams Elementary.



Cooking up a hot, delicious meal for our Silver Wings folks.

## 2021 Star Words



**Robert Provo**  
"My star word for 2021 is Sharing. Praise the Lord!"



**Marguerite Underhill**  
"My star word is Respect. Hangs near my chair, always visible and in my thoughts and prayers."

## Family Ministry Update

In January we received our Star Cards and talked about what the words mean, and learned about “The People Jesus Met.” Patti Foster, Claudia and Bruce Perney, and Herman Jones were our Story Readers. This month we will be “Loving our Neighbors.” Souper Bowl Sunday of Caring is Feb. 7. Last year we collected 250 lbs of food and \$593.00. (How cute is this photo from 2020?) This year the event will be “drive-thru” and our goal is to collect 300 lbs. In preparation for Ash Wednesday, on Tuesday, Feb. 16, along with the Fellowship Team, we will have a Shrove Tuesday Drive-thru Pancake Supper from 5 pm—6 pm. You can enjoy your pancakes at home, or eat them in your car in the north parking lot. We hope to see you all at these events! Peace be with you, Beth Johnston.



## Lenten Devotionals

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on February 17. The six-week Lenten journey is an opportunity to take on a new spiritual discipline and pray with Scripture as a way of discerning God’s movement in our personal lives and in the life of the world around us.

We will be sharing Lenten Devotionals with our congregation, and throughout the season of Lent you will be invited to pray with one passage from Scripture each day and be prompted to reflect on what it discloses to you about *movement toward God* and *movement away from God* in your life.

The devotionals will be mailed to our Silver Wings members, and also made available in the online Sunday bulletin, through the Friday church email, and be available for download on the website. There will also be some printed copies available at the front desk at church. If you are unable to access the devotionals online, please contact the church office at (785) 233-9601 to receive your copy by mail.

## Medical Equipment Available

Because of the generous donations of others, we have a substantial collection of durable medical equipment available for loaned use. The inventory, located on the second floor of the church, is managed by the deacons and includes canes, wheelchairs, boots, bath/shower chairs, portable toilets, and walkers. You may borrow any of these items for as long as necessary by contacting Andrea Conlee at (785) 217-5902.

## Volunteer with VIDA Ministry

Would you like to make friends and maybe learn or practice Spanish? VIDA Ministry is seeking volunteers for Spring 2021. Volunteer opportunities include sanitizing class areas, being a classroom/online teacher, class assistant or tutor, and yard and garden help. For more information, contact Shelby, the VIDA volunteer coordinator, at [shenson0028@gmail.com](mailto:shenson0028@gmail.com) or (785) 212-0836.

## A Note from Your Stephen Ministers

You can rest in the assurance that there is One greater than us and greater than any difficult circumstances you may be facing. This One is working through your Stephen Minister to produce assurance and hope in you both now and in the future. You may be struggling and hurting in the present, trust that God is not finished working in your life. Even when setbacks and disappointments come in the now, you and your Stephen Minister can choose to trust in God's presence and embrace Christian hope and healing. If you would like a caring ear to listen and someone to walk with you for even a short time, please contact John Dorsey at (785) 845-1177, or Jane Owen at (785) 862-5959.

## Year-End Giving Statements

Year-end giving statements for 2020 were mailed out the week of January 25, 2021. If you have any questions about your statement, please contact Lori at (785) 233-9601, or [lhennessey@fpctopeka.org](mailto:lhennessey@fpctopeka.org).

## Upcoming Events at FPC

### Souper Bowl Sunday of Caring—Feb 7

February 7 is "Souper Bowl" Sunday of Caring and we will be collecting donations of canned soups, crackers, and money to benefit Doorstep! Our goal is to gather 300 lbs of these items -- we want to "fill up the truck" for hungry families in Topeka. Please bring your items to our parking lot at 8th and Harrison between **11:30 am and 12:15 pm** on Sunday, February 7. Thank you for your generosity and for helping bless our neighbors with nourishing food!

### Art + Faith Small Group

Feed your creativity *and* your faith at the next FPC art event on February 7 from 1 - 3 pm! Our newly named Art + Faith Small Group will be creating fused glass art pieces under the direction of Tamra Yancey. It's simple, and fun, and you don't need any prior experience. For social distancing purposes, space is limited: in-person (up to 4), and online via Zoom (up to 6). Those joining online will receive supplies in advance. The deadline to register is Weds., Feb. 3. Come join the fun to make art, memories, and friends --all are welcome! To register, call the church at (785) 233-9601, or email [lhennessey@fpctopeka.org](mailto:lhennessey@fpctopeka.org). To cover the costs of materials, a \$12 contribution is recommended.

### Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper—Feb 16

The Fellowship Team is hosting a Drive-thru Pancake Feed on Tuesday, **February 16 from 5 pm - 6 pm**. Make plans to celebrate Shrove Tuesday with tasty pancakes and sausage!

### Annual Congregational Meeting—Feb 28

The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held online at 11:30 am on Sunday, February 28th via Zoom. Information on how to participate, and 2020 Annual reports, will be mailed and emailed out in advance of the meeting.

### Blood Drive—March 19

Our next blood drive will be held March 19 from noon to 6 pm in Disciples Hall. Sign up to donate at [www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org)—search by zip code 66612.

## Drive-thru "Souper Bowl" Sunday of Caring!

To benefit  **DOORSTEP**  
Neighbors Helping Neighbors



**February 7**  
**11:30 am -**  
**12:15 pm**

**Let's**  
**FILL UP**  
**the truck!**



**American**  
**Red Cross**

## Blood Drive at FPC

**March 19, 2021 12-6 pm**  
**register: [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org)**

# Matthew 25:31-46

## ***Judgement of the Nations***

“Now when the Human One comes in his majesty and all his angels are with him, he will sit on his majestic throne. All the nations will be gathered in front of him. He will separate them from each other, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right side. But the goats he will put on his left.

Then the king will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who will receive good things from my Father. Inherit the kingdom that was prepared for you before the world began. I was hungry and you gave me food to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you gave me clothes to wear. I was sick and you took care of me. I was in prison and you visited me.’

Then those who are righteous will reply to him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you a drink? When did we see you as a stranger and welcome you, or naked and give you clothes to wear? When did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’

Then the king will reply to them, ‘I assure you that when you have done it for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you have done it for me.’

Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Get away from me, you who will receive terrible things. Go into the unending fire that has been prepared for the devil and his angels. I was hungry and you didn’t give me food to eat. I was thirsty and you didn’t give me anything to drink. I was a stranger and you didn’t welcome me. I was naked and you didn’t give me clothes to wear. I was sick and in prison, and you didn’t visit me.’

Then they will reply, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and didn’t do anything to help you?’ Then he will answer, ‘I assure you that when you haven’t done it for one of the least of these, you haven’t done it for me.’ And they will go away into eternal punishment. But the righteous ones will go into eternal life.”

## Spotlight on Service

**Editor's Note:** Thank you Marty Snyder for penning the Spotlight on Service articles in 2020, and the Jan. and Feb. issues! Marty is "hanging up her pen" but we will continue the series. Next up in the Spotlight will be the Deacons. Thank you Marty for helping shine a light on those who faithfully serve First Presbyterian Church of Topeka.

### Gary Nantz, Session, Class of 2022

Gary joined First Presbyterian Church because his parents, Ed and Ruth Nantz, were members. His membership was previously with the Presbyterian church in Emporia. He shared, "My most enjoyable activity in 2020 was my involvement in creating the 2020 budget" and admits "the most challenging activity was chairing the Representative Nominating Committee." His participation as a member of the hard-working committee that reviewed and updated FPC's Operating Manual was his greatest learning opportunity in the past year.

As a current Session member, he was asked about his concerns and his hopes for FPC in light of pandemic restrictions. "I really feel that dealing with the pandemic has afforded the church a great opportunity to engage members, potential members and others via technology. Traditionally, we viewed going to church as physically going into the church. Now, going to church may mean simply clicking on a link, and there you are. We are now able to expand our reach and go out to others without expecting them to come to us," he explained.

An interesting side of Gary involves his unusual language skills. "While in the military in the early 1970s, I was an interrogator and a translator. I now have an app on my phone which helps me translate into Korean and find words in Korean which I have forgotten. It helps create a mental exercise." A non-church-related activity he enjoys is running half-marathons, as running requires both physical and mental exercise.



### Walt Menninger, Session, Class of 2023

The Menninger family has generations of roots with FPC. Walt's grandparents, CF and Flo Menninger, moved to Topeka from Holton in 1888. Flo wrote in her autobiography, "Charley (CF) was really a Lutheran, but I did not wish to join that church. And he did not believe in close communion nor immersion (her Baptist faith), so we decided to compromise." In 1890, they were invited by a couple who were members of First Presbyterian and joined FPC in 1891.

They raised their three sons in First Presbyterian Church. Walt explained, "their youngest, William (my father), met my mother at a Presbyterian retreat while he attended medical school in New York. They married and moved to Topeka. My mother joined First Presbyterian, and my two brothers and I were raised in this church. I participated in Sunday School and was confirmed in due course. Following my marriage and medical education, I returned to Topeka for specialty education and practice. At that time, my wife Constance joined First Presbyterian, and we raised our children (6) in this church."

With regard to his participation in various church groups over the years, Walt shared, "as a youth, I was a member of BSA Troop Two, which many years earlier my father had been scoutmaster of. I was deeply involved with the Sunday evening youth group during my high school years."

The choir is among his favorite groups. "In the fall of 1958, Connie was invited to join the chancel choir. That Christmas, at the annual party hosted by the director of music and choir director, CJ McKee, the party theme was 'Couples that sing together, cling together.' Folks who knew I had sung in high school chorus asked me why I wasn't singing, too. Thus began a commitment of 60 years, with interruptions to fulfill a US Public Health Service obligation or to attend to Connie's illness." *(continued on next page)*



## Spotlight on Service (continued)

Walt has also served previously as an elder and chaired a long-range planning committee at the time Dr. Neil Weatherhogg was pastor, and he has served on an Associate Pastor search committee. Following Connie's death in 2008, Walt was invited by Barbara Stanley and Jane Owen to assist with the Stephen Ministry. Over the past 11+ years he has functioned as a consultant to the Stephen Ministers program and participated in the monthly supervision sessions as well as the annual Blue Christmas service. For the last several years, he has also enjoyed participating on the Stewardship committee.

Walt shared his concerns and hopes for our church, "we are an aging congregation, and the church has done wonderful things for its 'senior' citizens. I trust the Silver Wings efforts will continue. While presently, the church is financially sound, our senior members represent future security, insofar as many are in a position to leave bequests to assure on-going financial stability." At the same time, he observed, "our future depends on elaborating programs that appeal to younger adults and families, who will help sustain vitality in our congregation. Pat Yancey has done much to grow our program for youth; and as the pandemic eases, we need to support that program's growth in whatever way we can."

He concluded, "I trust we will continue to make our existence in the 'heart of Topeka' an asset, rather than a liability. And that our neighborhood missional efforts - the Blessing Box, food distribution and participation in downtown activities (like the Christmas parade, Noon Noels) are sustained."

As to his current activities beyond the church, Walt admits his major "vice" is relaxing in his recliner, playing solitaire on his iPhone and iPad and watching news and sports on television. "At the same time, I engage in twice weekly sessions with a personal trainer. My son Fritz also facilitates my participation in orienteering, an outdoor activity that I characterize as intellectual cross-country. Also, I do enjoy mowing my lawn during the spring, summer and fall." ❖



WE ARE A  
MATTHEW 25 Church

## Session Highlights—January 2021

On January 16, the session spent several hours training, team building, and preparing for 2021 by setting ambitious goals for the year, all via Zoom. The regular stated session meeting was held at the end of the day.

- The clerk reported the filing of the annual statistical report to General Assembly. Though we have lost several members to death this year, giving us an official membership of 378 at the end of 2020, we have actually increased our average worship attendance through the use of online media—from 120 last year to 193 this year. These numbers do not include TV viewership since WIBW does not keep a tally.
- Bruce Cooper will represent us February 9 at the Presbytery of Northern Kansas, meeting virtually.
- February 28 was approved as the date for the annual congregational meeting. Arrangements to allow for virtual participation will be announced prior to that date.
- The Budget Task Force presented a draft budget for the year, which will be approved in final form at the February session meeting. The approved budget will be shared at the annual congregational meeting.
- As a result of discussions earlier in the day, the whole church is being encouraged to think big in making good use of personal involvement and cash available over and above the operating budget.

# FEBRUARY 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 9:30 AM Children's Sunday School Zoom Mtg 10:30 AM Worship Service, Online Only	1 Jerry Foster-AM Volunteer Patrick Yancey's Day Off	2 Marguerite Underhill-Volunteer 10:00 AM Staff Meeting 12:00 PM Fellowship Team 4:00 PM Worship Team Zoom Mtg 7:00 PM Stephen Ministry Mtg - In Person and Zoom	3 Bob McElroy-PM Volunteer 6:30 AM Men's Bible Study - Zoom Video Mtg 4:00 PM Worship Team- Zoom Meeting 4:30 PM Operation Food Secure Neighborhood Food Distribution	4 Lorraine Hyle-PM Volunteer Team Reports for February Session Mtg due to Melanie and Lori	5 John Conlee-PM Volunteer Sandra Brown's Day Off	6
7 9:30 AM Children's Sunday School Zoom Mtg 10:30 AM Worship Service, Online Only 11:30 AM Souper Bowl of Caring 1:00 PM Art + Faith Small Group	8 Jerry Foster-AM Volunteer Patrick Yancey's Day Off Sandra out of office, continuing education 6:00 PM Session Zoom Meeting	9 Marguerite Underhill-Volunteer Sandra out of office, continuing education 10:00 AM Staff Meeting	10 Bob McElroy-PM Volunteer Sandra out of office, continuing education 6:30 AM Men's Bible Study - Zoom Video Mtg 12:00 PM Finance Team Mtg 4:30 PM Operation Food Secure Neighborhood Food Distribution	11 Lorraine Hyle-PM Volunteer Sandra out of office, continuing education 6:30 PM Quartet Rehearsal	12 John Conlee-PM Volunteer Sandra out of office, continuing education	13
14 9:30 AM Children's Sunday School Zoom Mtg 10:30 AM Worship Service, Online Only	15 FPC Messenger Deadline Jerry Foster-AM Volunteer Patrick Yancey's Day Off Presidents' Day - Church Office is closed	16 Marguerite Underhill-Volunteer 10:00 AM Staff Meeting 5:00 PM Shrove Tuesday Drive-thru Pancake Supper	17 Ash Wednesday Bob McElroy-PM Volunteer 6:30 AM Men's Bible Study - Zoom Video Mtg 4:30 PM Operation Food Secure Neighborhood Food Distribution	18 Lorraine Hyle-PM Volunteer 6:00 PM Stressed Nest Zoom Mtg 6:30 PM Quartet Rehearsal	19 John Conlee-PM Volunteer Sandra Brown's Day Off	20
21 First Sunday in Lent 9:30 AM Children's Sunday School Zoom Mtg 10:30 AM Worship Service, Online Only	22 Jerry Foster-AM Volunteer Patrick Yancey's Day Off 6:00 PM Family Ministry Team Zoom Mtg	23 Marguerite Underhill-Volunteer 10:00 AM Staff Meeting 5:30 PM Women's Bible Study, Townsend home 6:30 PM Women's Bible Study, Zoom Mtg	24 Bob McElroy-PM Volunteer 6:30 AM Men's Bible Study - Zoom Video Mtg 4:30 PM Operation Food Secure Neighborhood Food Distribution Team Zoom Mtg	25 Lorraine Hyle-PM Volunteer 6:30 PM Quartet Rehearsal	26 John Conlee-PM Volunteer Sandra Brown's Day Off	27
28 11:30 AM Annual Congregational Meeting 9:30 AM Children's Sunday School Zoom Mtg 10:30 AM Worship Service, Online Only	1 Jerry Foster-AM Volunteer Patrick Yancey's Day Off	2 Marguerite Underhill-Volunteer 10:00 AM Staff Meeting	3 Bob McElroy-PM Volunteer 6:30 AM Men's Bible Study - Zoom Video Mtg 4:00 PM Worship Team Zoom Meeting 4:30 PM Operation Food Secure Neighborhood Food Distribution	4 Lorraine Hyle-PM Volunteer	5 John Conlee-PM Volunteer Sandra Brown's Day Off	6

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**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF TOPEKA**  
Loving God, loving neighbors and living with purpose

PERIODICALS  
POSTAGE

**Ministers**

All the Members of the Congregation

**Pastors**

Sandra Brown, *Pastor*  
Pat Yancey, *Commissioned Associate Pastor*  
Neil Weatherhogg, *Pastor Emeritus*

**Program Staff**

Beth Johnston, *Director of Family Ministries*  
Carrie Riordan, *Director of Communications*  
Sean Zears, *Videographer*

**Music Staff**

Kevin Kellim, *Director of Music*  
Cynthia Neufeld Smith, *Organist*  
Norma Pettijohn, *Organist Emeritus*

**Support Staff**

Lori Hennessey, *Office Manager*  
Mark Ingle, *Maintenance Supervisor*  
Steve Johnson, *Part-time Custodian*

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**The deadline to submit articles for the March Messenger is February 15, 2021**

**FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES**

Marilyn Halsey—1

Phil Baker—16

Deborah Edwards —26

Rosemary Menninger—2

Jerriene Harper —17

Hal Jensen—28

Jean McElroy—3

Melba Banion—19

Bill Wolff—28

Carl Perney—3

Jan Damron—19



Owen McGee—3

Gretchen McFalls—19

Robert & Jean McElroy—1

Julie Garlinghouse—5

Carlene Jones—19

Greg & Sally Wright—1

Richard Lady—5

Annette Douglass—21

John & Brenda Dicus—2

Shirley Harsin—8

Jim Pettygrove—23

Pam & Bob Carmichael—10

Wendy Crawford—13

Anne Baker—24

Andrew & Pam Schauer—14

Brenda Dicus—14

Kay Wischropp—24

Webb & Julie Garlinghouse—29

Grace Kim—15

Jenny Walton—24