

The Tower

March 2023



First Presbyterian Church

340 South 5th Avenue
Saint Cloud, MN 56301
Telephone: 320-251-8277
www.fpcstcloud.org

Lent

The season of Lent is a time of prayer, fasting and self-examination in preparation for the celebration of the resurrection of the Lord at Easter. It is a period of 40 days — like the flood of Genesis, Moses' sojourn at Mount Sinai, Elijah's journey to Mount Horeb, Jonah's call to Ninevah to repent and Jesus' time of testing in the wilderness. (The Sundays in Lent are not counted in this reckoning of the time between Ash Wednesday and Easter, as every Lord's Day is a celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.)

In the early church, Lent was a time of preparation for the celebration of baptism at the Easter Vigil. In many communities of faith, it remains a time to equip and nurture candidates for baptism and confirmation and to reflect deeply on the theme of baptismal discipleship.

At the beginning of Lent, we are reminded that our possessions, our rulers, our empires, our projects, our families and even our lives do not last forever.

"You are dust, and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19).



Church Staff

REV. DARIN SEAMAN
Pastor

DON FORTNER
Music Director

MARY NOTHNAGEL
Administrative Assistant

BRAD JOHNSON
Facilities Coordinator

PATTY SCOTT
Custodian

Pastor's Reflections

It seems that Ash Wednesday sneaks up on us every year. It doesn't matter if Ash Wednesday is early in February or later, I don't think I am ever ready for it. I think that may be the one of the purposes of the Lenten season.

The season calls for a break in the everyday routines to mark God's presence in our midst. Shouldn't we do that every day? Yes, but this season is different because it helps us prepare for the mystery that is the resurrection.

Churches respond differently to this season. Some use ashes on Ash Wednesday. Some host a weekly fish fry and others host special mid-week services to commemorate the season.

What is Lent? I like what how one theologian describes Lent:

Lent is a Christian season of practice, celebrated by some Christians though not all. It's not a prescription for holiness, but an invitation to relationship. Lent has its roots in the very early church, with some of those roots in preparation for baptism. During Lent the Scriptures remind us of God's expectations for Israel, Jesus' temptation in the wilderness and his journey to the cross.(1)

Many of you have shared meaningful Lenten practices that have helped you throughout the journey of faith. Some of them include prayer, fasting, hospitality and a variety of devotional practices. I hope you will continue to reflect on those practices.

In this season of preparation and penitence, may we be guided by God's Spirit. The grace and peace of Christ be with you.



Rev. Darin Seaman



March Sermon Titles

March 5

"Serve One Another"
Current series: One Anothering
1 Peter 4:7-11

March 12

"Encourage One Another"
1 Thessalonians 5

March 19

"Submit to One Another"
Ephesians 5:21-33

March 26

"Welcome (Accept) One Another"
Romans 15:7-13

(1) Michelle Bartel in Presbyterians Today, December 2016.

Don Fortner**Music Director****Email:** donfortner@fpcstcloud.org

February 22nd, is Ash Wednesday and there will be a worship service at 7pm. This is the beginning of our Lenten Season. This is traditionally a more somber and reflective time of worship correlating with, and as a disciple, examining the 40 days of reflection, contemplation and temptation that Jesus experienced. And so in worship, if you are on a lenten journey of deepening your relationship with God and investing in your faith temperament, you might find lenten worship experiences more reflective and contemplative. It is my hope that the music of the season will support and reveal a deeper devotion to the awe and reverence of your adoration. Following the Lenten Season and Holy Week is of course, Easter Sunday. I am asking any and all of you who have the ability to sing to consider a short-term commitment to what we have deemed the "Festival Choir." The parameters for participation are easy: • Let me know your interest and willingness to participate / don@fpcstcloud.org • I will email you a pdf of the music and a link to listen / rehearse on your own • Attend 2 rehearsals: 1. Sunday April 2nd at 11:15 (after worship meet in the chancel) 2. Wednesday April 5th at 6:15 (meet in the chancel) • Easter Sunday Morning: Arrive for warm-ups at 9am. (Coffee and Rolls served)

The **Fridays at First** series continues to garner attention in the community and with musicians. We are receiving accolades from attendees for our welcoming atmosphere, the beautiful sanctuary and the incredible sound of the room, so well-engineered and operated by Jay Espelien.

Here is the current line-up:

March 3rd - Partly Tame (Marianne Kreitlow, Susan Sheppers, Cristina Seaborn)

March 31st - Gunning and Cormier

May 5th - The Roe Family Singers

June 24th - (A Saturday) Nicholas Carter-Paraguayan Harpist Concerts are ticketed events ranging from \$15 - \$25 These funds facilitate the payment to the musicians. Tickets purchased in advance will be a bit less expensive but will incur a handling fee through EventBright. Tickets purchased at the door will be slightly more expensive, however this amount is funneled to the musicians rather than a ticket handling fee.

Sunday School

March 5 at 9am – Classroom

March 12 at 9am – NO SUNDAY SCHOOL - spring break

March 19 at 9am – Classroom

March 26 at 9am – G.I.F.T. Sunday in Fellowship Hall

April 2 at 9am – Classroom

PARENTS: *please pick up elementary-age students at 9:50am from their class*



Loaves and Fishes

Upcoming Loaves and Fishes Community Meals



March 15th: Spaghetti

April 19th: Ham and all the fixin's

May 17th: BBQ



Watch for new additions
to the event to include BINGO or Trivia!

Friends in Faith

Our campus ministry meets at Atwood Center on the campus of SCSU. We meet on Wednesdays at 7:00 pm in the Alumni Room.

With Much Gratitude

On Feb. 12th money was collected for "Souper Bowl" of caring on Superbowl Sunday, to benefit local food shelves. Donors could choose to donate to Kansas City, Philadelphia Eagles or Commercials. At first it looked like Commercials would win at \$ 245.76 but a late breaking donation score brought Kansas City for the win at \$ 260.16. As in the actual game, the Eagles came in last at \$220.43. A huge thank you to the kids who made



signs, advertised the event and collected money at the end of worship - we could not have done this without you! Thank you to all who donated. The older kids decided on donating the money to Catholic Charities food shelf.

G.I.F.T. Sundays

EVERYONE IS WELCOME - bring your friends!

March 26 9am – Yoga by Laura Brand from Laurel Leaf Yoga & Retreats

Bring your own yoga mat, water bottle, and a washcloth.

Dress in a comfortable outfit.

RSVP to Tomoko (torebe11@hotmail.com or 320-266-8276) by March 23 so that our yoga instructor can better prepare.

April 30 9am – Watercolor Painting by our own Linda Addicott & Paula Tift

No experience is necessary!

Supplies and instruction are included

RSVP to Tomoko (torebe11@hotmail.com or 320-266-8276) by April 27 for supply planning

Kelly Kadlec said *"I participated in one of Linda & Paula's watercolor events last summer and I promise that you won't believe what you can create - even if you don't think you are artistic! They made it so easy and fun! Most of the group had no experience, but it was no problem! I would highly recommend joining in the fun!!"*



**January
Games
For All
Ages**



Who's Who in the Pew?**Lori Smith****Tell us about yourself.**

I was born at the St. Cloud hospital. I was raised in Richmond and attended Richmond Elementary School and Rocori Jr. and Sr. High School. I graduated in 1983. After high school, I spent three years working up in Baudette, MN. I finished my Generals at SCSU. I have been the kitchen manager at Kennedy Community School for the past two years and have worked in the St. Cloud School district

**How long have you been attending First Presbyterian?**

I have been a member of First Presbyterian Church since 1997. I was a member of the Catholic Church in Richmond prior to that.

Share anything you wish about your family.

I have three amazing children. Adam is 23, he does construction work. Erica is 22. She is in the Air Force and is stationed in Colorado Springs. Alex is 20 and he also does construction work.

Where is the most interesting place you have been to?

I think that the most interesting place I have been is the Oklahoma City Bombing Memorial, because at that moment time stood still. As you leave the parking lot, there is a statue of Jesus and the quote on that statue states "And Jesus wept".

What are some memorable books for you?

The Hiding Place by Corrie ten Boom.

What are your favorite pastimes?

I enjoy cooking and baking. I **LOVE** doing anything with my kids.

What are some small things that brighten your day?

Accomplishing tasks.

Given the choice of anyone past or present, whom would you enjoy as a dinner guest and why?

Mother Theresa, because she was such an incredible woman.

*Thank
You*

Thank you to my church family for your prayers, concerns, cards, and well wishes after I underwent major surgery in early January and continue to recover.

- Ron Elg



Fundraiser for Lowertown Music Ministry

(An outreach ministry from our Church)

On Sunday, March 12th, we are planning a special treat during the Fellowship Hour after worship as a fundraiser, a way that members of our congregation can provide financial support for the very special music ministry that the members of the "Lowertown Project" provide. Following worship that day, stop in at the Fellowship Hour for a fresh-baked and absolutely-delicious caramel sweet roll with your coffee, and support the Lowertown music ministry with a freewill donation!

Don Fortner and Mike Karl have been working hard to create this worship and outreach ministry, which includes a contemporary praise and worship band with a message of encouragement and hope. They are now offering a program that could serve as either a stand-alone concert or a complete service of worship led by them, and needing only local announcements and introductions. They are offering this ministry to regional churches and even community events in 2023 and beyond.

Attached below is a link to a video they have recently completed, as well as their website. This will give you an idea of the scope of their work. Their cost is normally a free will offering, with a minimum of \$500.00 for the full band, but they would also be open to somewhat less depending on travel necessities and the number of band members needed.

If you will take the time to watch their video, I believe you'll be blessed, and catch a glimpse of the wonderful message through Christian music that they bring to the various church or community events that invite them. In additional support of this ministry, I encourage you to spread the word with people you may know far and wide, encouraging them to seriously consider giving them a call to discuss possible booking dates for their church or community event calendar!

Contact:

Mike Karl: 320-267-4584 or

Don Fortner: 612-790-5821

<https://youtu.be/GzDKRY2a3Yw>

www.lowertownproject.com

Phase Three of Capital Campaign "Entry into Faith"

Everything we have comes from the Lord. God's greatest gift to us is forgiveness of our sins through salvation in Jesus Christ. How can we repay him? We can give back to God what is God's so that through our gifts, the love of God can become a tangible reality in our world.

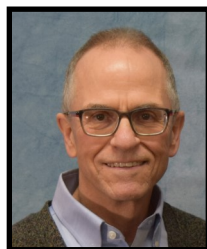
What a wonderful addition the entry is for our church. It is so welcoming! The bright sun coming through the windows gives us such a warm environment. It is getting daily/weekly use with fellowship, group meetings, activities, etc. Members and friends love the air conditioning and the new elevator.

The fundraising for our capital project to date has raised an impressive \$1,093,238. **THANK YOU!** Wow! What wonderful generosity from our members and friends. Part of the financing of the project was a \$450,000 loan from the Presbyterian Church USA. We continue to pay down on this loan. After applying our capital cash on hand, the balance of our loan is \$212,300. Since the initial loan, our interest rate has been 3.5%. On January 1, 2023 the interest rate increased to 4.4%. We would like to do our final fundraising to pay this loan off. Wouldn't that be wonderful?

The campaign will begin in early March. Our goal is to raise \$240,000 over a two-year period to retire the debt. (This figure includes estimated interest payments in addition to the loan balance). If we could pay it off sooner, we would save some of interest.

Please give thought and prayer to our ministry and respond with generosity to this campaign. A letter and pledge card will arrive in your mail shortly. Please complete and return your commitment card to the office by the end of April.

Members of the capital campaign are: Don Watkins, Mike Karl, Tom Horn and Karen Ondracek. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Karen or Tom.



Tom Horn
Finance Chair



Karen Ondracek
Capital Campaign Chair

Finances

January Contributions	\$ 46,556.78
January Expenses	\$ 29,183.05
Over/under	\$ 17,373.73



House/Holmgren Scholarships

The House/Holmgren Fund was set up to support young people who are active members of First Presbyterian Church, Saint Cloud, in obtaining their college education.

The forms are available in the church office and on the church website (fpcstcloud.org). Applications are due in the office by **April 15, 2023**. Late applications will not be considered.

Deacons Corner

Who Is the Face of Hunger?

Too many of our neighbors are one flat tire or medical bill away from an empty fridge. Parents skip meals so their kids can eat; seniors choose medications over food. Others work full-time yet can't stretch their paycheck to cover all their household expenses.

The face of hunger looks like all of us.



March is Minnesota FoodShare Month. We can do our part by donating non-perishable food and self-care items to this month's Mother Hubbard's Cupboard. As in the past, tables will be set up in the Narthex where you can leave your donations. Examples of items needed are: soup, canned vegetables, canned fruit, pasta, dry cereal, boxed dinners, dish soap, shampoo, paper towels, etc. Please be careful to check that expiration dates have not passed, as we do not donate food that may no longer be good. Also, please donate only new, never been opened items.

If you prefer to make a donation of money, please mark on your check that the money is for Mother Hubbard's Cupboard.

Thank you for helping us feed our neighbors in central Minnesota.

- The Deacons

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVERS SCHEDULE

Listed below is the Server Schedule for Sunday Worship. If you are unavailable for the assigned date, please swap with someone else scheduled that month. Also notify the office of any swaps, so that the Sunday bulletin can be updated. Thank you for your service to the Church.

	<u>Worship Leader</u>	<u>Ushers (2)</u>	<u>Greeter (1/2)</u>
Mar. 5	Dick Andzenge	Mary Lease/John Hoffman	Ken/Norine Schmitt
Mar. 12	Rachel Buchin	Dan Owen/Gail Aalderks	Don/Bonnie Ramsey
Mar. 19	Melinda Anderson	Randy/Kathy Arnold	Bert/Jan East
Mar. 26	Ryne Pentz	John Detra/Duane Scherbing	Shauna Seaman
Apr. 2	Tamara Calhoun	Dick Andzenge/Linda Bettison	Jan Larson
Apr. 9	Jamie Deering	John Pike/Jan East	Leroy/Jaule Tift
Apr. 16	Randy Hammond	Ryne Pentz/John Bowden	Kim/Mike Tollefson
Apr. 23	Bobbie Lampi	Phil/Jeanne Chu	Alvin Yu
Apr. 30	Gene Williamson	Joe/Steph Jacobs	Kari Ahles

Kit Henkemeyer	03/03
William Janssen	03/04
Margaret Brooks	03/05
Tyler Pelzer	03/05
Janna Warren-Perry	03/07
Randy Arnold	03/08
Jeremy Grittner	03/08
Debbie Picha	03/09
Randy Wickmann	03/09
Alan Espelien	03/10
Suzanne Merritt	03/10
Rodney Kadlec	03/11
Tammy Brook	03/12
Leah Jacobs	03/13
Lynne Osteraas	03/13
Lonny Wild	03/15
John Hoffman	03/16



Gary Lenzmeier	03/16
Beth Adamek	03/20
Lois Buchin	03/20
Brian Martens	03/22
Kari Ahles	03/23
Sean Hornibrook	03/23
Cathy Anderson	03/25
Michelle Chan	03/25
Lynn Miller	03/25
Donna Radeke	03/25
Jackson Randolph	03/26
Marsha Ziebarth	03/27
Steve Isaacson	03/28
Pat Triplett	03/30
Linda Addicott	03/31
Robin Hasslen	03/31
Carole Pike	03/31

Service Group 3 - March

Chairs - Jeanne Duininck and Sandy Ross



Bettison, Linda

Casey, Don/Arlene

Cimperman, Janice

Coleman, Nancy

Francis, Darwin/Shirley

Hook, Judith

Johnson, Sandy

LaVictoire, Murphy/Jaqueline

Moffitt, Betty

Payne, Bob/Betty

Peterson, Jean

Varner, Scott/Lyn

Mark Scholar/ConnieSandmann

Vigen, Betty

Adult Discipleship Opportunities Contemplative Prayer Series

Sundays in March from 3:30—4:30
at the Welcoming House or via Zoom

To honor a Lenten rhythm, a contemplative prayer series is being offered in March. During this time, we will explore themes of the presence of the Spirit, inner listening, noticing without attachment, and the idea that there is nothing to fix. We will value the contradictions of releasing and receiving, letting go and letting in as we spend time in silence, inner reflection, and group reflection.

Everyone is welcome. If you are exploring or feel set in your faith expression, all of it will add to the richness of community. There is no fee for this series and donations are welcome.

The Welcoming House is a gathering place (1600 11th Avenue South) in St. Cloud. Questions and to RSVP, please contact Jamie or John 320.240.6184.

Lenten Journal

A Lenten journal is being offered through the Presbyterian Outlook. The church has purchased a copy for you if you wish. The devotions this year focus on the Latin practice of examen. The spiritual practices, we hope, will benefit you in the journey of faith. Pick up a copy beginning on Ash Wednesday.

Feeding our Neighbors

The Mission Committee served our neighbors once again February 17th, in collaboration with Hope Covenant Church. This month the free grocery offering was chicken, rice, canned vegetable and a cake mix. The recipients were given the choice of white, yellow or chocolate cake mix. It was fun to see how happy they were to get a treat, and the freedom to make their choice. You can see by the photo how much fun Norm Seehusen, Duane & Darlene Scherbing, Betty Payne and Jim Anderson were having!

- submitted by Rhonda Siltman



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Our Mission Statement

*"Bringing the Living Hope of
 the Gospel to the World by
 Knowing and Serving Jesus
 Christ"*

Our Vision Statement

*"The Kingdom of God made
 known one sacred space at a
 time"*

Office Hours

Monday - Thursday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BIBLE STUDIES

Tuesday 9:00 a.m.
 Men's Bible Study

Wednesday 9:15 a.m.
 Women's Bible Study

Friday 7:00 a.m.
 Men's Bible Study

Friday 5:30 p.m.
 Chinese Christian Fellowship in the
 Fellowship Hall
 (Bi-weekly) (September-May)

*You're invited to join a study that
 works for you!*

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MARCH 2023

SESSION

Pastor Darin Seaman, Moderator
 Bobbie Lampi, Clerk

Class of 2023: Tom Horn (Finance), Jeanne Duininck (Fellowship)
 Darlene Scherbing (Mission), Rodney Kadlec
 (Property)

Class of 2024: Joni Karl (Fellowship), Kim Tollefson (Personnel),
 Alvin Yu, Stephanie Randolph (Youth/Family)

Class of 2025: Rhonda Siltman (Mission), Randy Hammond
 (Property) Lynn Rae Olson (Campus), Ryne Pentz
 (Worship & Evangelism)

DEACONS

Class of 2023: Mary Jost, Betty Vigen, Sandy Johnson,
 Jamis Cimperman, Barb Isaacson

Class of 2024: Gary Lenzmeier, Stephanie Merrill, Randy Arnold,
 Kathy Arnold, Carol Dirks

Class of 2025: Kari Ahles, Margaret Brooks, Karen Larson,
 Julia OwenDuane Scherbing