

First United Monthly Newsletter

JANUARY 2020

A New Year, A New Look... Familiar Faces

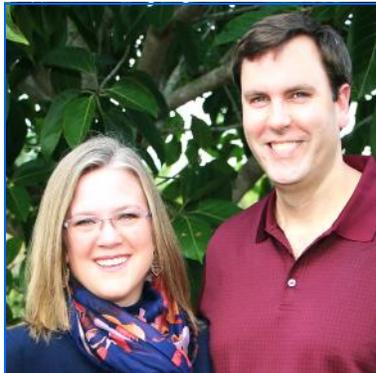
by Rev. Dr. Luke Farwell and Rev. Meggan Farwell

As of January 1, 2020, we begin our journey as Co-Pastors of First United Presbyterian Church. Luke has been Pastor/Head of Staff since February 2013, and Meggan has been serving as our part-time Director of Christian Education since September 2014 and overseeing our youth program since August 2019.

We are both excited for First United and its future. In agreement with the church mission: "Changing lives through God's love in Christ," as well the vision: "We are a welcoming community First United in proclaiming FAITH in Jesus Christ, sharing HOPE for the future, and inspiring LOVE for our neighbors," your Co-Pastors are ready to work alongside the session to address and focus energies on growing our membership and identifying and equipping leaders in the church.

Why most churches remain small and have trouble growing is often a mystery. The truth is that members as well as pastors want to see churches grow. Pastors want to reach more people and see the mission of their churches entirely realized, but it's usually not the reality. Protestant churches for the most part are seeing declines, and the dreams of both pastors and churches alike often go unrealized.

The pastoral care of a congregation is a large reason why churches end up suffering. When pastors have to visit every sick person, do every wedding and funeral, make house calls, attend every meeting, lead classes and groups - he or she becomes incapable of doing almost anything else. Sermon preparations fall to the side and providing leadership for the future is all but out of the question.



Many pastors are gifted in pastoral care, and this makes congregations happy. But when churches reach a certain number, this task is impossible. Caring for 40 people is personally possible, but caring for 340 is not, so many pastors will burn out trying, and everyone gets hurt in the process.

Sooner or later after burn out, a pastor leaves, and the church shrinks back. A new pastor arrives, and the pattern simply repeats: growth, frustration, burnout, exit. So one of the things that is #1 on a pastor's skill set - caring for their flock, usually causes them to leave when they simply can't keep up. Or if a pastor stays for a long time, they settle down to a comfortable membership number and can't grow beyond that limit.

FUPC is 340 members strong, and we are also blessed to have many new and returning visitors that are finding a warm and welcoming community among our church family when they visit. We have a dedicated Session and a caring group of Deacons who infuse energy and creativity into all of our ministries and the work they do for our church and our community. In addition, we have a proud history of striving for excellence in our ministry to children, youth and families.

There is a great opportunity and necessity, as discerned by Session, for faith formation, leadership development, and pastoral care. The Co-Pastor model best expresses and addresses FUPC's desire to provide continuing excellence in preaching, teaching, and care of all its members.

Your Co-Pastors are committed to First United and to all of its members from the youngest to the oldest. We are excited to see what God can do in the years to come. *(continued on page 2...)*

(...continued from pg. 1) It is our desire to not be satisfied with status quo, but to push the limits in order to change lives through God's love in Christ.

It's a new year, and our staff has a new look, but the faces are familiar. Please come alongside us as your Co-Pastors and help us live up to our Vision Statement in all that we do together in the name of Jesus Christ. May we truly be a welcoming community First United in proclaiming FAITH in Jesus Christ, sharing HOPE for the future, and inspiring LOVE for our neighbors.

We hope you enjoyed a wonderful holiday season! Our church family was certainly busy.

Our annual Christmas Pageant brightened the morning on December 15. We welcomed a



full house for the early evening Christmas Eve service featuring lots of special music plus the traditional candle lighting during "Silent Night." We finished the evening on a reflective note with our 11pm service featuring the Christmas story scripture readings, candle lighting, and a wide



variety of beautiful music.

It was also a busy month for special projects. Our **CORE & JAM** youth groups baked cakes for the NEW Community Shelter and rang bells for the Salvation Army. Also, after months of planning, organizing, and collecting, our church hosted the second annual **De Pere Christian Outreach Christmas Store.**



In cooperation with the seven other churches in the group, we were able to help 150 local families have a brighter Christmas this year. What a wonderful holiday season!

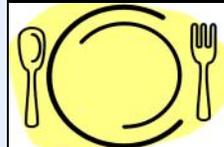
JANUARY

HAPPY NEW YEAR! January is best known for **New Year's Day** and **Martin Luther King's Birthday**, but it's also the time for **Someday We'll Laugh About This Week (1/2-8)**, **Penguin Awareness Day (1/20)**, and **Bubble Wrap Appreciation Day (1/27)**. Here are a few more important things to make note of:



Burn the Mortgage Celebration!

Sunday, 1/5, 11am



Agape Dinner & EPH Program

Wednesday, 1/8, 5:45pm



Church Volleyball League

Fridays (watch for details)



Family Ski Trip

Friday & Saturday, 1/25-26
(*reserve your spot soon)

You can always find the most up-to-date church information in our **"Weekly Newsletter"** inside your Sunday bulletin. You can also find all our information plus newsletter copies and the official church calendar on our website at www.firstunitedpc.org. Don't miss a thing!

We'll begin a new five-part worship series called **"Becoming a Christian Hero"** on **Sunday, January 12.** Hardship is inevitable, so how can we view



our struggles in a more positive light? How can our relationship with God adjust our attitude to heroically build a more complete Christian character? How can we teach this to our children? This may seem like a hard truth, but - even in the midst of our stormy lives - "it is well." Join us as we begin our exploration on Sunday, January 12 during our 9:45 worship service.



Session Report

by Dawn Picard, Clerk

At the **December Session meeting**, the Ruling Elders heard from Treasurer John Eggers that we are in a good place leading into 2020. The Stewardship Campaign fell slightly short of the goal, but adjustments will be made throughout the year so there is no need to worry. Also, we are debt free! During the Pastor's report, Luke stated his appreciation for the fine staff that we have, the successful Christmas pageant, and the dedicated leadership of the Elders in providing for the needs of the church. It has been a momentous and fun year. Some time was spent sharing Christmas reflections and enjoying the yuletide. During the business side of the meeting, the Session set a called Congregational Meeting after worship on January 12 to set the Terms of Call of the Pastor. The Annual Congregational Meeting was set for February 16 after worship. The approved budget was distributed. The meeting ended with the Clerk reading the following letter received from the Session at First Presbyterian Church in Green Bay:

"Dear Friends in Christ, On behalf of the Session and Congregation of First Presbyterian Church, Green Bay, I want to thank you for your generous sharing of Pastor Meggan and Pastor Luke while we wait and prepare for a new pastor. Pastor Luke has moderated our session with good advice and humor, both of which we appreciate. As a member of the Presbytery Committee on Ministry, he has also given direction and encouragement to our Pastor Nominating Committee. The Committee is already receiving Pastor Information Forms, so good progress is being made. Pastor Meggan has provided member care, led worship, and officiated at two funerals. As she assumes her new role with you, she will help us out only in emergencies. What a blessing they both have been. It is a good thing they like where they are or we would have snapped them up! Our church is so appreciative of the cooperative efforts between our congregations and look forward to more in the future."

Invite your friends to join us on **Wednesday, January 8 at 5:45 pm** for our free **Agape Dinner**. It will be followed by a special presentation about the **Ecumenical Partnership for Housing**. Come and share the love!



Presbyterian Women Calendar



Why not join them for some of their group activities and opportunities?

- 1/2 - **Mission Sewing @ 9:30am**
(Koinonia Lounge)
- 1/9 - **PWCT @ 8:30am (Room 11) & Talbot Circle @ 12pm ("K" Lounge)**
- 1/15 - **Esther Circle Bible Study @ 9:30am**
(Koinonia Lounge)
- 1/16 - **Mission Sewing II @ 9:30am**
(Koinonia Lounge)
- 1/18 - **Papercrafting @ 10am (Room 11)**
- 1/28 - **4th Tuesday Readers @ 1pm**
(Koinonia Lounge)

>Mission Sewing II - A new opportunity is being added to give women an additional chance to produce more items to give to people that need them. This work day will come on the **third Thursday each month from 9:30am until 2pm**. The focus will be on smaller projects (no big quilt frame). January's goal is to make 25 pillowcases. Lunch will be "brown bag". All are welcome to come to one or both Mission Sewing work days every month!



Monthly Financial Update

(as of November 2019)

"...the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a good crop." **Luke 8:15**

	Year-to-Date Actual	Year-to-Date Budget
Operating Fund		
Income	\$334,900	\$341,500
Expenses	\$333,900	\$339,700

Things to Remember:

Deacons Fund - 1/5

***2020 Offering envelope boxes & automatic withdrawal forms available in the Narthex**

***2020 Per Capita is \$40 per member.**

> Ministry "use of funds" highlights for January: 2020 budget year begins, Co-Pastor Meggan Farwell begins her new position, Agape Dinner, snow removal, winter heating of our building, and property taxes.

N.E.W. Community Shelter Update...

On **December 17** our team of volunteers served 222 meals prepared by Bruce Kilmer, Dennis Hibray, Lee Richardson, and Joe Williams. Cakes were provided by Sue Renier, Debbie Cordova, Barb LeMense, Lynn Huebbe, Jane Grocholski, Mike Kettner, and Eric E.



Dinner was served by Rita and Bruce Kilmer, Mike Kettner, Barb LeMense, and Anneliese Waggoner. Lee Richardson and

Lois Pelishek also delivered meals to Freedom House.

Each child who ate at the shelter received a coloring book and crayons (donated by Leigh Deprez) and a children's book (donated by Diane Betz).



A huge "thank you" to all the volunteers who prepare the meals, bake the cakes, and serve the meals each month representing the love of our church family.

The next date at the shelter will be **January 21** from 5pm to 6:15pm. If you'd like to donate a cake, sign up in the Family Life Center or contact **Diane Betz** at 336-5054. If you would like to help at the shelter, please contact **Cindi Barnett** at 737-5376 or cindi.barnett@snc.edu.



The **3rd annual Family Ski Trip** with our friends from First Presbyterian Church in Green Bay is being planned for **January 24 and 25** at Ski Brule. It's open to all families, but there are some

fees involved. Some funding help may be available from the church budget depending on the number of reservations. Please contact Pastor Meggan at meggan@firstunitedpc.org soon for details and reservation information.

Our Connecting Ministry has been working to better align our congregation's mission work with the focus of the new goals of our church. They have developed a new **Mission Action Plan (M.A.P.)** for 2020 focusing on homelessness, poverty, and hunger.



Our church family will begin with an educational component featuring special speakers following our monthly **Agape Dinners**. On **January 8**, we'll learn more about **EPH** (Ecumenical Partnership for Housing). February will bring a look at St. John's Homeless shelter, and in March, we'll have a panel of local school Social Workers to discuss children and poverty.

Future plans include a day at **Feed My Starving Children** and a mission trip to **Urban Immersion** in Minnesota, giving us a powerful idea of how quickly homelessness, poverty, and hunger can happen to anyone. There are also plans in the fall for a "cardboard city" to simulate what it is like for those who spend life out on the streets with no place to go or lay their head at night.

Our Connecting Ministry is very excited about sharing these experiences with our church family so we can all gain a better understanding of these issues and what meaningful ways we can help these neighbors in need. Watch for much more information about the activities involved with our new, year-long mission focus.

First United Presbyterian Church

"Changing Lives through God's Love in Christ"

605 N Webster Ave.,
De Pere, WI 54115
(920) 336-1446

info@firstunitedpc.org

www.firstunitedpc.org

[facebook.com/
First.United.Pres](https://www.facebook.com/First.United.Pres)

Sunday School
Sunday 8:30am

Worship Service
Sunday 9:45am

Coffee Fellowship
Sunday 10:45am



Office Hours

Mon. - Thurs.
9am - 1pm

Friday - closed