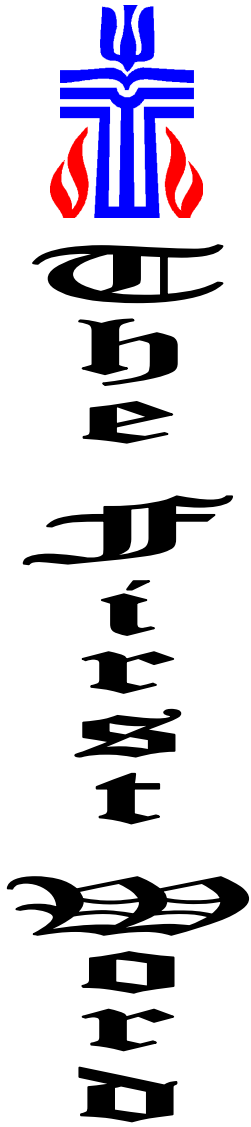


December 21, 2011



First Presbyterian Church
406 N. Main
Rockford, IL 61103
Voice: 815-968-0478
Website: www.firstpresrockford.com

All the People, Ministers
Transitional Pastor
Rev. Beth Wagner
revbeth@tds.net
Christian Education Director
Sally Borgetti
firstpresedu@tds.net
Music Director
Elizabeth LaGrande O'Leary
Firstpresmusic@tds.net
Administrative Assistant
Valarie Van Winter
firstpres@tds.net

*"The child to be born
will be holy;
he will be called
Son of God."*



Luke 1:35, NRSV

Merry 
Christmas

Beth Wagner

Joyce

Sally

Joy

Valarie

FROM
THE
PASTOR



Merry Christmas! In this season of political correctness I was reminded how each of us longs to say what we really mean and feel... so I wish each of you a Merry Christmas! As I sit in an

office with darkness surrounding me, I am reminded that this season of Christmas is all about light and dark. The days grow shorter and shorter as we move towards Christmas, and yet our time of celebration is all about light. The light of the candles reminding us that we are moving towards the center of our advent wreath where we will light the Christ Candle, just as the light of Christ in the center of each of us shines forth. The light of hope, peace, joy and love that comes from being Christ followers and the light of Christ that is being born anew in each of us again this season.

If some of you have been overwhelmed with the darkness of this season and the demands of this season, I would like to suggest that you light a candle to remind yourself that this is a season light! Light a candle, take a cup of your favorite beverage and take a few minutes to offer thanks for the blessings that surround you. Then think about how to respond to those blessings. Perhaps you have already ordered some bees from Heifer International or picked up an ornaments, coffee or jam in the Fair for All store. Write a note to someone that has made a difference in your life and tell them about it. Share the light with others that struggle with the darkness.

Still looking for ways to say Thank You? Consider a financial gift to Jeremiah Development. The Jeremiah board has hired Kathleen Ferrero to be the executive director, and her small salary is coming from the sister churches, so consider a gift of dollars towards that project. If each church puts \$5000.00 dollars towards this position we could fund Kathi for a full year. (Checks can be made out to Jeremiah Development and placed in our offering plate, we will forward them.)

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Pastor Beth

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

Come to our Christmas Eve Service. A string quartet will play from 2:45 until 3:00 p.m., so come early to enjoy the music. The Christmas Cantata "Candles and Carols" will follow, featuring our Chancel Choir and narrators Rev. Beth Wagner and Phil Davidson. Norma Hoffman will be playing the organ.

Financial Report—November 2011 General Fund Year to Date

Jan. 1: Beginning Balance	\$950.23
<u>Income:</u>	
Pledges	\$132,597.08
Other income	17,648.68
Transfers Trust Fund	140,138.49
Totals	291,334.48
<u>Expenses:</u>	
General Budget	\$258,881.38
Transfer designated	21,296.08
Totals	\$280,177.46
November 30: Ending Balance	\$11,157.02

PLEASE NOTE: The Church Office will be closed on the following dates: Monday, December 26, Monday, January 2, and January 16th.

In Memoriam

Mary R. Fosdick
October 10, 1922—December 15, 2011



*You will find the road to Christmas
where your hope and dreams come
true,
And your heart will know the magic
that the Season brings to you.
~ Garnett A. Schultz*

Are you looking for a church that is having an evening Christmas Eve Service? Third Presbyterian is having a Christmas Eve Service at 11:00 p.m.

The Transition Calendar for 2012

(Subject to change at any time!)

- January—Congregational Survey to determine thoughts and desires regarding the future of the congregation after the building is sold.
- February-April —Scouts are sent out to 2nd Congregational and 3rd Presbyterian to visit the churches and experience worship, education and fellowship events. Scouts would agree to visit both congregations.
- May—Scouts report back to Transitional Team and a report is made to the congregation about findings.
- June—Decision is made about our future location and how we will go about making the move/ merger.
- July-Nov —Move/ Merger Talks occur. Joint worship experiences and activities.
- December 30, 2012—Last Sunday worship at 406 N. Main occurs.

Starting in mid-January we will be scheduling “cleaning out the church” workdays. Watch the First Updates and Friday email updates for more information.

Dear First Pres,

You can imagine my astonishment when I opened your envelop and found a check for \$135! What a beautiful gesture and love offering. And, very timely. I appreciate it so very much. I continue to think about you all and hope and pray you are all doing well. I had certainly intended to come to some more enrichment dinners but time has just gotten away from me so much with our daughter’s family moving to Chicago. It has been quite an experience getting to know Chicago, a place I’d always said “NOT interested!” Too big, too much traffic. But somehow I am learning and especially enjoy walking around the neighborhood, all the shops and place to stop in. Adorable! Quite a contrast to our country-living experience we currently have. And it’s such a blessing to get to know our granddaughter—what a sweetheart!

Well, again, thank you for the wonderful gift and I will eventually get over. (Plus I’m out of chili olive-oil!)

Take care and God bless,
Terri

Happy Birthday!

December Birthdays!

17	Nancy Bailey Sharon Skidmore
18	Kathy Englehart Jayne Pheiffer Claude Vernam
19	Robert P. Smith
20	Jim Burright
21	Carol Darby Carol Ferguson
22	Elicia Pando
23	Barb McConnell Barbara Smith
25	Holly Beeman Ryan Semmelroth
26	Thomas Ferguson
30	Joy Butler
31	Katy Butler Theodore Wyeth

January Birthdays!

02	David Habermann
03	Diane Hassen
06	Tanya Gahl
07	Robert Pettigrew Willis Rowald
10	Zachary Pearse
14	Alistar Munn
16	Richard Reeves
18	David Anderson Jim Millikin
19	Katherine Semmelroth

Soup Kitchen Dates for 2012

Please mark your calendars!

Saturday, February 11
Saturday, May 5
Saturday, July 21
Saturday, October 13
Saturday, December 8



News from Sally

Sunday School for Kids in January

Located in First Fruits Education Wing

We will return to workshop rotations. We will be studying Moses. Each week we will learn the story of Moses in a new and fun way. Join us!

January 15 - Art
January 22 - Games
January 29 - Radio Show



Christian Learning Academy

(Sunday School for Adults)

"The Wired Word"
Bridge Clinic Waiting Room
Begins January 15

This is a timely and relevant curriculum that explores recent topics in the news from a faith perspective. The curriculum is emailed to you each week if you sign up ahead of time - or just drop in and we will have photocopies of the week's lesson.



First Hands Puppet

Performance

"God Talkin"
During Worship: Sunday, January 29



First Friday Study Horizons Bible Study

Sally Borgetti's Office
1:00 p.m. 1st Friday each month
Sally Borgetti, Facilitator

Please call Jane McAfee with questions, or to sign up. Our first meeting of the New Year will be on January 6.

Wednesday Enrichment

Begins on January 11

Schedule:

First Hands Puppets rehearsal: 4:45 - 5:45 p.m.
Dinner: 6:00 - 6:45 p.m.
Classes: 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Our Enrichment dinner will return to a "cook team format." If you would like to lead a cook team or serve on one, please contact Sally. Dinner cost will be \$5 per person with a \$15 max per family.



There will be two class options:

Option 1: "Faith at the End of Your Fork"

Class Leader: David Jones

This study is about food justice issues. It is based on the book by Anna Lappe, "Diet for a Hot Planet." The class will also prepare participants to attend an event on April 28 in which Anna Lappe will be the keynote speaker. Please contact David Jones to order book by calling him at (815)540-3703, or emailing him, (davidj6226@aol.com).

Option 2: "Bad Girls of the Bible"

Class Leader: Joyce Pogue



Enjoy this humorous book and lively discussion. Learn from the mistakes made by the Bible's notorious "bad girls." Author Liz Curtis Higgs offers a unique and clear sighted approach to understanding these women. She combines a contemporary retelling of solid, verse-by-verse study of their mistakes and what lessons we can learn from them.

More detailed information on these two classes will be printed in the First Presbyterian Winter 2012 Activity Guide that will be available in early January.



Jeremiah Development

“Seek the well-being of the city, for it is by seeking its well-being that you will find your well-being” Jeremiah 29:7

The prophet Jeremiah invites the **investment** of God’s people into the city in which they live. There is an acknowledged **self-interest** here. If we want to be, or stay, healthy/secure/whole, then we must take account of, and value, the environment in which we live. City-dwellers are only as healthy as the cities in which they live. City churches are only as secure and well as their urban contexts. There is no separation between my neighbor’s well-being and my own. My health is unavoidably entwined with yours; your life impinges upon mine. We are created with relationship and mutuality in mind.

Recognizing that the health of our downtown congregations is woven into the health – the “shalom” - of our city, we invite you to **invest in the health of our downtown neighborhood** with a tax-deductible gift to the ministry of **Jeremiah Development, NFP**.

Here are a few things we’d like to accomplish next year, for the sake of our neighborhoods, and our own health as churches and urban Christians:

Partnering with Rockford Urban Ministries

This summer of 2012 project, will have us working with work campers from Rockford Urban Ministries to ascertain various projects that our neighbors need help completing. These projects could include painting, redoing a bathroom or even weatherizing windows. For this project to move forward, we need to fully fund the project at \$30,000.

Habitat for Humanity

Jeremiah Development has started discussions with Habitat around bringing new, safe, affordable housing to our neighborhood. Critical to this project is amassing the lots upon which homes could be built. Each lot costs \$500 to \$1000. We need to purchase up to ten lots, for a cost of up to \$10,000.

For the health of our city neighborhood, and for our city congregations, please give prayerful consideration to an **investment** in the ministry of Jeremiah Development NFP. Your tax-deductible check should be made out to “Jeremiah Development NFP”, and can be mailed to:

Jeremiah Development
318 North Church St.
Rockford, IL 61101

For the well-being our city and our churches, Shalom!

The Jeremiah Development Board: Roberto Cardenas, Kay Galloway, Rev. Bob Hillenbrand, Dennis Horton, Donna Larson, Steve Moore, Ann Rundall, Don Swinson, John Vanderheyden and Jeanine Wang

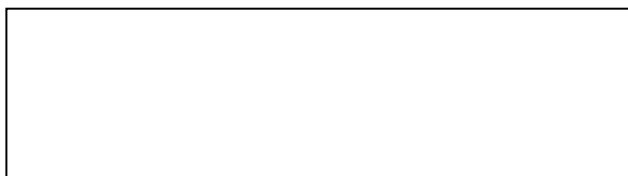
Kathi Ferrero, Executive Director



First Presbyterian Church
406 North Main
Rockford, IL 61103

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<p><u>Saturday, December 24</u> 3:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service <u>Sunday, December 25</u> 9:30 a.m. Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Fellowship Time <u>Monday, December 26</u> Office Closed <u>Tuesday, December 27</u> 7:00 a.m. Men's Prayer Breakfast <u>Saturday, December 31</u> 11:00 a.m. Highway & Hedges <u>Sunday, January 1</u> 9:30 a.m. Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Fellowship Time <u>Monday, January 2</u> Office Closed <u>Tuesday, January 3</u> 7:00 a.m. Men's Prayer Breakfast 4:30 p.m. Guiding Team <u>Thursday, January 5</u> 9:30 a.m. First Carillon Ringers 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Practice</p>	<p><u>Saturday, January 7</u> 10:00 a.m. Bridge Clinic <u>Sunday, January 8</u> 9:30 a.m. Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Fellowship Time <u>Tuesday, January 10</u> 7:00 a.m. Men's Prayer Breakfast 5:00 p.m. Mission Committee 5:30 p.m. CE Committee <u>Wednesday, January 11</u> 4:45 p.m. First Hands Puppets 6:00 p.m. Enrichment Dinner 7:00 p.m. Enrichment Programs <u>Thursday, January 12</u> 9:30 a.m. First Carillon Ringers 12:00 p.m. First Word Deadline 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Practice <u>Saturday, January 14</u> 10:00 a.m. Bridge Clinic 10:00 a.m. Undecorating the Church 6:00 p.m. Mariners Planning</p>	<p><u>Sunday, January 15</u> 9:30 a.m. Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Fellowship Time 11:00 a.m. Sunday Learning <u>Monday, January 16</u> Office Closed <u>Tuesday, January 17</u> 7:00 a.m. Men's Prayer Breakfast <u>Wednesday, January 18</u> 4:45 p.m. First Hands Puppets 6:00 p.m. Enrichment Dinner 7:00 p.m. Enrichment Programs <u>Thursday, January 19</u> 9:30 a.m. First Carillon Ringers 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Practice <u>Saturday, January 21</u> 10:00 a.m. Bridge Clinic</p>
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