



A NOTE FROM PASTOR KIP

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No. 14

October 5, 2026

Recently Lee and I sat down with a woman over lunch, and she was sharing about how the church she grew up in had closed. The church had invited all the former pastors to the closing service, and several of them were able to be there and to share about their fond memories of their time serving the church. She told us that their sharing was nice, but she really had hoped to hear more from the members of the church.



She made a very good point, because the church is not the pastor. Pastors are important in the life of the church (at least, I hope so!), but the life of a congregation is in the members, and their stories are central to a congregation's life and legacy.

With that in mind, I am hoping that we can begin to collect your stories. One of the questions that I've often heard used to begin discussions in groups is, "where have you seen Jesus this week?" Perhaps we could modify that to ask, "where have you seen Jesus in First Presbyterian Church of Mason City?" I would particularly appreciate hearing personal stories of how God has worked in your life through this congregation.

If you have a story you'd be willing to share, please let me know. It can be a brief anecdote or a longer account. You can include your name or keep it anonymous. I'm hoping to collect them for sharing in the pulse and hopefully during occasional Sunday services. Perhaps we have someone in the congregation who would be willing to help if someone doesn't feel comfortable with wording. Regardless, I'd love to hear from you, so send me an email or give me a call.

God bless,
Kip

**The Vision of First Presbyterian Church is to glorify God by
GATHERING as Children of God,
GROWING together in faith, hope and love, and
GOING out to make Christ known.**

A Fun Way to Connect⁺

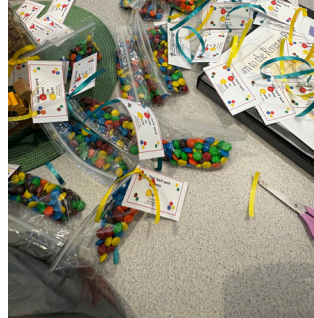
Community is important! Come and be a part of our church community on Wednesday nights in October! We begin at 6 p.m. with a light meal and then follow with an activity.

In September, we made teacher appreciation treat bags for the teachers at Hoover Elementary, watched Nooma videos, and just got to know one another better.

October 7, we will be eating a meal provided by the Deacons and watching the Nooma video Shells.

Come and enjoy food, laughter, and fellowship with your church family. We look forward to seeing everyone each Wednesday at 6:00 p.m.!

Bring friends!



We believe in the power of prayer

Please Keep the Following People in Your Prayers

- Sydney, Coni Samsel's niece, recovery program
- Tammy Buffington, blood clot in lung
- Rhonda Pyle, treatment for melanoma
- Paul Buren, at home, continued health concerns
- Jacquelyn Richter, recovering from accident
- Pam Little, health concerns
- Cindy, niece of Carol Foster, cancer diagnosis
- Our October neighborhood business, Avion Azul
- Our Congregation as we discern our future
- Kristi Balk, friend of Pastor Kip and Lee, cancer treatment
- Bill, brother of Sarah Kress, cancer diagnosis
- Lori Diehl, sister of Teri Elsbury, cancer diagnosis
- World leaders, our military, and others caught up in the middle east conflict, that they would be comforted and kept safe until peace is restored

Community Prayers

We will be praying for Avion Azul in October.

Avion Azul is a Mexican restaurant located at Willowbrook Mall. They offer dining services including indoor (table or bar seating), take out, delivery via Iowa EatZ, food truck, and catering.

Pray for their staff and the success of their business. Pray for the people who utilize the services provided. Go and be a patron!

October Presbytery Prayers

October 4 - Bethany, Grundy Center
Rev. Brad Braley

October 11 - Lone Rock
CRE Walt Reemtsma

October 18 - Barclay, Waterloo,
CRE Larry Fuson

October 25 - Central in Nevada
Rev. John Molacek

We wanted to take a moment to express our gratitude for the beautiful flowers that grace our church all summer. Thank you Sarah Kress, Donna Lee Olson, and Jackie Wendt.

From Building and Property



October 4	Lisa Foster
October 4	Paul Hertzel
October 7	Diane Trimble
October 11	Laura Little
October 15	Barb MacGregor
October 17	Kyra Jellema

Recognition of Service

Charlene Gooch will be awarded a Quilt of Valor on Sunday, October 11th, 2 p.m., at the Veterans' Center, 1603 South Monroe, Mason City, IA.

The Quilts of Valor Foundation awards handmade quilts to local service members and veterans touched by war, offering comfort, gratitude, and healing for their sacrifice. Family and friends are invited to attend; this free, family-friendly ceremony is a meaningful way for our North Iowa community to say "thank you" together.

After the ceremony, say hello to the recipients, visit with neighbors, and enjoy coffee and treats.

Second Sunday Soup Sunday

Beginning October, 11, our relaxed worship Sunday will include an outreach component. October 11 will be SOUP! Bring cans of soup, bags of dry soup mix, or boxes of soup mix for our food pantry. Let's overload our shelves with generosity!



Thank you to everyone who kept me in your prayers over these last weeks (and months!). I am blessed to be part of such a loving congregation and am sending warm hugs with this message!
Cheri Collins

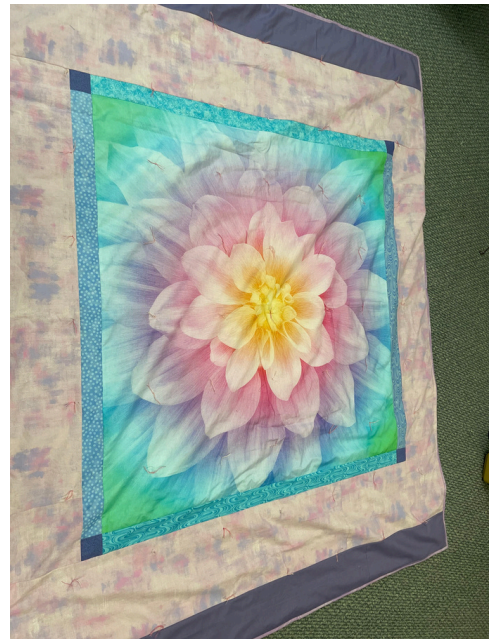
Adult Forum is starting up again!

Join us at 9 a.m. on Sundays in the Meeting Place. We have been using Nooma during Adult Forum. Please contact a member of the Adult Forum Planning Committee with suggestions or an offer to lead a Forum: Betsy Gross, Cindy Saul, Nancy Nickerson, Pastor Kip Murphy, or you may contact the Church Office.

Quilters Have Been Busy

Our quilting year is underway and we welcome anyone to join us on the second and fourth Thursday mornings of the month at 9:30 a.m. We have room for those who'd like to help "tie" a quilt, or those who like to sew. We are also hoping this year to find a way to help others learn to sew or renew sewing skills to help save money.

Here are some of the quilts we donated this past year to the Crisis Center.



An Update from Our Financial Secretary

July/August Financial Report

July	August	Year to Date
Income: \$16,682.00	Income: \$17,880.81	Income: \$174,918.37
Expenses: \$17,756.83	Expenses: \$25,889.07	Expenses: \$186,211.26
Shortfall: \$1,074.83	Shortfall: \$8,008.26	Shortfall: \$11,292.89

These figures relate to the income and expenses we budget for. So far this year, we have averaged about \$21,000 a month in income and a little over \$23,000 in expenses.

At the end of August, we mailed \$820 to Hawkeye Harvest Food Bank for their challenge: \$500 from the Deacons and \$320 from the congregation. Thank you!

Updates from our Clerk of Session

Please be aware that while Session voted at it's Stated Meeting on June 25, 2026, to sell the building, this allows Session, The Exploratory Team, and the Congregation to do the research and discernment necessary to determine how to proceed. We need to do this discernment together, of the pros and cons of selling the building and property. The building cannot be sold without the approval of the Members and the Presbytery. A Congregational Gathering was held on 9/27/26 to inform the members of information gathered since the last Gathering on 7/12/26.

If you'd like a copy of the Report to the Congregation, which contains specifics on the condition of the building and costs to remedy, please contact the Church Office.

Please, also, see the enclosed Contact List of members of Session and The Exploratory Team. Feel free to reach out if you have questions, concerns, suggestions.

Items from Session:

- Nominating Committee will begin search for candidates for officers for Session, Deacons, and 2027 Nominating Committee.
- Stewardship Team will begin campaign soon. Focus will be on supporting the work and mission of the Congregation.
- Approved acceptance of a \$25,000.00 gift. The Donor's stated preference for use is education and outreach.
- Scheduled the Stated Meeting of the Congregation, to elect officers, for November 22, 2026.

Let Betsy Gross know if you have an item for the Agenda.

Summary from The Exploratory Team:

- The Exploratory Team met on 9/21/26 and 9/30/26.
On 9/21, we met to prepare for the Congregational Gathering
On 9/30, we met to plan our next steps in assisting Session and the Congregation this process.
- We will reach out to Shelley Oltmans, from North Iowa Corridor Economic Development Corporation, regarding developers.
- Nancy Beenken will get additional estimates for replacement of the roof.
- Gary Owens, the real estate consultant recommended by Presbytery, will visit on 10/15/26.

Respectfully Submitted,
Betsy Gross

Church Calendar for October

October 5 - 11 Pastor Kip on study leave

Tuesday | October 6

10:00 am Coffee & Conversation

Wednesday | October 7

6:00 pm Connect in Friendship Room Meal & Activity

Thursday | October 8

9:00 am Quilting Group

1:00 pm Prayer Shawl at Homestead

5:00 pm Finance & Special Needs Team

Connect

Sunday | October 11 **SECOND SUNDAY SOUP SUNDAY**

9:00 am Adult forum

10:30 am Worship in Fellowship Hall
Rev. Cindy Saul is preaching



Tuesday | October 13

10:00 am Staff Meeting

6:30 pm Small Group at Murphys' home

Wednesday | October 14

6:00 pm Connect in Friendship Room, Meal & Activity

Connect

Thursday | October 15

5:30 pm Deacons

Sunday | October 18

9:00 am Adult Forum

10:30 am Worship

Monday | October 19

4:00 pm Membership and Outreach

Tuesday | October 20

6:30 pm Small Group at Murphys' home

Wednesday | October 21

6:00 pm Connect in Friendship Room, Meal & Activity

Connect

Thursday | October 22

9:00 am Quilting Group

6:00 pm Session

Sunday | October 25

9:00 am Adult Forum

10:30 am Worship

Tuesday | October 27

6:00 pm Small Group at Murphys' home

Wednesday | October 28

6:00 pm Connect in Friendship Room, Meal & Activity

Connect

2026 Contact List Session Members

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