



Our Life Together

As We Make Disciples Through . . .



Worship,
as we praise and glorify God.

ADVENT CELEBRATION

Advent comes from the Latin word meaning "coming." Jesus is coming, and Advent is intended to be a season of preparation for His arrival. While we typically regard Advent as a joyous season, it is also intended to be a period of preparation.

The weeks of Advent remind us to set aside some of the hectic business of the holiday season, and to quietly reflect on the promise of the baby born in Bethlehem 2000 years ago.

Each Sunday during Advent an FFC family is invited to light the Advent candle and share the week's litany with the congregation at the 8:00 and 10:00 am services.

CELEBRATING COMMUNION

We will celebrate Communion at both the 8:00 and 10:00 am services on Sunday, December 3rd.

Teaching,
*as we explore what it means
to be a follower of Jesus.*



LOGOS IN JANUARY

- Our Children's Mid-Week Ministry Program, LOGOS, will be held Wednesday evenings in January.
- Each night features a meal, recreation, Bible activity and music.
- Our Children's Ministry Director, Jessica Sheley, is preparing a mailing, the event is open to all. For registration or contact information, see page 6.

Missions,
*as we embody God's love
in the world around us.*



FFC'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CATALOG

This year's Christmas catalog features 12 local FFC Mission concerns. A donation made in the name of that "hard to buy for" relative or friend is the perfect gift solution! Your catalog should be arriving by mail and are also available in both the reception area and Sanctuary.



Fellowship,
*as we love and care
for one another.*

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM & SENIOR HIGH STROLLING MEAL

- Join us at 5:00 pm on Sunday, December 3rd in the Great Hall of our Life Together Center for our Annual Children's Christmas Program.
- Traditional Christmas carols will be sung by both the children and those attending.
- The Senior High Strolling Meal will follow with lots of tasty treats. This Senior High Mission Trip Fundraiser is a delicious way to end the evening and all proceeds go toward the Senior High Mission Trip.

JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SPECIAL EVENTS

- Both our Junior and Senior Highs will gather for Christmas celebrations. (See page 6 for more details.)

SING-IT-YOURSELF MESSIAH

- Sunday, December 10th at 2:30 pm join us in the Sanctuary for this highly anticipated event!
- This production is accompanied by a full orchestra and special soloists, directed by Bradley University's Dr. John Jost.
- A cookie reception will follow.

SUNDAY FELLOWSHIP

- Following our 10:00 am worship service each Sunday in the Commons;
- Friends and families gather to catch up and plan to get together in the coming week.



First Federated Church of Peoria

A Federated Church of Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ.



What's Inside . . .

Page 2

Glimpse of Grace
& Congratulations

Page 3

FFC Missions

Pages 4

Fellowship

Pages 5

Stewardship & Service

"Do Words Matter",
by Nora Johnson

Page 6

Children & Youth Ministry

Page 7

Adult Christian Education

The Preschool at FFC

"The Preschool at FFC, A
Legacy of Ministry and
Education" by Carol Long

Life Together

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FIRST FEDERATED CHURCH

3601 N Sheridan Road
Peoria, Illinois 61604

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Email your article to the church
by the 15th of the month
to be included in the following
month's newsletter.

CONTACT US

Main Church: 309-685-5258
Email: info@ffcpeoria.com
Fax: 309-685-5451

OFFICE HOURS

8:30 am – 4:30 pm
Monday - Friday

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

8:00 am Chapel Service
10:00 am Sanctuary Service

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

ffcpeoria.com

Glimpse of Grace



Frosty

"Marley was dead, to begin with. There is no doubt whatever about that. The register of his burial was signed by the clergyman, the clerk, the undertaker, and the chief mourner. Scrooge signed it. And Scrooge's name was good upon 'Change for anything he chose to put his hand to. Old Marley was as dead as a doornail."

So begins Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol. I begin to read it every year on December 1st. It is my way of beginning the work of spiritual preparation called for in the season of Advent. Some people do Advent calendars, others Advent wreaths, still others begin with Christmas cards, but I start to read A Christmas Carol. I have even done a sermon series or two on the themes of Advent using movie clips from the film version of the story.

Advent is a time of preparation. Not the preparation of Christmas shopping, open houses, and cards, but spiritual preparation as we look forward to the "advent" or "coming" of Christ. Advent calls us to take a "spiritual inventory," to reflect upon our lives and our priorities to make sure that they are in order. Advent reminds us that "the time," *our time* is short. There is no putting off until tomorrow because we may not see a tomorrow. Advent is a time to mend broken relationships, forgive past hurts, and to be alive in *this moment*.

I think that that is the appeal of A Christmas Story. In Ebenezer Scrooge we see how the "ways of the world" can slowly lead us to "lose ourselves" - our true selves. Like the "prodigal child" we chase after that which is not real and sooner or later realize that we wandered away from that which we *really wanted*, Love.

A Christmas Carol concludes with these words:

"And it was always said of him, that he knew how to keep Christmas well, if any man alive possessed the knowledge. May that be truly said of us, and all of us!"

Yes, may it be said of us, as well!

Congratulations

Rev. Henry Hein

At the November meeting of the Presbytery of Great Rivers, the Rev. Henry Hein was recognized for 55 years of ordained ministry in the Presbyterian Church (USA). Before becoming affiliated with First Federated Church, Henry was Pastor Emeritus of First Presbyterian Church in Peoria. He was ordained by the Presbytery of Chicago in 1962. We join the Church in celebrating Henry's 55 years of ordained service to our Lord and Savior.



Congratulations to our members who were elected officers at the annual congregational meeting in November.

Executive Board members, Class of 2020:

El Higus, Bridget Mattson, Debbie Dornaus, and Hank Stone.

Board of Deacons,

Class of 2018 - Pat Fenoglia and Al Hedeman

Class of 2019 - Ronalee DeNoble and Jerri Varnold

Nominating Committee, Class of 2019

Robin Simpson, John Mooney, Laura Kowalske, and Linda Sahn

Clerk of the Congregation, Suzanne Mooney

Missions, *As we embody God's love in the world around us.*

'Tis The Season!



FFC Giving Tree

Please bring a smile to the face of a young person by providing them something special and new this Christmas.

The Giving tree will be placed in the Commons by mid-November and will benefit children from Common Place and Crittenton Center.

You can choose one or more stars, purchase the gifts, and place the wrapped gifts with star firmly attached to the outside of the gift back under the tree.

Mission Committee volunteers will deliver the gifts mid-December for Christmas delivery to the recipients!

Annual FFC Christmas Catalog

Each year our Missions Committee prepares a special "Gifting Catalog" packed with descriptions of local organizations chosen to reflect our concern and caring for the young, the elderly, and the vulnerable in our community.

This catalog will reach your mail box early in December and represents a unique giving opportunity.

Advent Sundays (except December 10th - Cantata Sunday) will feature one of our catalog mission concerns during a "Mission Moment" at the 10 am worship service.



Crittenton Stocking Stuffer Store

Once again we will partner with the Crittenton Centers and provide a shopping experience for preschoolers in their related programs. Volunteers are always welcomed to help little ones pick out gifts for Mom and Dad, Brother and Sister, Grandma and Grandpa. Watch the Home Edition and 1stNews for this year's shopping date. For more information, please contact the church office at 309-685-5258.

Passport To Hope - Total Raised \$18,497.83 - Thank you All!



Ongoing FFC Missions

Snack Packs for Whittier Primary School

- Packing weekend snacks for children
- Volunteers gather each Thursday morning at 8:45 am
- Warehouse of the Life Together Center.

Box Tops for Education

- The collection box is across from the reception desk.
- The Box Tops are delivered to Thomas Jefferson School.

Friendship House Food Pantry

- Canned goods and personal care items are always needed; see the list by the North door.
- Collection bins are by the North door of the church & in the Narthex.

The Center For The Prevention of Abuse

- Personal care items, snack items, etc. Please see the list by the North door.
- Collection bins are by the North door of the church & in the Narthex.

Fellowship, as we love and care for one another.

Our Church Family ~ A Matter of Record

Baptism

- November 26th, Zachary Warren Lundy, parents are Molly and David Lundy, Annabelle and William are siblings.

Completed This Part of Life

- October 27th, Willaneta Pieroni
- November 11th, David Ransburg
- November 15th, Rose Sunderland

Do you have a birth, wedding or bereavement you would like to share with your church family?
Please contact the church office at 309-685-5258 or info@ffcpeoria.com.

Church Membership

Welcome To Our Church Family

Our Next New Member dates are in December

- We formally welcome new members into the life of our church during both worship services.
- If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a member of First Federated Church, please contact Rev. Zach Lysdahl at zlysdahl@ffcpeoria.com or 309-685-5258, X102.



Church Fellowship Groups

SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE ▪ Saturday Night Live is primarily a social group that meets roughly once a month for dinner (at restaurants or members' homes) and is made up of those over 50. If you're interested and would like more information, contact Judy Thompson through the church office at 309-685-5258.

EVENT: Details of the next event are on the way!

YOUNG FAMILIES GROUP ▪ Adults between the ages of 25 and 45, single, married, or with a family. This group gathers monthly to enjoy great community events and engage in mission opportunities. All are welcome and have a place in helping us create this community. For more information about the group or events, please contact Rev. Zach Lysdahl at 309-685-5258, X-12 or zlysdahl@ffcpeoria.com.

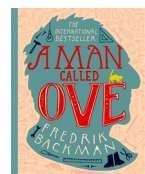
EVENT: Details of the next event are on the way!

KNITTING / CROCHETING MINISTRY ▪ The next meeting is **Tuesday, December 5th, at 9:00 am in the Memorial Lounge**. If you are interested or have questions, please contact Alice Racine through the church office at 309-685-5258.

OLD BUDDIES BREAKFAST ▪ The next gathering of the "Old Buddies," a men's fellowship group that meets for breakfast and fellowship, will be **Tuesday, December 19th at 8:30 am Lutheran Hillside Village, private dining room**.

FIRST FEDERATED WOMEN'S CLUB ▪ The Women's Club will meet **Wednesday, December 6th at noon**. This month our program will include the Illini Bluff Madrigal Singers, directed by our own Emma Boulton. Lunch will be served. Membership is open to all women of First Federated Church. For more information you may contact Women's Club President, Barb Hein through the church office at 309-685-5258.

THE FFC BOOK CLUB ▪ The club will meet **Saturday, December 2nd, at 10:00 am at the North Branch of Peoria Public Library (3001 W. Grand Parkway, Peoria, Illinois 61615)**. The book for the combined November/December gathering will be *A Man Called Ove* by Fredrik Backman.



Executive Board

(The Executive Board meets the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30 pm in FFC's Life Together Center Boardroom)

MODERATOR . . . Rev. Dr. Forrest Krummel, Jr. VICE-MODERATOR Michael Verkuilen

Class of 2017

Fiona O'Laughlin, (PCUSA); Allan Hedeman, (UCC); Ralph Schoen, (PCUSA); Mike Verkuilen, (UCC)

Class of 2018

Elizabeth Allen, (UCC); David Bailey, (PCUSA); Kent Kowalske, (UCC); Theresa Pfeiffer, (PCUSA)

Class of 2019

Nancy Amos, (PCUSA); Rebecca Frankel Clifton, (UCC); Dana Hobson, (PCUSA); Cheryl Resnick, (UCC)

Board of Deacons

(The Board of Deacons meets the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm in FFC's Life Together Center Trinity Room)

Class of 2017

Jim Christopher, Helen Nixon, John Nixon, Kim Predmore, Jessica Sheley, Joyce Smith, Lauren Sokn

Class of 2018

Barb Hein, Carol Nelson, Roberta Schroff (Moderator), Rick Snarr, Sally Stone

Class of 2019

Vicki Bailey, Donna Bantis, Ted Bantis, Trish Fordyce, Kay Hulin, Carol Sleeth, Sheila Snarr

Nominating Committee

Class of 2017

Kent Kowalske (UCC), John Mooney (PCUSA), Robin Simpson (PCUSA), Tom Simpson (UCC)

Class of 2018

Jill Koch (UCC), John Morris (PCUSA), Ron Silver (UCC), Kim Snarr (PCUSA)

Clerk of the Congregation

Suzanne Mooney (PCUSA)

Do Words Matter? By Nora Johnson

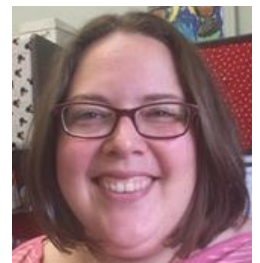
As I began my liturgy internship here at FFC this was my chief wondering: Do words matter? Each week hours are spent preparing for worship, choosing the words we will use as we worship our Triune God. All of these words, spoken by the pastors, liturgist, or congregation make up the liturgy of the worship service. I wondered if any of us notice the intentional choices that were made in selecting the week's liturgy. Do we notice when different names and characteristics are used when speaking of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? Do we notice when the liturgy incorporates aspects of the scripture lessons of the morning?

Throughout my internship I have concluded that words do matter... they matter to God and they matter to us as the body of Christ and as individuals. I struggled with articulating this until I read the following in *Worship Words* by Ron and Debra Rienstra.

How we name God, address God, and describe God in worship powerfully forms the imagination of believers. They learn who God is and how they are to relate to God in great part through the words we use in worship.

Yes, the words we use in worship work together to bring about a cohesive worship experience and a meaningful encounter with Christ. But more importantly, much more importantly, the words we use in worship teach us who God is and how we can relate to God. Our God is incomprehensible, majestic and omnipresent and at the same time He is personal, intimate, and dwells within us. The words we use in worship, our liturgy, tell us of all these characteristics of God. They help us to know just who God is and what God has done for us and how we are to respond to God's giving. Thank you for the opportunity to be a vessel for shaping our words in worship this semester. I am looking forward to being your preaching intern next semester.

Grace and Peace,
Nora Johnson



Teaching, as we explore what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

Children's Ministry



COMING UP IN SUNDAY SCHOOL Kindergarten – 5th Grade

Sunday, December 3rd:

The children will be practicing for the Christmas Program during Sunday school. The program will begin at 5:00 pm followed by a strolling meal to benefit the Senior High Mission Trip.

Sunday, December 10th:

Bible Story: God gave us Jesus, *1 John 4:9-11*

Bottom Line: Because God gave, I can give

Sunday, December 17th:

Bible Story: Parable of the rich man, *Luke 12:13-21*

Bottom Line: Don't miss your chance to give

Sunday, December 24th:

The children will remain in worship to enjoy the Christmas Eve services with their families.

Saturday, December 31st:

A Veggie Tales movie will be shown during Sunday School, along with popcorn!

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Children will rehearse each week during Sunday school

Saturday, December 2nd: Christmas Program Dress Rehearsal, 10:30 am -12:00 pm, *Great Hall*

Sunday, December 3rd: Christmas Program 5:00 pm, *Great Hall*



LOGOS

"Like VBS once a week!"

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR
JANUARY DATES**

January 10th, 17th, 24th, and 31st!

- Wednesday nights from 5:30 - 7:00 pm in the Life Together Center
- Each night features a meal, recreation, Bible activity and music
- Cost is \$20 per child for the 4-week program
- Check your mail for a registration form or contact Jessica Sheley at jsheley@ffcpeoria.com or 708-476-5405

Jessica Sheley ♦ ☎309-685-5258 X-105 📧jsheley@ffcpeoria.com

Junior Highs (6th - 8th Graders)

Junior High Sunday School

• December series: "Best Seller"

- This month in Sunday school, the junior high students will complete a series about how to understand and navigate the Bible and access all the tools it makes available to us to live a better life.

Junior High Event

- **Junior High Christmas Party, all Junior High students and their friends as well are invited!**
- Friday, December 8th, 5:30-7:30 pm
- Junior High room, 3rd floor
- What to bring?
 - Your favorite Christmas snack to share
 - A white elephant gift under \$10.00
- RSVP by Thursday, December 6th to Rev. Zach at zlysdhal@ffcpeoria.com

Confirmation Worship Retreat

Sunday, February 11th,

11:15 am ~ 4:00 pm

Garden Room, LTC

- Please wear your t-shirt!



Senior Highs (9th - 12th Graders)

Senior High Event

- **Senior High Christmas Party**
- **Sunday, December 10th, 5:30-7:00 pm**
- Puterbaugh Home
- Bring your favorite holiday snack to pass
- RSVP by Thursday, December 6th to Rev. Zach at zlysdhal@ffcpeoria.com

Senior High Sunday School /Fellowship Sunday Evenings

- **Next gathering - Sunday, January 7th, 5:30 to 7:00 pm**
- 3rd floor Youth Rooms
- Dinner will be provided.

Senior High Parent Volunteers Needed

Sunday Dinners For The Students

- All parents are invited to provide an evening meal.
- Please visit the Sign-Up genius to volunteer.
- Your choice, home-made or carry-out.
- This QR Code will take you to the website or <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090e4caea728abfa7-sunday1>



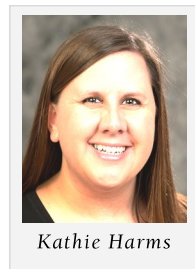
Meditation Group

- Will not meet December 21st and 28th, will resume January 4th.
- Thursdays at 10:00 am
- Memorial Lounge
- Contact Ann Voll for information at 309-691-1781 or avoll@comcast.net.

Off Campus Bible Studies

- Each Thursday at:
- Independence Village at 9:15 am
Independence Village December schedule: Will not meet 12/14, 12/21 and 12/28, will resume meeting 1/11/2018.
Led by Rev. Zach Lysdahl.
 - Lutheran Hillside Village at 10:30 am
LHV December schedule: Will not meet 12/21 and 12/28, will resume meeting 1/4/2018.
Led by Rev. Frosty Krummel.

The Preschools at FFC



Kathie Harms

Enroll Now for the Spring Semester

Director, Kathie Harms ☎ 309-685-5258, x.108 📧 kharms@ffcpeoria.com

December Events

Preschool Christmas Celebration

Friday, December 22nd
10:15 am
FFC Gym, 2nd floor

Closed for Christmas

Monday, December 25th -January 2nd

The Preschools at FFC . . . A Legacy of Ministry and Education

For the past 67 years, First Federated has been the proud home of a community cornerstone in preschool education. The Preschools of FFC have been a ministry of our church, as well as a gift to our community. The program has educated and nurtured thousands of children since its inception in 1950. While church members, as well as many families in our community, are familiar with our programs (Little Lambs, Bo Peep, Jack and Jill and Mom’s Day Out), you may not realize that *in 1975 FFC’s Executive Committee voted to make the entire preschool program part of the ministry of FFC through the Christian Education program.* This level of commitment has supported the preschool program ever since.

We invite you to stop by FFC during the week. You can’t help but notice the energy surrounding the preschool. Grins and giggles, singing and stories fill our classrooms. Not only has this program been a gift to our community, but it has served as an important ministry of our church with many families becoming part of our First Federated family over the years.

Director Kathie Harms joined us in 2014 and has done a tremendous job helping our program as it evolves into a 21st century preschool. Her initial priority was to transition the preschool from a half-day only program to one that also offers some full day options for working parents. This change has been very well received. Our terrific teachers are working hard to provide quality instruction that follows NAESC (National Association of Early Childhood Specialists) standards based instruction. Since 2015, they have been using **Creative Curriculum**, a developmentally appropriate curriculum for young learners, which was generously donated by two of our church members. The addition of this formal curriculum is another way in which we are able to provide a high quality program to meet the needs of young families.

As a sub-committee of Christian Ed, the Preschool Committee is chaired by Carol Long along with members Judy Gwillim, Cathy Shultz and Debby Triebel. Christian Ed Chair Elizabeth Allen has also joined the committee along with staff members Gail Weghorst and Frosty Krummel. This committee meets at least once per month and is working to develop a strategic plan for the preschool, improve the technology offerings for our little ones, and update the environment in which they learn. In addition to creating a clean, safe and stimulating space for our young learners, these improvements will also benefit our Sunday school classes. How fortunate FFC is to have this rich ministry in our building!

We are always looking for new committee members.

If you are interested in joining the preschool committee, please contact Carol Long at 264.2753.

First Federated Church of Peoria

www.ffcpeoria.com

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THE SING-IT-YOURSELF MESSIAH

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10TH
2:30 PM

FREE WILL OFFERINGS WILL BE ACCEPTED

Plan **NOW** to become a part of our **LIFE TOGETHER !**



First Federated Church of Peoria

3601 N Sheridan Road, Peoria, IL 61604
309-685-5258 • www.ffcpeoria.com

Welcome

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