



The Builder



December 2023

The newsletter serving the families & friends of:

**First Presbyterian Church
1005 1st Corso - Nebraska City NE 68410**

Worship on Sunday mornings - 10:30am

Sunday school for all ages at 9:15am – Christmas Program December 10

The Sacrament of Holy Communion the 1st Sunday of each month

**Sunday Worship services are posted on our Facebook page:
First Presbyterian Church – Nebraska City Facebook**

Keep in touch.....

Pastor Tom: Email: presbypastortom@yahoo.com Phone: 402-274-8199

Church Office: Hours: 9-2:30, Monday – Thursday

Email: secretary@firstpresnc.org Phone: 402-873-5306

Church Website: www.firstpresnc.org

Homestead Presbytery website: www.homesteadpres.org

Greetings to our Church Family,

Nearly 2,000 years ago, shepherds in a field near Bethlehem were startled awake by a spectacle never before seen or heard. Wintry clouds were thrust asunder as a heavenly choir burst into majestic song. An angel proclaimed, "We are here to announce the first annual Christmas, which hereafter shall be celebrated throughout the world on December 25th."

Is this a fact? CERTAINLY NOT!

The gospel of Luke records that angels did announce the birth of a savior which is Christ the Lord. And it is true that shepherds received this news. But was the declaration made for December 25th? NO!

The fact is that Christ's birthday was not celebrated until more than 300 years had gone by, years in which accurate birth records (if there were any) had been lost. The early church remembered and celebrated Christ's Resurrection from the dead, which was more important. The early church was slow in adding Christmas to its list of dates worthy of recognition.

So, when the time came, why was it decided to celebrate Christ's birth on December 25th? A pagan festival, Natalis Invicti, was a boisterous Roman affair celebrated on December 25th, when the sun was in its winter solstice. Worshippers of the Roman sun god enthusiastically pulled their Christian friends into the partying. By A.D. 386, church leaders set up the celebration of the "Christ Mass," so that Christians could join the festival activities without bending to paganism.

After the Roman Empire dissolved, Christians continued the December 25th birthday custom. By that time, December 25 seemed more fitting than any other date. Simply stated, no one knows the date of Christ's birth. But that doesn't stop us from celebrating the miracle.... that of Jesus being born. I hope, no, I want you to come each week this month and join with us in celebrating this important occasion. After all, if Jesus had not been born, how could he have been crucified and resurrected to newness of life that we celebrate at Easter? Come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord! Be sure to be with us this year!

Blessings, Pastor Tom



BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 Happy Birthday, Adam Wilton
- 4 Happy Birthday, Josh Martens
- 8 Happy Birthday, Dave LeGrand
- 10 Happy Birthday Bill Peterson
- 13 Happy Birthday, JoAnn Martens
- 14 Happy Birthday, Randy Martens
- 19 Happy Anniversary, Lori Koeneke
- 23 Happy Birthday Bev McGinnis
- 24 Happy Birthday Nels Wilton
- 27 Happy Birthday RuthAnn Weddle
- 28 Happy Birthday Keith Dierking
- 30 Happy Anniversary Bill & Jean Dammast
- 31 Happy Birthday Gene Mercer

Many happy returns to the day of thy birth, may sunshine and gladness be given, and may our dear Father prepare us on earth for the beautiful birthday in heaven!

If you have additions or corrections to the Birthday and Anniversaries calendar, please don't hesitate to let Jane know! Please call the office or email your information to secretary@firstpresnc.org

Serving this month:

Organist: Abby Reese Scripture: Jeff Maddox Greeters: Tony & Kim Reese
Camera: Marv Zimmerman/Alexis Dierking Acolytes: Youth Communion prepared by Abby Reese
Sound/Power Point: Julie Hopp Facebook/Photographer: Teresa Fields
Nursery: Kristie Dierking, Kim Reese, Jan Marion, Udine Wilton, Carol Maddox

Please continue prayers for the following church family and friends: Tom & Janet Hemphill, Diann Starr, Cathy Berger, Rev. Bob and Misty Burdett, Nancy Blackshear, the Bassinger family in Dunbar, and for those unable to attend worship in person. Please call or email the church office if you have someone to add to this list.




Stephanie Shrader's mother, Wanda Mowrey, pieced this quilt top some time ago, and Gertrude, Helen and Udine finished the quilt for Stephanie. Lots of love went into this quilt!





Calendar Of Events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 Sunday School 9:15 Worship/Holy Communion 10:30 1 st Sunday of Advent	4 Food Pantry at UMC 3-5pm	5	6 Lunch Bunch at Pizza Hut 11:30am Quilters 1pm Choir 7pm	7	8	9
10 Sunday school 9:15 Worship & Sunday School Program 10:30 Coffee Fellowship 2 nd Sunday of Advent	11	12	13 Lunch Bunch at El Portal 11:30am Quilters 1pm Session 6:30pm	14	15	16
17 Sunday School 9:15am Worship 10:30am 3 rd Sunday of Advent	18 Food Pantry at UMC 3-5pm	19	20 Lunch Bunch at Spring Garden 11:30am Quilters 1pm Choir 7pm	21	22	23
24 Sunday School 9:15am Worship 10:30am 4 th Sunday of Advent Christmas Eve Service 7pm	25 	26	27 Lunch Bunch at Downtown 11:30am Quilters 1pm	28	29	30
31 Sunday School 9:15am Worship 10:30am Hunger Offering						

PLEASE REMEMBER TO INCLUDE YOUR CHURCH IN YOUR REGULAR GIVING!

CHRISTMAS

Around the World



First Presbyterian Church Sunday School Students

Will present their 2023 Christmas Program - Sunday, December 10

We invite everyone to join them for the 10:30 Worship Service and Program!

After the service we will enjoy coffee fellowship featuring cookies from around the world.

If you would like to help by providing your favorite international cookie, we would like to have your participation that morning! There is a sign-up sheet on the table in the narthex for our cookie volunteers! Thank you!



AN ADVENT LOOK AT CHRISTMAS ANGEL MESSAGES

During the season of Advent Pastor Tom is sharing a sermon series based on the message of the angels of the Christmas story. Be sure to come each week and bring a friend with you!

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| December 3 | The Angel's Message to Zechariah |
| December 10 | Sunday School Program |
| December 17 | The Angel's message to Mary and Joseph |
| December 24 | The Angel's Message to the Shepherds |