

*FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH*  
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Non Profit Organization  
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NORFOLK, NE

# December



**CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED**

## HAPPY, HAPPY BIRTH DAYS

Myrtle Smith 1 \* Jamie Unkel 1\* Kristina Schmidt 3\*Debra Brunswick 3\* Rev. David Crawford  
3 \* Chuck Olsen 5\* Annette Hansen 5\* Dave Wells 6\* Ryan Cleveland 6 \*April Jones 10  
\*Mason Greenough 12 \* Melvin Unkel 13\* Nayeli Correa 13 \* Taylor Smith 13\* Jim Zittritsch  
14\* Delaine Horn 15 \* Jenna Rehan 15 \* Deanna Tiedtke 16 \* Dale Mather 17 \* Jacob Rusk  
17 \* Azelan Amundson 17 \* Jenna Hatfield 17\* Brooke Luhr 18 \*Joe Reynolds 18\* Joseph  
Sateren Sr. 19\* Ann Dover 20 \*Darlene Finkhouse 21 \* Robert Dover 21\* Sherrilee Jones 23 \*  
Erica Dover 23 \* Mary Luhr 24\*Renee Halsey 24\* Jennifer Jimmerson 25 \*Sadie Anderson 27  
\*Darrell Anderson 29 \*Taylor Easland 29 \* Sandrau Swier 29 \* Inez Haspeslagh 30 \*Brandon  
Jones 30 \* Natalie Kent 30 \* Holly Wendel 31\* Evangeline Oltjenbruns 31 \* David Shipley  
31\*

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY:

Dr. Aaron and Laura Walter 17 \* Buster and Linda Beckenhauer 20 \* David and Noreen Crawford 21  
\* Greg and Teri Wendel 23 \* Joe and Nancy Reynolds 25 \* Mark and Greta Johnson 28 \*

# PASTOR'S PAGE

Dear Friends,

Merry Christmas!

As I eagerly await surgery Friday, December 9, I have been reminded of some life lessons:

What is, is not what always will be. The constant pain from three torn tendons will, after recovery, no longer determine how much sleep or energy I have. The impossibility of moving my shoulder through vital motions (namely, making a real golf swing) will, with therapy, again be possible.

Sometimes in life to become more whole we must pass through a painful process of discerning the problem and fixing the situation the best we can. Surgery is not fun, nor is the pre-surgical pain and limitations. Through a six month long process of surgery, recuperation and therapy these challenging experiences will lead a better life. May this serve as an analogy of what we have been working hard to accomplish in First Presbyterian Church this year: Identifying the challenges; discerning what causes the challenges; facing with honesty and respect the challenges and their underlying causes; modeling more healthy ways to live together in God's Family; acknowledging our part in creating or maintaining the challenges; asking forgiveness for our short-comings; granting forgiveness to those around us who also have human short-comings; working together as we move into the future God holds for us. In other words, we pass from the myopia of seeing things only from our perspective, through the process of Focus On God (a bigger, more comprehensive perspective), to the vision of God using our differences to strengthen the Body of Christ.

Not a one of us can do it all. We need the gifts other bring to live fully. I did a fine job of injuring myself. I didn't need help to accomplish that feat. But I trust that the surgeon and the nurses and the other care-givers and the physical therapists working as a team with me will create a stronger, better functioning and less painful shoulder. We need the gifts God has entrusted to other people.

Yes, the list could grow much longer, but we get the point. Do we also get the point of the need to let go of individual control of aspects of our church's life? Do we also get the point that each one of us has caused some of the challenges First Presbyterian Church faces? Do we also get the point that each member of this Family of God has been hurt by us, and has hurt each of us? What can we do?

In this season of gift giving, God can give us gifts which will help us on the next stage of our journey. Sunday, December 18 at 5:30 pm, we will have a Service of Forgiveness, Wholeness, Letting Go. In this service each of us will be given the gift of Forgiveness coupled with the gift of being able to Forgive. God will offer to us the gift of Shalom—Wholeness if we are willing to find the courage to Let Go of whatever might form the heavy burdens which have weighed us down and kept us from being able to accept the Wholeness—Peace God offers.

As I prepare for the surgery and for the rapidly approaching move from Norfolk to other challenges in Canyon, Texas, I know how profoundly I need this service. I expect many of us do. In fact, it seems the Church itself needs this gift from God. Please accept God's offer of the gifts of Forgiveness, Wholeness, Letting Go.

Thank you for the gift of this year serving God with you.

*Calvin*

## Prayers Please

CALVIN HARFST \* JANE NEELY \* RUTH LUTES \* PETER HENKEL  
\* DALE & BARB MATHER \* INEZ & JIM HASPELAGH \* SR  
ROSANN IN PERIMIHO \* KAPHUTA CHURCH MALAWI \* KEITH  
& CATHY MCCLARY\* MARIE HINRICHS



## Worship Dates to Remember

Dec 11—Childrens Program

Dec 18— Healing/ Forgiveness Service 530pm

Dec 24—Christmas Eve service with communion 7pm

Dec 25—Christmas Day service 10am

January 1—Joe Mtika Preaching

January 8—Rev Dr Earl Underwood Preaching with communion & Congregational Meeting



## **Other Announcements**

New Bylaws have been adopted by FPC Norfolk. Stop by the office if you would like to see them.

An Interim Nominating Committee has been formed and is interviewing candidates.

A student led youth group will be beginning soon.

Professional Accounting Solutions (Susie Lutz) will be doing our bookkeeping services starting Jan 1, 2012 with the assistance of the finance committee.

Elders of the Month for January are: Doug Korth and Sonja Putnam

A Manual of Operations will be up and coming work for the session (ruling elders) and committees, if you would like to be involved, see a ruling elder to help on a committee.

Dec 18th we will have a special worship service dedicated to healing and forgiveness at 5:30 pm.

A card shower is planned for Calvin on Dec 18, please bring a card to either service that day.

If you haven't sent in your giving pledge for 2012, please do so. If you need another copy please contact Tom Jones or Mark Johnson.

A Congregational Meeting will be held January 8, 2012 following service to elect new ruling elders and nominating committee members.

**Have a blessed Christmas!**