First Presbyterian Church
10 Charleston Ave. Mattoon, IL 61938
Phone: (217) 234-6722
Email: fpchurch@consolidated.net
Website: www.fpcmattoon.org

December 2019

Pastor
Rev. Matthew Froeschle

Treasurer
John Swick

Administrative Assistant
Cherry Wishard

Youth Director
Toby Montgomery

Music
Scott Hines

Worship AV
Brandon Barta

Church Custodian
Rick Plummer

Special Events
December 1
Barbershoppers Concert
7:00 p.m.

December 7
Rotary Breakfast
8:00 a.m.

Dec. 15
Children’s Christmas program
During Worship

Dec. 22
Blue Christmas Service
7:00 p.m.

Dec. 24th
Christmas Eve. Services
5:00 p.m. & 10:00 p.m.

Sunday Worship
Adult Bible Study
8:30 a.m.

Worship Service
9:30 a.m.

Children’s Church
9:45 a.m.
(after Children’s Chat)

*Childcare provided

Wednesday
LOGOS
5:30 p.m.- 7:30 p.m.
“God in the Mess”

She is pregnant, unwed, and very uncomfortable. He is anxious, clinging desperately to his faith in God in the midst of a nightmare situation. The road before the young couple is terrible. There will be no inn available to them; and no relatives willing to surrender a bed to these black sheep of the family. There is no light but a distant star; no hospital, only a feeding trough in a cave. In the midst of the judgment, the uncertainty, the pain, the fear, and the loneliness, Christ is born to Mary and Joseph, and the world's long wait for the Messiah is over.

This is certain: Jesus didn't come in the midst of an ideal situation. God didn't wait for the world to be a wonderful place before he entrusted us with His Son. Into the mess, into the fray, into the filth came the baby Savior. God's love... it's reckless, isn't it? Good thing He's God! Otherwise this plan never would have worked!

We look around today, more than two millenea later, and things are messy. We face an uncertain future, and the world is in crisis. We are not who we want to be, and are frustrated with our failings and those of others.

All this didn't stop Christ from arriving in Bethlehem all those years ago. And it does not prevent His working in our lives today.

Advent is a time of spiritual preparation, true. It is not wrong to want to clean house for visitors, or to prepare for a beloved guest. But sooner or later we will realize that we are never good enough to earn Christ's blessing; we must simply invite Him to come. Not later. Not “tomorrow.” Now.

Come in, Jesus, into the mess and the nightmare. Please, come once again into the lives of broken and fearful people. Please, enter into our darkness and despair, and be born in us.

God's not afraid of the dirt and the doubt and the darkness. He never was, He isn't now, and He won't be tomorrow. What are we waiting for? Pray to Him now. Worship Him now. Receive Him now. There is no place He can't brighten. He is all a burning love and a joy. What do you need more than Him?

Thank You, God, for showing us how far You will travel, and how much You will give.

Have a wonderful Christmas, my dear friends.

In Christ's love,

Pastor Matthew
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Events</th>
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| Sunday, Dec. 1 | Adult Bible Study 8:30 a.m.  
Worship Service 9:30 a.m.  
Children’s Church 9:45 a.m.  
Worship Committee meeting after service  
Mission Stitchers 2:00 p.m.  
Youth Group 3:00 p.m.  
Barbershoppers Concert 7:00 p.m. |
| Tuesday, Dec. 3 | Prayer Group 10:00 a.m.  
Dulcimers 1:30 p.m.  
Barbershoppers 7:00 p.m. |
| Wednesday, Dec. 4 | Women’s Board Meeting 9:00 a.m.  
Membership Committee 10:00 a.m.  
LOGOS 5:30 p.m. |
| Thursday, Dec. 5 | Bible Study 9:00 a.m.  
Men’s Prayer Group 10:00 a.m. |
| Saturday, Dec. 7 | Rotary Breakfast 8:00 a.m. |
| Sunday, Dec. 8 | Adult Bible Study 8:30 a.m.  
Worship Service 9:30 a.m.  
Children’s Church 9:45 a.m.  
Pre-Pack Food Center 1:00 p.m.  
Youth Group 3:00 p.m. |
| Monday, Dec. 9 | Sarah Circle Christmas Luncheon 11:30 a.m. |
| Tuesday, Dec. 10 | Prayer Group 10:00 a.m.  
Retired Teachers Lunch 12:00 p.m.  
Dulcimers 1:30 p.m.  
Personnel Meeting 4:30 p.m.  
Priscilla Circle 7:00 p.m.  
Barbershoppers 7:00 p.m. |
| Wednesday, Dec. 11 | Stewardship & Finance 1:00 p.m.  
B & G 2:00 p.m.  
LOGOS 5:30 p.m. |
| Thursday, Dec. 12 | Bible Study 9:00 a.m.  
Men’s Prayer Group 10:00 a.m.  
Mystery Book Club 6:00 p.m. |
| Sunday, Dec. 15 | Adult Bible Study 8:30 a.m.  
Worship Service 9:30 a.m.  
Children’s Christmas Program during worship  
Youth Group 3:00 p.m. |
| Tuesday, Dec. 17 | PEO 9:00 a.m.  
Prayer Group 10:00 a.m.  
Dulcimers 1:30 p.m.  
Barbershoppers 7:00 p.m. |
| Wednesday, Dec. 18 | LOGOS 5:30 p.m. |
| Thursday, Dec. 19 | Bible Study 9:00 a.m.  
Men’s Prayer Group |
| Sunday, Dec. 22 | Adult Bible Study 8:30 a.m.  
Worship Service 9:30 a.m.  
Children’s Church 9:45 a.m.  
Youth Group 3:00 p.m.  
7:00 p.m. Blue Christmas Service |
| Tuesday, Dec. 24 | Christmas Eve.  
5:00 p.m. Service  
10:00 p.m. Service |
| Wednesday, Dec. 25 | |
| Thursday, Dec. 26 | Church Office Closed |
| Sunday, Dec. 29 | Adult Bible Study 8:30 a.m.  
Worship Service 9:30 a.m.  
Children’s Church 9:45 a.m.  
Youth Group 3:00 p.m. |
| Tuesday, Dec. 31 | New Year’s Eve. |
**Flowers for 2020**

Would you like to provide flowers for the sanctuary one Sunday during the year?

Name:________________________________________________________________

Phone:________________________________________________________________

Special Date:___________________________________________________________

Second choice/Special date:______________________________________________

In Honor of / In Memory of (circle one)_____________________________________

Do you want the church to order the flowers and charge to you? Yes____ No_____

After the service please take your flowers.

Please return flower request form to the church office. Thank you!

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**Christmas is an amazing time at Kemmerer Village!** Everyone works so hard to provide magic memories for our children. If you would like to help share the love of Christ by purchasing a gift, here is a list of items found frequently on individual lists. You can also call Development to get a specific list of a child in need. Call Alice at 226-4451 or Casey at 226-2130.

**Christmas Wish List**

- Gift Cards - Amazon, Walmart, Target
- Model Cars, Twin Bedding
- Diamond Art, Craft Kits, Sweat Pants
- Hoodies, Adult Coloring Books, Flat Iron
- Modeling Clay, Basketball

Did you know there is also a wish list on Amazon where you can send a gift straight to Kemmerer Village? And as always remember amazonsmile.com before any Amazon purchase and they will make a donation to us!

**Kemmerer Village 26th Annual Charity Golf Classic** was a success thanks to all of our sponsors, golfers and volunteers! The money raised from this event is used to help meet the needs of our children. Mark your calendars now to make next year even better, on September 11, 2020.
Surviving the Holidays
When you are Grieving

Most psychologists agree that there is no right or wrong way to grieve. Most of us just muddle thru doing what feels right, or doing what our gut and soul tell us. As the holidays come close, there will be many wondering if they could just skip from November to January. Since that will not be an option I’d like to offer some ideas that I have gleaned from Google and experience.

Take Care of You: Lower your expectations and do some things to pamper yourself. The family meal doesn’t have to be 6 courses plus dessert. Do some things that you know will bring a bit of joy to you.

Do something For Someone Else: Go visit a friend in the nursing home. Take cookies to a neighbor. Reaching out to others may take your mind away from your troubles, even for a short time.

Find Ways to Remember and Honor: Tell stories of that loved one, especially the funny ones. Share time with others in the family. Start a new Holiday tradition.

Ask for Help: There may be tasks that just seem impossible. Reach out and let others help with those tasks.

Focus on the love: Love for yourself. Love for the one you are missing. Love for those around you. When in doubt, ask yourself, what feels like LOVE?

This is far from all you will need to “make it” through the days ahead. There are as many ways to grieve as there are folks grieving. Take what works and trust yourself to have the courage to live each day as it comes. -Jean Jones

As some of you know, I have been doing my Supervised Practice of Ministry in Charleston, IL over the last few months. This church has allowed me to grow in my ministry as well as allowing me to have learned so much over my time here. The Reverend Mary Wright has been such a blessing for me as a mentor and has done an awesome job of making me feel welcome.

Some of the things that I have noticed for myself is that how tough it can be sometimes to be a Senior Pastor. The meetings alone have tested me in that it is genuinely tough to be able to attend all of them. But in the end, I believe that all of the meetings that I have attended have given me much more knowledge on everything that goes on in the church. One of the awesome things that I have noticed in my time here in Charleston when it comes to being a Pastor is just how much people love being visited with. I have seen on multiple visits to the hospital that even though I’m technically a stranger, the people will warm up very easily. I love that part about ministry!

However, all great things must come to an end and I will be finishing up my Charleston residency I believe on December 22nd. I am sad to leave the Charleston church but I am equally excited to be back in Mattoon and to get back to a regular routine. I have missed my Mattoon FPC family dearly and I cannot wait to be back with all of you in worship on Sunday mornings! Have a great Thanksgiving and I will see all of you very soon! -Toby
**Food pantry items are being gathered.**

Please keep the food coming to help those in need. Food may be left in a box in the Narthex.

December: Sugar

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**The Rotary Breakfast**

will be Saturday, December 7, 2019 at 8:00 a.m. We need four volunteers to help chaperone the food drive at 6:30 a.m.

If you have any questions please contact Toby Montgomery.

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**Snow Alert**

Winter Weather Hotline... If you happen to find a winter wonderland on Sunday morning and are concerned or wondering if there will be church services,... our contact person is **Paul Daily** or tune in to **WMCI 101.3** on the radio.

Paul will be in contact with Rev. Froeschle and a determination will be made regarding the weather and our services. Paul’s number is: 234-9667 or 232-9667.

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**Continued prayers for those having treatments for medical conditions:**

- Kathy Beaver
- Jean Beaird
- Earl Bennett
- Joan Dickens
- Jeremiah Parker
- Lindel & Betty Martin
- Betty & Bob Miller
- Elner Oliver
- Lori Woodyard
- The Barta family

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**For all those who are serving in Armed Forces, including:**

- Matt Gathmann
- Kelly Martin
- Hunter S. McRoberts
- Kelly Martin

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**Dec. 14**

Dan & Ann Spitz

**Dec. 21**

Tom & Kathy Oakley

**Dec. 24**

Nick & Kristie Figgins

**Dec. 28**

Frank & Bobbi Kingery

**Dec. 30**

Jerry & Roberta McRoberts
The Coles County Barbershop Chorus and quartets will present their Annual Christmas Benefit Concerts on Sunday, December 1, 7:00 p.m. here at First Presbyterian Church.

Everyone is invited to bring a poinsettia to decorate the church for Christmas. If you wish to have your poinsettia in memory or honor of a loved one, please share this information with the church office by December 18th. You may bring whatever color you would like.

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH in MATTOON offers a special “Blue Christmas” service on Sunday, December 22nd at 7:00 pm. Come out, and join with us in sharing and hearing prayers, scriptures, and music that acknowledge that God’s presence is for those who mourn, for those who struggle – and that God’s Word comes to shine light into our darkness. Everyone, regardless of church background (or lack of it) is welcome. The short service will be followed by a brief time for light refreshments and fellowship.

The Box Tops for Education program is changing! This could be a great opportunity for a youth group or someone to step up and make a huge difference with only a little effort. Instead of clipping, you can scan your receipt. The Box Tops for Education team has worked hard to build a user-friendly Box Tops mobile app (available now on the App Store and Google Play) that allows you to scan your store receipt, find participating products and instantly add Box Tops to Kemmerer Village earnings online.

If you still have traditional Box Tops clips at home, make sure to send them to Kemmerer as soon as possible. We will still earn cash for all clipped Box Tops until they expire. Better yet, you can “double clip” during the packaging transition by clipping traditional Box Tops AND scanning your store receipt containing participating products. Thanks for helping our school get what it needs!
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
10 Charleston Ave.
Mattoon, IL 61938

Return Service Requested

THE FIRST ALERT

HELLO DECEMBER