

First  
Presbyterian  
Church  
MOSCOW, IDAHO

# News & Views

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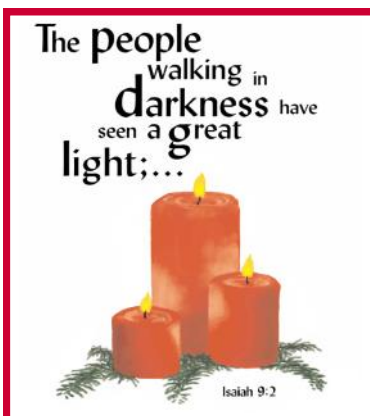
As we enter this last month of 2020, I come with a powerful sense of longing for a change. The most immediate reason is the way the spread of Covid-19 has rearranged our lives. We have had to distance ourselves from others. We end up having very few direct human interactions, and at times we may go for days without seeing anyone. We are confronted with other on-going systemic issues as well. We see how racism and white supremacy lead to real and tragic deaths of black people. We see the effects of climate change in the intensity and number of hurricanes and the fires burning out of control and wreaking havoc in the western United States. We see the political, ideological, and alternative senses of reality influencing how we get along in our nation and in our world. I long for change.

This is a time when longing for the Prince of Peace becomes even more real to me. In the midst of all the things we see, the struggles that engage us, the suffering that is real, I look again toward the way peace might come and light might enter our darkness. I realize my dependence on my hope in a God who so loves this world that this God would send the Son into the world, not to condemn us, but to save us. I feel the need of God's saving love that brings light into our darkness.

When I get up before dawn, I see the sky begin to lighten. Even before the sun peeks over the horizon, I see that the light of day is coming. Advent signals this lightening of the sky for me. It begins to show that the light is coming. I can remember the light of previous days and I can look forward to the new day. I am invited to remember God's promises, God's works of love and grace. I look forward to how God may fulfill the promises and lead us into new opportunities to show and know love, and to show and know grace.

We are invited to prepare for God's coming in the person of Jesus. We are invited to prepare through opening our hearts, recognizing our limitations, looking for the one that will show us the way, the (real) truth, and the life. I know how easy it is for me to set expectations of how God should act, of what God should do, of how God should solve our problems. I think part of preparing is letting go of my expectations and living instead with hope. *"For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we*

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## From the Pastor *...continued from Page 1*

*wait for it with patience.*" (Romans 8:24-25) This is a hope in the love, grace, and goodness of God, not in what I want or expect to happen. Hope invites me to be open to where God may lead us.

So, together we enter Advent and the journey to the birth of the Prince of Peace. Immediately, I see the readjustment I need to make. It is a birth. It does not describe a conquering battle over the forces of evil. God seems to enter into our lives and grow with us into the reality of grace. Even in our rejection of God's grace, God will move to enable us to know the love offered and hear the way described. God surprises, saves, and sustains us. So even in our necessarily rearranged lives, God enters in. Light shines in the darkness.

Indeed, we will do things differently this year. We will be live online on Sunday mornings. We will offer an online version of a Christmas Eve service, and we will plan a Christmas Eve parking lot service around a portable fireplace (or several). I hope these differences remind us how unusual the event of two thousand years ago is, as well. The incredibly wonderful gift of God's love present with us, the one we call Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. This birth is a moment that changes the course of history, and our lives. I pray that as we enter Advent, with all the unusual ways we must approach the celebration of Christ's birth, we will open our hearts, minds, and lives once again to Christ's coming and the way he changes us.

May the grace and peace of Christ be with you,  
Pastor Norman

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## Advent and Christmas 2020



### **Sunday Morning Worship Live Online - 10:30 a.m.**

Facebook Live: <https://www.facebook.com/moscowfirstpres>

YouTube Live: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCzTiJBub4fHAgVPgn5rgag>

*Videos of Sunday services, as well as Wednesday Taizé services, are available on Facebook and YouTube for viewing any time at your convenience at the above links.*

NEW: WE WILL ALSO BE LIVE ON ZOOM for worship, and for fellowship before and after the service. For the link, check the weekly Friday email or contact the church office.

Second Sunday of Advent, December 6 — Communion

Third Sunday of Advent, December 13 — Stewardship Dedication

Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 20 — Dedication of Christmas Joy Offering

### **Christmas Eve Worship, December 24**

6:00 p.m. — Outdoor service in the parking lot around a bonfire or fire pits. All are invited to join this in-person worship. Watch for details in weekly announcements.

Worship Online — A video Service of Lessons and Carols will be available on Facebook and YouTube (links above) at 4 p.m. on Christmas Eve, and any time/day after that. Access the service at the time that works best for you. The service will include reading of the Christmas story from scripture, and musical offerings from our music staff and congregation members.

## Family Promise/Avenues for Hope 2020

Family Promise of the Palouse seeks your financial support this December. This holiday giving campaign is Family Promise's primary source of funds to help homeless families find safe housing. They seek contributions this time of year so that these contributions can be matched with prizes from the Idaho Home Partnership Foundation. This campaign is called "Avenues for Hope". Last year, Family Promise of the Palouse received almost \$69,000 in contributions, and the Home Partnership Foundation gave Family Promise of the Palouse another \$15,500 in matching funds with this effort.



Rather than giving our December benevolence offerings through the church, the Deacons ask that we give to Family Promise through Avenues for Hope between December 10 and 31 in order to increase our gift through Idaho Home Partnership Foundation's matching funds. Please do not write a check to First Presbyterian Church. If you are able to contribute to Family Promise, please donate directly through one of these three ways.

- You can give to Family Promise of the Palouse by writing and mailing a check to Family Promise, PO Box 9389, Moscow, Idaho. 83843
- Go to [familypromisepalouse.org](http://familypromisepalouse.org) and press the DONATE button.
- Go to the Avenues for Hope website [www.avenuesforhope.org/organizations/family-promise-of-the-palouse](http://www.avenuesforhope.org/organizations/family-promise-of-the-palouse) and donate through their website. (Be sure you are giving to Family Promise of the Palouse, not the other Family Promises.)



Thank you for your support.

## Christmas Joy Offering

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) invites us to joyfully contribute to future and past church leaders who have critical financial needs. Many pastors serve in small churches where they receive little financial compensation for their work. At their time of retirement, they do not then have financial resources to address health or other living expenses. Your contribution will assist these leaders who have given their lives to this work. Contributions to the Joy Offering also help people of color who are aspiring to become pastors and faith leaders. Our church challenges us to "pay it forward" so that future faith leaders will be prepared to lead our congregations. Your contribution will help pay for their educational expenses.

The Joy Offering will increase our witness in the world by supporting those who are called to leadership in our churches. You may give by check to First Presbyterian Church, memo: Joy Offering, or via [Tithe.ly](https://tithely.com) online.

Thank you for your consideration of this giving opportunity. Contributions to the Joy Offering will be dedicated on December 20th.



## Ways to Help With Disaster Relief

If you are interested in donating to natural disaster relief efforts, here are a few options.

For general disaster relief: Presbyterian Disaster Assistance: <https://pda.pcusa.org/>

Specifically for Hurricane Iota: <https://pda.pcusa.org/situation/hurricane-iota/>

To send money to our contacts in Las Salinas, Nicaragua (hard hit by flooding) to help that particular village, use [Tithe.ly](https://tithe.ly) and choose gift type 'Other' and in the Note/Memo line put "Nicaragua Fund."

CEPAD Nicaragua works in programs of sustainable agriculture, economic development for women, psychosocial attention, community organization and training, strengthening of pastoral leadership, exchanges between delegations and partnerships, and education from a faith-based perspective. Much of the focus near term will be to help rebuild from the devastation caused by recent hurricanes: <https://cepadnica.org/donate/#give-a-one-time-gift>



## Thanks to the Scouts of T333 and T344

The scouts, leaders, and parents of our two scouts troops turned out on November 28 to rake leaves in the church yard. We are thankful for their service, and for the excellent job they did raking and hauling the leaves away. Both of our troops are doing their best to deliver a safe and quality scouting program in these socially distanced times.

### Stewardship Campaign 2021

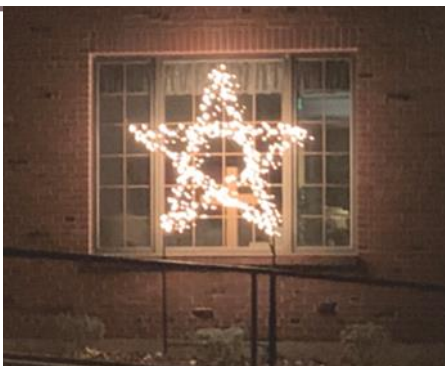
Your pledge is essential to the mission and ministry of our church, and will allow our Session to plan and budget for the coming year. Please send in your pledge before Stewardship Dedication Sunday, December 13.

Pledge forms were sent to church members in mid-November. If you need replacement forms, contact the church office at 208-882-4122 (leave a message) or email [office@fpcmoscow.org](mailto:office@fpcmoscow.org).

Thank you for supporting the work of our church with your time, talents, and monetary donations.



Drive by the church after dark to see our new Star of Hope illuminating the front of the building. The star was donated by Ed Schaper and decorated by the Johansens for everyone to enjoy.



## Finance Report



As of October 31, 2020

	October	YTD
Receipts	\$ 28,206	\$ 281,752
Disbursements	\$ 23,893	\$ 244,193
YTD Surplus/(Deficit)		\$37,559
Cash Balance (checking/savings)	\$43,493*	
*Includes prepaid pledges for 2020 @ \$2,602.		

## Christmas Cheer for Family Promise


Family Promise of the Palouse (FPP) is well established as an important provider of love and assistance for families experiencing housing insecurity in the Moscow-Pullman area, and our church has been an integral partner since the beginning. This year has been particularly challenging due to Covid-19, which necessitated housing families in local hotels rather than with area congregations. This change has taken a financial toll on the FPP budget for 2020, and we anticipate this will continue into the early months of 2021.

There are three ways you can help ease this burden and support families currently in shelter as we approach Christmas and year-end.

**VOLUNTEER** to provide a **home-cooked meal** during our upcoming host week, December 20-26. We need volunteers for four of the nights that week – Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday. You can provide the entire meal or collaborate with a friend. Sign up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0c4daaad22aaf94-family19>


Volunteer your time or funds to provide **small gifts** with each night's meal. This could be a candy cane or other sweets tucked into a small Christmas stocking, or any simple, inexpensive surprise to brighten their holidays—a bit of extra Christmas Cheer. Sign up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0c4daaad22aaf94-family19>

**PARTICIPATE** in FPP fund-raising events scheduled this month:



**Alternative Giving Market**  
 Dec. 5th 10-2 PM @ the Fairgrounds in Moscow  
 @agmpalouse@gmail.com  
[www.agmpalouse.org](http://www.agmpalouse.org)  
 Facebook Event AGMP Facebook Event

**Avenues for Hope Housing Challenge**  
 Dec. 10-31<sup>st</sup> online event  
 Matched giving opportunities to help our families stay safe. (Read more about this on Page 3.)  
<https://www.familypromisepalouse.org/avenues-for-hope>



**PRAY** for current, past, and future Family Promise guests, and all who are experiencing housing insecurity. Currently, there are **two** families in shelter with a total of **seven** people who will benefit from your prayers as they work hard to move forward and achieve their goals during these challenging times.

Family of **three**: This family includes a single mother and her 2-year-old and 3 year-old, who will be attending daycare.

Family of **four**: This family includes mom, dad, and two teenage boys, 14 and 16 years old.

Please pray for the FPP staff as well, as they continue to show resilience, creativity, and compassion and have inspired many during the past year.

## Deacons' Spotlight—Celeste Brown

Celeste Brown became a member of our church family in November 1992 and from the beginning her presence and humble service has made a difference in so many ways. Now retired, Celeste was deeply involved in her work as professor of Genetics in Biological Sciences at the University of Idaho, where she was greatly respected as a teacher, speaker, and collaborative researcher. We feel that her distinguished career is equally balanced by the laudable contributions made in her service to our church.

Early on, Celeste joined the Adult Handbell Choir with abundant enthusiasm. She loved being part of that musical ensemble and fully embraced the concept that every member is important as the ensemble offered music frequently in worship.

Celeste is often a quiet helper behind the scenes. Pre-COVID, she served as a member of the planning team for Taizé worship, and frequently shared in leadership of midweek prayer services. She enjoys being worship leader and usher, and occasionally runs the sound board for worship. In addition, she has taken on the responsibility for hanging the beautiful sanctuary banners, changing them to reflect the seasons of the church year. When children's Sunday School moved to a rotation model, Celeste served as technical support/teacher for students in the computer lab.



No matter what task is at hand, when Celeste sees a need, she steps in to fill it. Many would award her the "Golden Gloves Award" for the countless number of dishes she has washed following Wednesday Supper Fellowship Dinners. Recently Celeste has been a vital member of the COVID task force; and subsequently she taught many of our members how to get connected with online ZOOM meetings.

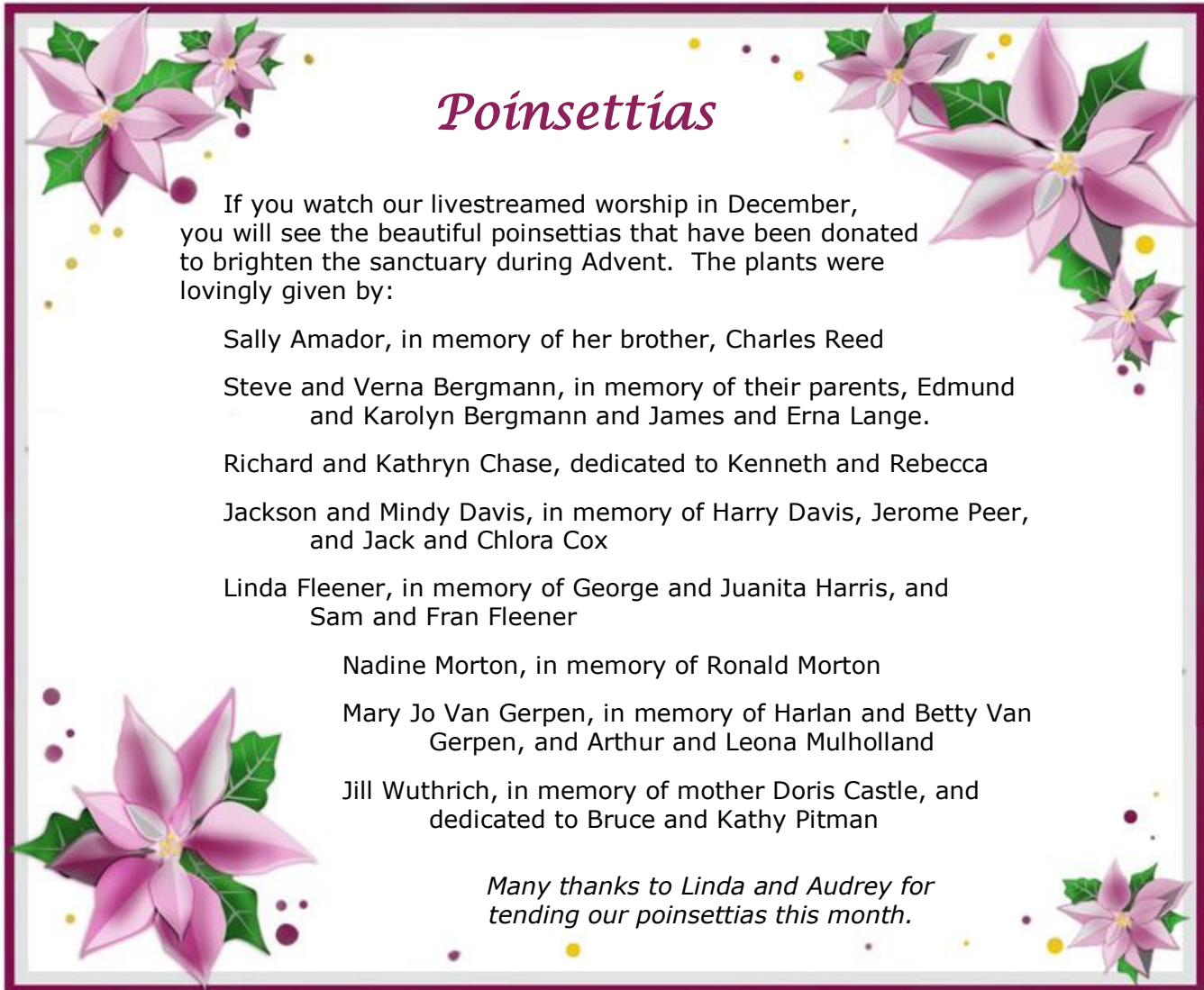
Celeste has blessed us with her many leadership skills. In 2004 she was ordained as a Deacon, and served as a Deacon for 12 years, including several terms as Moderator. Celeste was ordained as an Elder in 2019 and is currently serving as a member of the Session. As a compassionate Christian, Celeste is active in our church's Stephen Ministry program. She has received additional training certifying her as a "Stephen Leader", and currently is ministering in that capacity.

During the past year Celeste has served as Moderator of Presbytery of the Inland Northwest. In early November, many had the privilege of watching her preside as Moderator of the quarterly Presbytery meeting via Zoom. Although she had been totally involved with the tasks of leadership all morning and afternoon, in the late afternoon Celeste was found in the FPC kitchen sterilizing a myriad of donated plastic containers which are filled with soup going to needy families through the efforts of Food Not Bombs.

When Food Not Bombs (FNB) started working out of our Fellowship Hall and kitchen to provide community meals, Celeste became the liaison between FPC and FNB, as well as a FNB volunteer. She recruited and trained volunteers to assist with the vegetable preparation for these meals, and is now putting in more hours to fill the gaps left by student volunteers who have gone home for the holidays. Her dedication and long hours of service to this ministry is inspiring.

With the pandemic came many economic and food challenges for people in our community. Celeste laid the groundwork for the Fall Harvest Food Distribution we staged at church in lieu of our Welcome Back picnic this fall, and worked alongside other church members from start to finish.

Celeste has been actively involved in the Presbytery's "Future Church Project", helping our church to become a Matthew 25 Church. Loving God and loving our neighbor is what we are to be about, and Celeste lives this ethic out on a daily basis. Our church family is blessed with Celeste's humility, generous heart for service, and leadership.



## Seeking Applicants for FPC Director of Family Ministry Position

First Presbyterian Church of Moscow is looking for someone with a heart for Family Ministry. This is a 30 hour per week salaried position coordinating ministry and outreach to families and the individuals in them. The successful applicant will focus on ministry to children and students from birth through high school, with supervision from the Pastor and guidance from the Family Ministry Coordinating Team. The primary responsibilities include providing appropriate avenues for faith development in children and youth, encouraging youth to know Christ and to become disciples, and engaging parents in ongoing faith development. The position has room for your ideas, skills, and creativity, and depends on your passion for ministry.

For a complete job description, application, and information on how to apply visit our website: [fpcmoscow.org/jobs.aspx](http://fpcmoscow.org/jobs.aspx).

Contact the [church office](#) with questions. Applications are currently being accepted, and the search will remain open until the position is filled.



## A Community Prayer Board

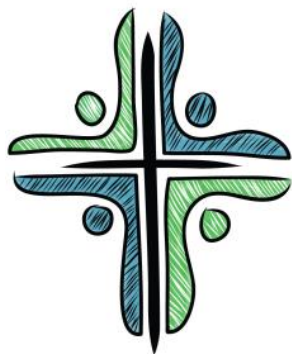
Since COVID-19 deaths now have surpassed 260,00 in the United States and 866 deaths in Idaho, we need a way for communal grief and lament. We are dealing with many other losses and struggles during 2020 as well. The heavy hand of racism is seen in the loss of black persons' lives due to police shootings. Homes and lives have been lost in natural disasters. Divisiveness and incivility is all too common.



We think it is beneficial to express the troubles of 2020 and to pray for a better 2021. We need ways of expressing our sorrow and lament, our prayers for change, and our prayers for hope. We want to make possible a way to commemorate those who have died. The prayer board we have placed in the front yard of First Presbyterian Church is offered to the entire community as a way to pray and to lament the losses and express the concerns of 2020 as well as the hopes for 2021.

On this prayer board one may place messages/remembrances, pictures, and symbols of our lament and mourning. One may also tie prayer flags on the wire mesh on each end of the board. The waving pieces of fabric will be physical reminders of the prayers we lift to God in sorrow, lament, and hope.

We cannot easily gather at one time to lament and mourn, but we can, across time, stop by the prayer board and notice each other's grief and express our own. We may, as a community, lift our concerns for each other in prayer and recognize we are not alone in our losses and in our grief. We hope this prayer board blesses you in these difficult times.



First  
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Facebook: Moscow FPC  
Web: [fpcmoscow.org](http://fpcmoscow.org)

## *First Presbyterian Church*

*"Growing in Christ"*

**Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m. online**

Facebook Live:

<https://www.facebook.com/moscowfirstpres>

YouTube Live:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCzTiJBUB4fHAqVPGn5rgag>

Office Hours by appointment  
208-882-4122

Pastor Norman Fowler  
[fpcpastornorman@gmail.com](mailto:fpcpastornorman@gmail.com)