

The Messenger

First Presbyterian Church,
Kewanee

June 2024

Elmira United Presbyterian
Church, Toulon

Upcoming Scripture:

- **June 2**
 - Deuteronomy 5:12-15: Observe the sabbath day.
 - Mark 2:23-3:6: Lord of the Sabbath.
- **June 9**
 - 1 Samuel 8:4-20 Give Us A King
 - Mark 3:20-35 How can Satan cast out Satan?
- **June 16**
 - Ezekiel 17:22-24 The Noble Cedar.
 - Mark 4:26-34 Compare the Kingdom of God.
- **June 23**
 - Job 38:1-11 God questions Job.
 - Mark 4:35-41 Calms the Seas.
- **June 30**
 - Lamentations 3:22-33 The Lord is my Portion.
 - 2 Corinthians 8:7-15 A Fair Balance.

Rev. Art Blegen Wife: Annabell

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Pastor Art's Office Hours are as follows:

**Tuesday and Wednesday - Kewanee church office
10:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m.**

**Thursday – Elmira church office 10:00 a.m. until 8:00
p.m.**

**Administrative Assistant office hours in Kewanee
Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday 10:00 a.m. to
4:00 p.m.**



From the Pastors Desk:

Vital Congregations

When we look around at other churches in our community, we see some that are growing, while too many others are closing their doors. What makes them different? What makes some congregations “vital,” while others continue to struggle? Dictionary.com defines vital as: “having remarkable energy, liveliness, or force of personality,” “being the seat or source of life,” or “indispensable; essential.” Can we say these things about our church?

Many people have attempted to list criteria to be a vital congregation. They’ve come up with many lists, all different, but there are some common themes. At the very core, vital congregations focus on equipping and empowering members to be loyal disciples of Jesus; at home, when they gather, and when they reach out around their communities and the entire world.

Vital congregations are those who embrace the Holy Spirit and welcome all people. They focus on becoming and teaching disciples in the power of the Holy Spirit. Vital congregations are those who serve Christ by serving their community through ministries of mercy and justice.

Notice that this says nothing about the size of the church’s membership or its budget. It doesn’t distinguish between rural or urban churches. It doesn’t address whether the church can afford a large pastoral staff, or a single part-time pastor. It doesn’t mention what part of the country the church is located. This definition applies to all churches of all types, all denominations, and in all places.

Almost ten years ago, the Presbyterian Mission Agency began working to determine what they saw as the criteria for congregations to become “vital.” They began by recognizing that we live in a different world now than we did when most of us attended church as children. Where the church used to be a central fixture in our communities, now it is often little more than an afterthought. The very things we used to do no longer seem to work.

The Presbyterian Mission Agency ended up with a list of seven characteristics or “marks” to describe a Vital Congregation. For the next several months, I will address each of these more intensively, but for now, know that they are as follows.

1. **Lifelong discipleship formation.**
2. **Intentional authentic evangelism.**
3. **Outward incarnational focus.**
4. **Empower servant leadership.**
5. **Spirit-inspired worship.**
6. **Caring relationships.**
7. **Ecclesial health.**

As we study these seven marks over the coming months, we must ask ourselves some questions. The first of which is whether we desire to be engaged in the work of the church. We will never be a vital congregation if all we do is come to church out of duty or routine. We may continue to

exist, but we won't be a place of liveliness unless we believe God is at work within us.

It's time to check the vital signs. For God has not called us to be on life support, but rather to be filled with life abundant.

Grace and Peace!
Pastor Art

Memory Verse: Lamentations 3:24-27:

²⁴ *"The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him."*

²⁵ *The LORD is good to those who wait for him, to the soul that seeks him.*

²⁶ *It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD.*

²⁷ *It is good for one to bear the yoke in youth,*

Memorization of Scripture should never be seen as a burden, but as a way to grow closer to God. Psalm 1 tells us that our "delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law, [we] meditate day and night." With that in mind, try to memorize one verse of the following passage each week. If you struggle with memorization, don't worry about it. Spend some time reading and thinking about each verse. When we get to this passage at the end of the month, God's words will already be alive in your heart.

Prayer Prompt:

Father in heaven, I am impatient. Teach me to wait on you...

At First Presbyterian Church of Kewanee, we commit ourselves to worshiping God, growing spiritually together, and reflecting Christ in our daily lives.



LADIES FELLOWSHIP

Thank you Betty Oliver, Kay Grieve, Dawn Milburn & Paige Milburn for inviting us for the fun afternoon we had at the "If the Shoe Fits" ladies get together at Elmira Church. Dawn had all the tables decorated with vintage glass shoes and fresh flowers. After eating cupcakes, cookies and fruit, Dawn read scriptures to fit the occasion with her "models" of young ladies walking down the "runway" showing off their footwear. Everyone did a great job!! What a splendid way to spend a fellowship spring afternoon.



MISSION FOR JUNE IS REBUILDING TOGETHER

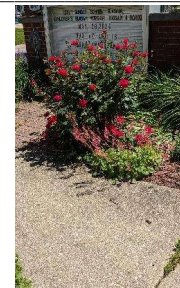
Rebuilding Together Henry County makes its impact by providing free-of-charge home repairs and updates to existing homeowners in Geneseo, Cambridge, Annawan, Colona and Kewanee School Districts. They also repair homes, revitalizing communities and rebuilding lives. Safe homes and communities for everyone. Your donation helps homeowners live in safe and healthy

homes.



GOOD TO SEE BOTH OF YOU!

We were so happy to see Elmer and his son, Don. Elmer was very glad to see his church family again too. He & Don even joined us for lunch. Elmer will be 92 years young on his birthday, June 2nd. Have a very happy birthday Elmer!!!



THANK YOU MONIKA

The garden is looking beautiful and healthy thanks to Monika's gardening skills. Shirley's (Anderson) roses are in full bloom along with all of the other flowers and plants. Thank you Monika for your time and effort to keep the garden looking so inviting!!

SUMMER WORKSHOP UPDATE

Last month in the Messenger I suggested having a workshop on using resources available to better understand Bible scriptures. Receiving no interest at this time, I have decided that summer might not be the best time to do this. I will try again in the fall.

Sharon Hall



8TH GRADE PROMOTION

Congratulations to Treavor Hulslander and Cage Martin for being promoted from the 8th grade. They will be heading to High School now!! We wish you the best and hope you enjoyed being a Freshman. Next thing we know, they'll be getting there driver's license!



First Presbyterian Church’s Board and Congregation invites the Community and surrounding area to embrace and join in the commemoration and celebration of Juneteenth, to widen and deepen the celebration of this day by providing a brief history and reflection. **Though the Emancipation Proclamation was issued January 1, 1863**, it was not until more than two years later that the people of Texas, the most remote state of the former Confederacy, first learned of freedom for enslaved people. When Union soldiers following the end of the Civil War, traveled to Galveston where the pronouncement was publicly read on June 19, 1865. Celebrations of Juneteenth started in Texas, which declared Juneteenth a state holiday in 1980. By 2019, forty-seven states recognized Juneteenth, and it became a federal holiday in 2021. **In the immediate post-Civil War era**, there was much hope that the formerly enslaved people would finally have peaceful and free lives. Families tried to reunite. The granting of land by the federal government promised to provide a means to live, and African American men were given the right to vote. During Reconstruction, 16 African Americans were elected to the U.S. Congress, 600 to state legislatures, and hundreds more to local offices. However, the backlash against these changes was swift, widespread, and ruthless. The land grants were taken back within a year. African Americans were depicted as little more than savages while Ku Klux Klansmen were depicted as saviors, as famously portrayed in the 1915 film *The Birth of a Nation*. Lynchings, Black Codes, and Jim Crow laws that only applied or were only enforced against Black people kept the formerly enslaved people subservient. One example was the practice of imprisoning formerly enslaved people for violations of vagrancy laws and using the resulting prison labor for profit. **While this is a time for reflection**, there will be a re-dedication of the rare First Presbyterian stain glass windows depicting Jesus as a person of color, within the sanctuary, by Rev. Eric Heinekamp Transformational General Presbyter & Stated Clerk along Rev. Art Blegen. **Community Churches and Leaders** will be in attendance and participating in projecting, Anti-racism goes beyond diversity. It is a spiritual practice of self-reflection that examines how we individually live out the truth that God created humanity in God’s own image. It examines the structures that comprise our processes and practices to understand their impact on people and works to identify and remove structural obstacles to full participation by all in the life of the church. **Please come and celebrate Unity as a Community.** **Date:** Saturday June 15, 2024, **Time:** 1:00pm-4:00pm

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

- 2 – Elmore Thurston
- 5 – Roger Johnston
- 7 – Pastor Annabell
- 8 – Annett Bates
- 8 – Sarah Nelson
- 9 – Terri Wolfe
- 11 – Vickie Bennett
- 21 – Michele Wentworth
- 21 – Frank Marselle
- 27 – Dawson Hull
- 30 – Gabe Martin

JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

- 6 – Niles & Shiela Reamer
- 10 – Jim & Monika Breed
- 21 – Roger & Melanie Johnston
- 26 – Merle & Sharon Hall

PRAYER CONCERNS

- Baker, Lisandra – stroke
- Behnke, Tommie Jane – health problems
- Bennett, Cody – car accident, grandson of Vicki Bennett
- Bock, Lauren – 14-year-old diagnosed with leukemia, Wendy Smith’s, friend’s daughter
- Bornstein, Jaimee – stage 4 cancer – cancer is in remission
- Bowman, Jeff, and Peg – cancer
- Bridgewater, Kari –seizure disorder
- Briggs, Maci – health issues, Bill & Ruth Anne Scott’s great granddaughter
- Brown, Jeff – health problems friend of Lanny & Carolyn Anderson
- Bystry, Dave – pneumonia
- Craig, Clifford – Heart surgery and his wife Jean
- Cronk, Cliff – pneumonia
- Cruse, Lynette – leukemia
- Danielson, Robin –leukemia, friend of Vicki Bennett
- Donavon, Kevin - cancer –friend of Chris & Curt Reeves
- Duncan – health issues
- Edelman, Dave – health problems and Sharon for his care
- Evans, Dan – health problems
- Faber, Peggy – MS
- Faber, Steve – recovering from lung transplant
- Ferkel, Randy – recurrence of cancer
- Feldner, Hannah – recovering from eye surgery
- Fryer, Alvah – breast cancer, friend of Lanny & Carolyn Anderson
- Gasaway, Larry – health problems, friend of Lanny & Carolyn Anderson
- Good, Billie – Health issues
- Harding, Jack, Robert, Richard & Susan – health problems
- Heane, Jeremy – tumor and angina
- Huber, Denny – recovering from hip replacement Janet Huber’s son
- Huber Karessa _ health problems, Janet Huber’s daughter-in-law
- Huber, Mallery – health problems, Janet Huber’s granddaughter
- Huggins, Cindy – kidney & brain problems, Niles & Sheila’s daughter
- Hughes, Andrew – health problems
- Jackson, Estavan – recovering from surgery, Annabell’s grandson
- Johnson, Clay – many health problems
- Johnson, Jerri – health problems
- Kopp, Brenda – recovering from fall and health issues
- Lamb, Paul – Lymphoma
- Larson, Ken – health problems, friend of Lanny & Carolyn Anderson
- Lindstrom, Madeline – health issues
- Lloyd, Carla – recovering heart surgery, Pastor Annabell’s cousin
- Martin, Anna – daughter of Freddie Martin, Jr. has MS
- Marselle, Frank –health problems
- Naslund, Ron – health problems, friend Lanny & Carolyn Anderson
- Newell, Nylan – 7-year-old has Lorenzo’s Oil Disease (ALD)
- Norton, Sue – breast cancer, friend of Mary Jane Stabler
- Olson, Rusty – inoperable tumor
- O’Neill, Kay – her family
- Perrin, Steve & Debby – health problems
- Scott, Gene – has MS- wife Rowann – health issues
- Skinner, Dave – health problems
- Smith, Wendy – good, on-going test results
- Stead, Tim – heart problems, Chris & Lisa’s cousin

Thompson, Michael – stamina
 Thron, Butch – serious health problems
 Thurston, Elmer – health problems
 Vigor, Becky – dementia, on hospice
 Wade, Lori (Scott) – prayers for her MS & diabetes
 Ward, Debi – congestive heart failure, Lanny & Carolyn's niece
 Ward, Dona – Parkinson
 Weeks, Judy – Melanoma. Vicki Bennett's sister
 Welgat, Nick – stage 4 lung cancer Abby Hamilton's brother
 Wentworth, Al – health problems
 Wentworth, Michele – continuing health problems
 Winter, Debbie – health problems
 Willa Drake - Cancer, Pastor Annabell's friend
 Williams, Alan – many health problems, Annabelle's brother
 Wood, Chris – cancer
 Wolf, Jackie – health problems
 Wolfe, Terri – vertigo
 Family and friends of Jo Hammon, Chris and Lisa Hammon's cousin
 Family & friends of Brock Tumbleson who passed away May 5

Elmira United Presbyterian Church, we will continue to be a thriving faith community reaching out to our community and the world



April 28, the Deacons had made May Baskets and children of the church passed them out to each family present during worship that morning. Deacons took baskets to those not at church that Sunday. Thank you Deacons for all the baked goodies, candy, bubbles and such in the basket. You do a GREAT job of showing your love for our congregation!



SUNDAY SCHOOL

April 28 was also special because there were 42 people in attendance at church, with 12 of them being children. Paige Milburn had Sunday School that morning, following worship. The 10 children present talked about Jesus Calming the Sea of Galilee, Jesus calms our worries and fears.



IF THE SHOE FITS

Saturday, May 4 saw 37 guests attend "If the Shoe Fits" Women's Event at EUPC. Dawn Milburn presented a wonderful program on different scriptures from the Bible and shoe models for the afternoon were Michelle and Hailey Lane, Kenzie Wright, Caroline and

Genevieve Schroeder and Elsie Currier. All had a good time, the shoe models especially! Paige Milburn and Kay Grieve also helped the models prepare. Will this Women's event become an annual event?



HAPPY MOTHER'D DAY

May 12 saw the sanctuary decorated with petunias and during worship the children passed out petunias to each mother there in recognition of Mother's Day; a long standing tradition at our church. The flowers were given by John and Betty Oliver in recognition of their mothers and grandmothers.



COFFEE HOUR

A big thank you to Dawn Milburn and Kay Grieve for hosting our final Coffee hour for the Spring on May 19. We will start up again in September. This is a wonderful time of friends, food and fellowship! Come join us at 8:15 a.m. in Fellowship Hall, before church.



MEMORIAL DAY CELEBRATION & ANNUAL DAY ASSOCIATION MEETING

On May 27, Memorial Day, the Toulon Legion had a group of veteran's come to the Elmira Cemetery for a brief service in honor of all the veterans buried there. Thank you, opened with prayer, had the presentation of colors, a 21-gun salute and Taps. Always a nice way to start Memorial Day!

At 2:00 pm, 26 gathered at the EUPC for the Annual Elmira Memorial Day Association meeting. President Dave Grant welcomed people and gave the talk for the day on "Civil War Oddities". He also stated that any veteran that can get off and on a bus should try and go on an Honor Flight to Washington D.C. His trip this year was wonderful! During the business meeting the group agreed to give \$150 to the Toulon American Legion, the Quad City and the Peoria Honor flights. A processional to the cemetery, with crosses in hand to decorate the Veterans graves, was led by Elmira's bagpiper Bill Good! Thank you to all those who serve our country now and the veterans that have served in the past .

THANK YOU!!

A big Thank You to Dave and Linda Grant for their work in the Meditation Garden, beautiful as always and Dave's mowing of the yard. John Oliver for keeping the

hedge trimmed and Dawn and Dave Milburn for the flower plantings around the church.

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

2 – Milo Currier
3 – Donna Kay Elliot
7 – Annabell Blegen
17 – Jim Winslow
23 – Pat Fifer

JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

22 – Jim & Diana Winslow
23 – Dave & Dawn Milburn

CALL OR SEND CARDS TO:

Don Oliver

Courtyard Village
860 Sunset Drive, Box 112
Kewanee IL 61443

Barb Elliott

626 East Street South
Kewanee, IL 61443

Lois Seger

The Heritage
3121 Macineery Dr, #110
Council Bluffs, IA 51501

Barb Shambaugh

203 Willow Street
Lafayette, IL 61449

PRAYER CONCERNS





Archer, Colin
Barnbold, Debbie
Bayer, Peggy Grant
Beck, Lia
Bennett, Cody
Bennet, Matt & Chris
Bergen, Calvin, Maggie & Tyler
Bishop, Jeremy
Bishop, Mike & Sonna
Bickhauser, Angie
Brattie, Nancy
Bimmerle, Mike & Annette
Boardman, Donna
Campbell, Nich & Jenny
Carlson, Mike
Chapman, Frank
Clark, Gloria
Cook, Dave
Currier, Ron
Daniels, Eunice
Dennis, Chrystal
Donavan, Kevn
Doran, Amanda
Drake, Willa
Ebnle, Dean
Eddy, Jack
Elliott, Barb
Elliott, Debbie
Emily, Ellie

Eshe, Rev. Dave
Faber, Steve
Fry, Matthew
German, Brenda
Goodall, Pat
Grant, Austin
Green, Allison
Greene, Samantha
Grieve, Kay
Hebdon, Ali
Hotchkiss-Kucukas, Diane
Hulslander, Donna
Jackson, Estevan
Jacobson, Del
Johnson, Alex
Jones, Noab
King, Judy
Klien, Kaithyn
Lindstrom, Diane
Maber, Jack
Marshall, Maggie
May, Scott
McGinnis, Debby
Milburn, Cindy
Miller, Carol
Minton, Tom
Montooth, Tim
Morris, Geneva, Jo & Pam.
Nelson, Dan
Nelson, Paul
Rev Nurtzorn, Art
Parish, Brandon
Parish, Jim
Parker, Jim & Arlene
Perkins, Kathleen Grant
Peters, Julie
Pullen, Whitney
Rose, Sue
Bloomberg Rosenberg, Vicky
Russell, Melissa
Sandy & Beth
Schaeffer, Bob
Scott, Gene
Seckman, Marilyn
Seger, Lois
Sellnow, Celina
Sinkovich, Cindy
Shayna & Kevin
Smallee, Kaylee
Smith, Charlie
Sovey, Angela
Shipp, Matthew & Matt
Steelman, Kendra
Steward, Karen
Talbot, Ben
Taylor, Debbie
Thurmon, Lisa
Thurston, "Sy" & Gary
Tolley, Joe & Jenna

Tuthill, Connie
 VanVoren, Rev Patrick & Pat
 Welgat, Nick
 West, Emily
 Wilkinson, Phil

Wilson, David
 Wilson, Nancy
 Woods, Chris & April
 Joe, Jenna & Kathy

JUNE 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2 Communion Elmira Service 9:00 a.m. Adult Discussion 9:45 a.m. Kewanee Service 11:00 a.m.	3	4	5	6	7	8
9 Elmira Service 9:00 a.m. Kewanee Adult Discussion 9:45 a.m. Service 11:00 a.m.	10	11	12 	13	14 FLAG DAY 	15 Juneteenth Celebration 2:00 p.m. Followed by a coffee hour
16 Elmira Service 9:00 a.m. Session meeting 7:00 p.m. on zoom Kewanee Adult Discussion 9:45 a.m. Service 11:00 a.m. 	17	18	19	20 Session meeting 6:00 p.m. 	21	22
23 Elmira Service 9:00 a.m. Session meeting 7:00 p.m. by Zoom Kewanee Adult Discussion Class, 9:45 Service 11:00 a.m.	24	25	26	27	28	29
30 Elmira Service 9:00 a.m. Kewanee Adult Discussion 9:45 a.m. Service 11:00 a.m.						