

Lamplighter

Randall Presbyterian Church ~ Randall, MN

November 2021

Preparing for a A Post-Pandemic Advent

*I am about to do a new thing; now it
springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness
and rivers in the desert.
(Isaiah 43:19 NRSV)*

In a time of great hardship, these words were spoken to the Hebrew people by the prophet as a promise of hope and peace.

It a reminder to us that even through the darkest times, there is hope in the future. That is the message of Advent- the light shines and darkness can not overcome it.

Hopefully this four week worship series will prepare us for a more meaningful Advent this year.

If you missed any of the services, they are available online on the church's webpage (randallpresby.org).

	October 24, Worship Fully Christmas marks the moment where God's promise was fulfilled, and love took form. It is a moment that deserves our full attention.
	October 31, Spend Less By spending wisely on gifts we free ourselves from the anxiety associated with debt so we can take in the season with a full heart.
	November 7, Give More We know what you're thinking. "Wait, didn't they just say spend less? The most memorable gift you can give to someone is
	November 14, Love All It all boils down to love. Love from a savior. Love to a neighbor. By spending just a little less on gifts we free up our resources to love.

Preparing for Christmas before it is too late!

Message from Michael....

Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.
1 Thessalonians 5:18

Sometimes it seems that stuck between Halloween and Christmas is Thanksgiving. I was in Target on November 1st, and their Team Members were busy taking down the Halloween merchandise and replacing them with more Christmas items. I couldn't even find discounted Halloween candy.

There are numerous studies on the physical, spiritual, and emotional value of being a more thankful person. One study on gratitude showed that "participants were more likely to report helping someone with a personal problem or offering emotional support to others. In other words, gratitude may also motivate pro-social or moral behavior."¹

So, instead of skipping over Thanksgiving, let's use the month of November to test the above results. I encourage you to practice one act of gratitude every day until November. In the past, I have suggested writing a thanksgiving journal where everyday you write down what you're thankful for. However, I have learned that often this isn't as beneficial as I thought. Mainly, because we are too general in our comments.

A University of California study showed a more effective way of writing a thanksgiving journal: Take some time each day to think about something you are thankful for, and then write five sentences explaining why you are thankful. The study showed that the students who did this for ten weeks were more "elated excited and alert and less tired, sad, or lethargic."²

I encourage you to give it try.

Michael

1. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/more-mortal/200911/the-benefits-being-thankful>
2. From the website 13 Most Popular Gratitude Exercises & Activities

Scientific Evidence of the value of being a grateful person.

- Keeping a gratitude diary for two weeks produced sustained reductions in perceived stress (28 percent) and depression (16 percent) in health-care practitioners.
- Gratitude is related to 23 percent lower levels of stress hormones (cortisol).
- Practicing gratitude led to a 7-percent reduction in biomarkers of inflammation in patients with congestive heart failure.
- Two gratitude activities (counting blessings and gratitude letter writing) reduced the risk of depression in at-risk patients by 41 percent over a six month period.
- Dietary fat intake is reduced by as much as 25 percent when people are keeping a gratitude journal.
- A daily gratitude practice can decelerate the effects of neurodegeneration (as measured by a 9 percent increase in verbal fluency) that occurs with increasing age.
- Grateful people have 16 percent lower diastolic blood pressure and 10 percent lower systolic blood pressure compared to those less grateful.
- Grateful patients with Stage B asymptomatic heart failure were 16 percent less depressed, 20 percent less fatigued and 18 percent more likely to believe they could control the symptoms of their illness compared to those less grateful.
- Older adults administered the neuropeptide oxytocin showed a 12 percent increase in gratitude compared to those given a placebo
- Writing a letter of gratitude reduced feelings of hopelessness in 88 percent of suicidal inpatients and increased levels of optimism in 94 percent of them.
- Grateful people (including people grateful to God) have between 9-13 percent lower levels of Hemoglobin A1c, a key marker of glucose control that plays a significant role in the diagnosis of diabetes.
- Gratitude is related to a 10 percent improvement in sleep quality in patients with chronic pain, 76 percent of whom had insomnia, and 19 percent lower depression levels.

From Dr. Robert Emmons, professor of psychology at UC Davis and a leading scientific expert on the science of gratitude. Author of *Thanks! How the New Science of Gratitude Can Make You Happier*.

Advent Is Coming

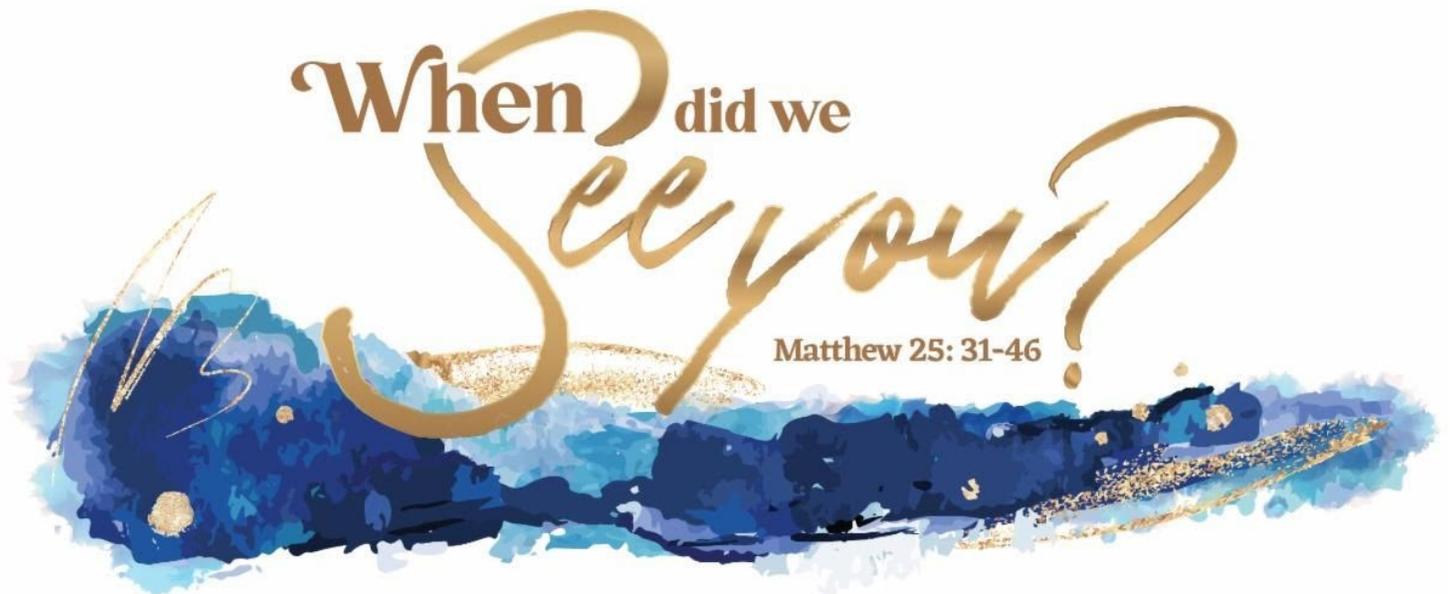
November 28th is the first Sunday of Advent. We will decorate the church after the morning service.

**Light of the World:
A Beginner's Guide to Advent,
Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m.
December 1, 8, 15, 22**

Randall will be joining Presbyterian Churches in the area for this zoom Advent study.

Advent is not only the perfect time to read the story of the birth of Jesus; it's also a great time to dive deeper into the biblical texts that surround the event. In *Light of the World: A Beginner's Guide to Advent*, author, professor, and biblical scholar Amy-Jill Levine shows how the Gospel narratives connect to the Old Testament, highlights the role of women in first-century Jewish culture, and emphasizes the importance of Mary's visitation, the census, the stable, the star of Bethlehem, and the flight to Egypt.

This will be an online study, and people can participate in their own homes or view the class in the church's sanctuary.



**Presbyterian Youth Triennium 2022
Indianapolis, Indiana
DEPART July 23 – RETURN July 28**

A gathering for High School age youth, youth leaders and young adults in the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the Cumberland Presbyterian Churches. presbyterianyouthtriennium.org

Kylee Magee, Macall Magee, and Brenna Magee attended the last Triennium. Ask them about their experience! Or speak to Pastor Michael for more information about next summer's trip.

Randall Live!

Beginning October 24, not only were worship services moved indoors, they're also being streamed and recorded live. So, if you are not able to attend on a Sunday morning, you can watch the live service on your computer or smart tv. The services will be on YouTube, but links we be on both Facebook and the church's website: randallpresby.org

The service will be available on the site for at least four weeks. So now there is never an excuse to miss worshipping with Randall Presbyterian Church.

Streaming live takes more volunteers, and church is grateful to Corbin and Landan for jumping in to help. Other volunteers are also needed.

Coins for a Cause

Every year, Dr. S. G. Knight students, families, staff and the community work together to make some children's holiday shiny and bright by providing holiday gifts for families in need in our Randall community.

Prayer Concerns

Joyce McDonald is struggling with cancer.

Chris Magee is struggling with cancer.

Betty Pasela--Betty is Mary Skoog's sister.

Chad Keller's cancer has returned. Chad is Kari Magee's brother.

*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.
(1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NRSV)*

Who Me? An Officer? Are You Being Called?

Whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many
Mark 10:43-45

The Nominating Committee of Randall Presbyterian Church is beginning its work to call officers to serve beginning in January, 2022. Their task is to seek God's wisdom in calling 2 Deacons and 2 Ruling Elders. As they pray for God's discernment, they ask you to pray, and ask yourself, "Is God Calling You?"

Worship Assistant Volunteers are Needed

Worship Assistants are a reminder that worship is the act of the entire congregation. The Worship Assistant helps lead the congregation in the liturgy and prayers. A signup sheet is available in the entry way for those able to help.

November Birthdays

Ashley Farrow	11/20
Kari Magee	11/21
Irene Pietz	11/22
Michelle Pietz	11/22
Brianna Yorek	11/24
Patty Ballou	11/25
Tina Pearson	11/30

*May God Bless Each of You & May You
Have a Happy Birthday*

RANDALL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

MINUTES OF SESSION – September 15, 2021

Members present: Terry Coffin, Jake Farrow, Christi Hartwell, Michael Lashinski, Marlys Olson and Moderator Reverend Michael Hartwell. **Members excused:** Chris Magee. **Members absent:** None.

Others present: None.

The regular meeting of the Session was called to order at 6:35 p.m. in the basement of the Randall Presbyterian Church by Moderator Reverend Michael Hartwell, who opened the meeting with prayer. A quick check in was also done to see how everyone was doing and any prayer concern updates.

Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve the August 18, 2021 Session Meeting minutes was made by Michael Lashinski, seconded by Christi Hartwell. Motion carried.

Approval of Treasurer's Report: Summary of the August 2021 Balance Sheet – Current Total Assets: \$160,327.41 (Checking: \$3,683.53, Savings: \$156,643.88). Motion to approve the August Treasurer reports was made by Michael Lashinski, seconded by Jake Farrow. Motion carried.

Reports:

- **Pastor's Report:** Thursday, August 19, Perkins Bible Study; Monday, August 23, Pastor's Cohort Zoom Meeting; August 23, Faith not Fear Cohort Zoom; Thursday, August 26, Perkins Bible Study; August 26, Food Shelf; Monday, August 30, Pastor's Cohort Zoom Meeting; Wednesday, September 1, Lunch Meeting, Baxter; Thursday, September 2, Perkins Bible Study; September 2, Chapel Services; Pastor's Cohort Zoom Meeting; Thursday, September 9, Little Falls Area Ministerial Association; September 9, Perkins Bible Study; Monday, September 13, Crosslake/Lake Areas Sessions gathering, Baxter; Tuesday, September 14, Crosslake Session Meeting, Crosslake; September 14, Logos Bible Software Webinar.

A committal service was held for June and Gerry Dalquist, former members, on August 28, 2021, officiated by the Reverend Ken McCullen, Parish Associate of First Presbyterian Church, Stillwater, Minnesota.

Reverend Hartwell officiated the graveside service for Yolanda L. Ballou (non-member) at the Randall Cemetery on September 15, 2021. Yolanda was born on June 28, 1968 and passed away on February 22, 2021.

Vacation: September 17 – 21

Continuing Education: The Academy, November 20-21

Reverend Hartwell served home communion to Phyllis Hoffman and Jackie Magee, assisted by Ruling Elder Terry Coffin.

- **Church Rolls and Register Report:** Nothing to report.
- **Worship/Membership/Mission Report:** Outdoor in-person worship continues, weather permitting, with an average of 29 attending. COVID-19 protocols have been relaxed for those fully vaccinated and for outdoor activities. Session recommends outdoor worship will continue until morning worship temperatures drop down to 40 degrees, in which we will then move indoors. Online worship will continue.
22 Communion services served on September 5, 2021

69 members; no change.
Monthly church mission is the Morrison County Food Shelf and the weekly church mission is Meals on Wheels.
- **Fellowship:** Morrison County Food Shelf on August 26, 2021 with four members from church volunteering.
- **Christian Education Report:** Sunday school and adult bible study will begin on Sunday, October 10, 2021. Michael Lashinski has volunteered to teach Sunday school. Adult bible study will be focused on different types of prayer. Both Sunday school and adult bible study will be held from 9:15 – 9:45 a.m.
- **Building/Maintenance Report:** Michael Lashinski mentioned there is a break in one of the gutters that he will repair. Committee is still researching best sound bar options.

- **Presbytery:** nothing to report.
- **Correspondence:** Received a thank you note from the Morrison County Sheriff's office for our donation.
- **Deacon's Report:** Nothing to report.
 - Motion to approve the committee reports as received was made by Marlys Olson, seconded by Jake Farrow. Motion carried.

Old Business:

- a. Officer training – pended until COVID-19 restrictions have been fully lifted and it is safer to gather.
- b. Morrison County Food Shelf – only three volunteers are needed at this time until restrictions are lifted. September 30, 2021 will be our next night for volunteering. Everyone is invited to volunteer at the Food Shelf. Starting in October the new hours to work will be 4:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Please contact Geri McLennan or Terry Coffin if you are interested.
- c. Church Mutual policy change update - The beginning of October we will receive new policy information and renewal rates for session to review.
- d. Family game and picluck has been scheduled for September 26 after worship.
- e. Our web page has been moved to the FaithLife/ServantKeeper platform. Online giving should be available soon.

New Business:

- a. COVID-19/Post COVID: At this time, we will continue with our current mask policy while indoors, which states recommended but not required. We will continue to monitor the COVID risk and if things worsen, we will need to reconsider changing our policy.
- b. Board of Pension employer agreement changes need to be submitted by October 8, 2021.
- c. Fall clean up – to be determined later.
- d. Pastor Michael will soon begin scheduling meetings with the Nominating Committee to discuss terms that will be ending.
- e. Pastor Michael and Jake Farrow will be looking at proposed changes to the bylaws, which will be presented at a future meeting.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Jake Farrow, seconded by Marlys Olson. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m. followed by prayers for the people and the Lord's Prayer led by Reverend Michael Hartwell.

Next Meeting date and time: Wednesday, October 20, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,



Terry L. Coffin
Clerk of Session