



## FROM PASTOR ERIC

In the season of Advent, it is not uncommon to initiate our hope of Christ’s presence with the fifth verse of Luke’s Gospel, in which we situate ourselves in the historical setting of the late First Century BCE. Herod the Great rules in Judea; Tiberius Caesar is normalizing imperial rule in Rome; and two humble Jews—who might be forgotten to history—grapple with the social realities of aging without a child. This collision of the historic and the personal is how we’re ushered into Advent and asked to discern the arrival of God in our midst.

We are also a people whose lives encompass the personal and the monumental. We live with eyes looking outward into the events of our culture and the world beyond. We are asked to reconcile the everyday occurrence of how we live with the broader consequence of actions taken by our leaders and those with power and influence. Where is God arriving in the midst today’s collision between the personal and the global?

With those concerns in mind, let’s take a step back and consider four verses of Luke’s Gospel that we rarely discuss in the Advent season. Rather than starting with a tale about Elizabeth and Zechariah, Luke instead addresses a friend, telling him:

*Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed on to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, I too decided, after investigating everything carefully from the very first, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed.*

Luke did not witness the events of Jesus’ life, but rather had people tell him stories about focus of his hope. This cultivated a desire to learn more, leading him to interview eyewitnesses and investigate all that he was told. And finally he did his best to lay out an account of Jesus’ work in an order that he wanted to share with others.

Much like how we can find kinship with Elizabeth and Zechariah at the start of Advent—looking for ways to reconcile the personal and the global—so too are we like Luke;

*Continued on next page...*



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**Sunday, December 1 is  
Fair Trade Coffee Hour!**

**Sunday, December 1 is  
2-Cents-A-Meal**

*Continued from Pastor Eric*

...we are trying to make sense of our hope through what we've learned from others. We cannot prove the stories of Advent about Jesus' arrival as a fulfillment of God's desire to be with us and known by us, but we can cultivate a kind of knowing that is more powerful than proof: *love*. It is love of Christ, love of our family, love of the world that compels us believe that God desires to be present with us.

If we love the goodness of this beautiful world, then how could God not love it all the more? If we yearn to see a reconciliation between the struggles of individual lives and power-hungry rulers, then surely God is even more passionate to see the world put to rights. Advent is our annual reminder that our longing for hope, peace, joy, and love are direct outgrowths of God's plans for both the personal and universal needs of all people. Jesus is arriving to begin this work, which continues with him being born in us each year.

And so, as we begin this Advent season, may we all continue the good work of looking wholeness in our personal lives and in the larger events of the world around us. May we come to love Christ more as he brings light to the darkness.

In Christ,  
Eric



Do you know someone who is in the hospital, someone who would like to hear a friendly voice, or someone who would like to make a prayer request? The FPC Pastoral staff and Deacons would like to hear from you!

You can complete a Prayer Request form online at [www.fpcmankato.org/prayer-requests](http://www.fpcmankato.org/prayer-requests), call, or email the Church office and our administrative assistant will get you connected to Pastor Eric and the Deacons! 507.387.2160 | [info@fpcmankato.org](mailto:info@fpcmankato.org)



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## WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS

Every Sunday, FPC members **generously volunteer their time** during worship services and for many other activities—we **just want to say**

*thank you!*  
**THANK YOU!**

**For all you do! We couldn't do it without you!**

If you would like to volunteer during a worship service, please visit our SignUp Genius website here: [https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0c4ea8a92fa1fe3-livestream#/,](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0c4ea8a92fa1fe3-livestream#/) or, please call the church office and Lori can help you with getting signed up.

# DECEMBER CHURCH CALENDAR



## December 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> 10:00 a.m. Worship & Communion Fair Trade Sunday 2-Cents-A-Meal 11:00 a.m. Faith Formation Meeting 11:15 a.m. WiredWord	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 6:00 p.m. Love Thy Neighbor Book Club <i>Atlas of the Heart</i>	<b>5</b> 12:30 p.m. FPC Staff Meeting	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> 10:00 a.m. Worship and Children's Christmas Program <i>The Poems of the                      Christmas Story</i> Cookies & Cocoa Following	<b>9</b> 6:00 p.m. Connections Shelter Guests- MCHS Clinic Youth Room	<b>10</b> 6:00 p.m. Budget Committee Multipurpose	<b>11</b> 12:00 p.m. Deadline: Articles for weekly e-blast	<b>12</b> 12:30 p.m. FPC Staff Meeting Multipurpose	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> 10:00 a.m. Worship 11:15 a.m. WiredWord	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 11:30 a.m. PW Christmas Lunch at Papa George 5:00 p.m. Worship Committee 6:00 p.m. Session	<b>19</b> 12:00 p.m. Deadline: Articles for January Newsletter 6:00 p.m. Theology on Tap! LocAle Brewing Poplar Street Mankato	<b>20</b> 6:30 p.m. Candlelight Concert "Christmas Carols" 8:30 p.m. Candlelight Concert "Nut Cracker"	<b>21</b> 5:00 p.m. Blue Christmas Contemplative Service
<b>22</b> 10:00 a.m. Worship 11:15 a.m. WiredWord 11:00 a.m. Families Connect Lunch & Cookie Decorating & Crafts	<b>23</b> 6:00 p.m. Connections Shelter Guests- MCHS Clinic Youth Room	<b>24</b> 4:40 p.m. Christmas Eve Music Begins Choir & Brass 5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service Sanctuary	<b>25</b> Christmas Day Video Worship Service	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> 10:00 a.m. Worship 11:15 a.m. WiredWord	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> New Years Eve!				

DECEMBER

2024

# PROGRAMMING DATES



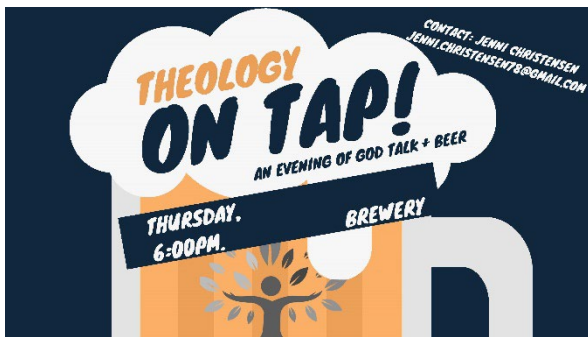
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 Choir Rehearsal 9 AM Sunday School 10:20 AM Wired Word 11:20 AM	2	3	4 Love Thy Neighbor Book Club @ 6 PM	5	6	7
8 Choir Rehearsal 9 AM Wired Word 11:20 AM No Sunday School	9	10	11	12	13	14
15 The Poems of Christmas Children's Program Choir Rehearsal 9 AM Sunday School 10:20 AM Wired Word 11:20 AM	16	17	18 Presbyterian Women @9:30 AM	19 Theology on Tap @6PM	20 Candlelight Concert at 6:30 and 8:30 PM	21 Blue Christmas Service @5
22 Choir Rehearsal 9 AM Wired Word 11:20 AM No Sunday School	23	24 Christmas Eve Service 5:00 PM	25	26	27	28
29 Choir Rehearsal 9 AM Wired Word 11:20 AM No Sunday School	30	31				

Families Connect at 11:30 AM



# DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

6 Deb Kienholz	20 Kelly McBride
8 Kris Connors	20 Janet Schickling
12 Patti Kramlinger	21 Ruth Finnern
13 Lisa Schickling	31 Pam Guss
17 Kay Hughes	31 Becca Rader
20 Suellen Lloyd	



## THEOLOGY ON TAP!

Thursday, December 19, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.  
At LocAle Brewery, 228 Poplar Street, Mankato

We're looking for future speakers/panel discussion members for future gatherings!

I've been a member of our church for less than 2 years, and I'm learning some wonderful things about a few people in our congregation. However, wouldn't it be nice to learn about the journeys of the lives/careers/faith of more of our congregants? I heard from one member that said it's a shame that we often don't learn about our fellow church members until we attend their funerals. Pastor Eric, Lizz, and I would love to have some volunteers that are willing to share, whether as a solo or duo or as a small group, followed by discussion.

If a brewery is not your comfort zone, we can plan some of our gatherings in our fellowship hall. We will also be sending out requests to individuals that have been recommended, but we want to start with an open invitation 😊

Please respond by email or text or phone (below), or you may send an email about your willingness to be a speaker or panel member to Lori in the church office at [administrative@fpcmankato.org](mailto:administrative@fpcmankato.org).

Thank you!

Jenni Christensen  
[jenni.christensen78@gmail.com](mailto:jenni.christensen78@gmail.com)

651-703-6116

and

Pastor Eric Garner  
[pastor@fpcmankato.org](mailto:pastor@fpcmankato.org)

507-519-2633

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

### Children Kidz Club

Classes during the  
Worship service for age  
groups:

Pre-K – 5<sup>th</sup> grade  
10:20 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.  
Children's room

**No registration Required.**  
Contact Lizz with any  
questions!

### YOUTH GROUP

#### Youth

11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.  
Every Sunday with  
Lizz. Tons of activities  
planned for fall!

**No registration required.**  
Contact Lizz at with any  
Questions!

educator@fpcmankato.org



## CHANCEL CHOIR

**Sunday morning rehearsals at 9:00 a.m. in the FPC Chapel, choir  
sings at 10:00 a.m. during Worship Service in the Sanctuary.**

**Contact Dr. Andrew Kendall at [music@fpcmankato.org](mailto:music@fpcmankato.org)**

Our adult choir provides beautiful musical offerings during our Sunday  
worship services. This is a low-commitment opportunity to sing with a  
group and dive more deeply in worship arts practices.

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## PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN CIRCLE

The PW Circle will meet Wednesday,  
**December 18, at 11:30 a.m.** for a luncheon at  
Papa George's Restaurant, 1028 N. Riverfront  
Drive, Mankato.

**All are welcome for this time of fellowship!**





## Families Connect

Sunday, December 22, at 11:30 a.m. at FPC.

→ Lunch provided!

→ Cookie decorating and crafts!

Contact **Lizz Kendall** at [educator@fpcmankato.org](mailto:educator@fpcmankato.org)

**All families are welcome!**

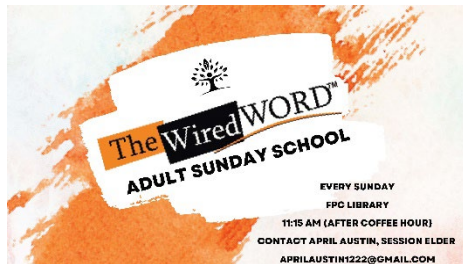
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## Board Game Nights

Fourth Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. in the FPC Fellowship Hall.

Contact **Lizz Kendall** at [educator@fpcmankato.org](mailto:educator@fpcmankato.org)

**Bring board games and appetizers to share!**



Every Sunday at 11:20 a.m. in the FPC Library

for Adults

Contact **April Austin** at [aprilaustin1222@gmail.com](mailto:aprilaustin1222@gmail.com)

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## “Love Thy Neighbor” Social Justice Book Club

Wednesday, December 4, at 6:00 p.m. in the FPC Narthex.

A low-commitment group for anyone (all adults) who cares about making a difference in their corner of the world. Didn't finish or read the book? No problem! Join us for a great discussion anyway.

Contact **Sophie Hoiseth** at [sophie.hoiseth@gmail.com](mailto:sophie.hoiseth@gmail.com)

**Just show up! No sign-up required.**



## OCTOBER 16, 2024 SESSION MINUTES

### Prayers & Devotions

- Moderator: Pastor Eric Garner
- Devotion: Pastor Eric shared a devotion from Sophie Hoiseth
- Elders express their Joys and Concerns
- Opening Prayer

### For the Record

- Attendance: April Austin, Jim Connors, Lynn Kuechle, Brad Leiding, Kelly McBride, Paul Peterson, Joyce Prahm, and Eric Garner.
- Excused: Sophie Hoiseth
- Guests: Mark Taylor, Deacon representative.
- October 31, 2024, Minutes approved via email.
- Communion Count for November 3: 78
- Communion count to homebound members for October: 0
- Births in October: N/A
- Baptisms in October: N/A
- Members who passed in October: N/A
- New members in October: N/A
- Transfer members in October: N/A
- Letter from Personal Representative of Estate of Marcia Chalgren, reviewed.
- Thank you card from Jackie Lemmerman, reviewed.
- Next Session meeting is Wednesday, December 18, 2024.

### Review of Financial Reports

**Committee Reports, Brad Leiding motioned to Approve receiving Committee Reports as submitted. Motion carried**

- Budget, 11/12/24, Minutes
- Community Engagement, 11/14/24, Minutes
- Deacons, 9/8/24, Minutes; 11/17/24
- Endowment
- Faith Formation, 11/3/24, Minutes
- Nominating Committee
- Personnel
- Properties, 11/6/24, Minutes
- Worship

### From the Pastor (Eric Garner)

- Pastor Eric shared a report on the new member class and the process going forward for those interested in joining the church
- Six-month Review.
- Pastor Eric shared on the process for Officer training.
- Pastor Eric discussed custodial coverage for Mark when he's away and if that task should be reimbursed. Motion by April Austin to reimburse for custodial coverage on Sundays at a rate of \$50, seconded by Brad Leiding. Costs to be covered by Properties. Motion carried.
- Pastor Eric shared that he's been contacted by a Sarah Braveheart who will ride into town for a ceremony related to the December 26, 1862, hangings that took place in Mankato. She shared that they could use assistance with hot food when they arrive, firewood, and a water trough for horses on December 23. Session approves inviting Sarah to speak on Sunday, December 1.
- Pastor is seeking approval to form a task force to work on updating the history section of the website to be more inclusive. Motion by Paul and seconded by Jim. Motion carried.

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## SESSION MINUTES CONTINUED

*Continued on previous page...*

**From Budget Committee (Brad Leiding)**

- October 31, 2024, Financial Compilation Report, reviewed.
- Motion by Lynn Kuechle and seconded by April Austin to retroactively approve moving \$20,000, from savings to checking. Motion carried.
- Session discussed the hearing devices purchase. A grant request has been submitted to the Presbytery for \$750, the Deacons are contributing \$250, and \$500 will come out of the General Fund.
- Brad provided an update on budgets and 2025 pledges.

**From Corporate President (Jim Connors)**

- Jim shared a report on the new printer, functions, and costs of color copies.

**From Board of Deacons (Mark Taylor)**

- Mark shared that the Deacons will be decorating for Christmas.
- Mark discussed struggles with addressing community crisis requests and the conversations will continue.

**From Community Engagement Team (Joyce Prahm)**

- Joyce shared that there will be a Fair Trade Market after worship service on Sunday.

**From Faith Formation Committee (Eric Garner)**

- Pastor Eric shared how Lizz is preparing for her maternity leave.

**From Nominating Committee (April Austin)**

- April shared the progress of nominating.

**From Personnel Committee (Paul Peterson)**

- No updates.

**From Properties Committee (Eric Garner)**

- Pastor Eric shared that there was a roof leak on the Connections' entrance.

**From Worship Committee (April Austin)**

- No updates.

**From the Office (Eric Garner)**

- Check signing has been changed to Tuesday, November 26.



*First Presbyterian Church*

OF MANKATO

rooted in community • growing in faith

November 21, 2024

Dear Church,

The Session, Personnel Committee, and Worship Committee are pleased to announce the hiring of a Director of Music Ministries.

Effective September 1, 2024, we have promoted Dr. Andrew Kendall from choir director to Director of Music Ministries at First Presbyterian Church Mankato (FPC).

This position is a part-time (approximately 20 hours per week), 12-month position responsible for planning, coordination, and execution of all music programming that occurs in support of both regular Sunday worship services as well as special services throughout the year.

Andrew will report directly to the Pastor, as Head of Staff. The Personnel Committee, in consultation with the Pastor, will periodically review the performance and salary of the Director of Music Ministries. Andrew will serve as an ex-officio member of the worship committee.

Andrew's experience as Director of Music Ministries at First Presbyterian Church in Marion IA, and his current role as Choral and Music Education Faculty and Conductor of the Choir of Christ Chapel and Lucia Singers, made him an ideal candidate to fill this position at First Pres.

Congratulations to Andrew on this new position! Please take a moment to let him know how happy we are to have him on staff and ask how you can get involved with the music program!

Sincerely,

Personnel Committee  
Worship Committee  
Session



# First Presbyterian Church

OF MANKATO

rooted in community • growing in faith

November 21, 2024

Dear Church,

The Session, Personnel Committee, and Faith Formation Committee are pleased to announce that we have hired Noa Malone as a Faith Formation Intern for the first semester of this school year. Through a donation to the church, we set up an internship from July through December 2024.

First Presbyterian Church of Mankato (FPC) is proud to be a space of welcome, innovation, and deliberate service as we learn how to be a more faithful, a more loving, and a more just, congregation in service to one another and a community around us. One of the ways that we continue to grow as a congregation is with the privilege of hiring interns.

Noa is a freshman at MSU, Mankato, studying political science and economics. He will assist Lizz and the Faith Formation committee with the planning and implementing of children and youth programs at FPC. He will also assist with social media efforts, and website updates to specifically reach more youth audiences. Noa has already been a tremendous help with the Backpack program, Trunk or Treat, Fall Fest, and more. As an Intern with FPC, Noa will identify youth pastoral leadership skills and spend one hour in each area, such as visiting church members, leading children's time, practicing public speaking, and leading community engagement.

We are pleased as a congregation to be able to assist Noa in his development as a leader in church and in our community. Please join us in welcoming Noa as our intern for this semester!

Sincerely,

Personnel Committee  
Faith Formation Committee  
Session

# FPC Leadership, Staff, and Contact Info

## Pastor and Head of Staff

Reverend Eric Garner

## FPC Session ~ Elders

Jim Connors, President | Brad Leiding, Treasurer | Joyce Prahm, Clerk of Session  
April Austin, Worship | Sophie Hoiseth, Stewardship and Faith Formation  
Lynn Kuechle, Community Engagement | Kelly McBride, Properties | Paul Peterson, Personnel

## FPC Board of Deacons

Mark Taylor, Moderator | Derek Fette, Treasurer | Chris Renne, Secretary  
Karen Anderson | Nancy Black | Amily Crowell | Kathy Gordon | Deb Kienholz  
Marcia Richards | Diane Murray | Susan Schoon | Jeanne Steiner

## FPC Staff

Ben Marti, Organist | Dr. Andrew Kendall, Director of Music Ministries  
Lizz Kendall, Director of Outreach & Faith Formation  
Mark Zallek, Building Manager | Lori Olson, Administrative Assistant  
Noa Malone, Faith Formation Intern | Katelyn Prahm, Custodial Assistant

## Staff Contact Info:

Pastor Eric Garner: [pastor@fpcmankato.org](mailto:pastor@fpcmankato.org) | 507-519-2633

Administrative Assistant, Lori Olson: [administrative@fpcmankato.org](mailto:administrative@fpcmankato.org) | 507-387-2160

Building Manager, Mark Zallek: [buildingmanager@fpcmankato.org](mailto:buildingmanager@fpcmankato.org) | 507-327-7907

Pianist and Organist, Ben Marti: [music@fpcmankato.org](mailto:music@fpcmankato.org) | 507-387-2160

Director of Music Ministries, Dr. Andrew Kendall: [music@fpcmankato.org](mailto:music@fpcmankato.org) | 507-387-2160

Director of Outreach and Faith Formation, Lizz Kendall: [educator@fpcmankato.org](mailto:educator@fpcmankato.org) | 507-246-6381

Faith Formation Intern, Noa Malone: [intern@fpcmankato.org](mailto:intern@fpcmankato.org)

Custodial Assistant, Katelyn Prahm: [info@fpcmankato.org](mailto:info@fpcmankato.org)

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