

# First Church News

Volume 12 issue 7

July 2023

## Chip's Chatter



Last month we addressed the relevancy of today's church. We looked at the results in our society as we diverge further and further away from church relevancy. This month we will expand on last month's article with the question: Do God's Laws still apply or are they, like church, becoming irrelevant. Does relevancy of the church stand on its own or has irrelevancy grown out of the abandonment of God's Laws? There are four possible combinations: (1) The church is still relevant and God's Laws are still relevant; (2) The church is still relevant and God's Laws are or becoming irrelevant; (3) The church is irrelevant and God's laws remain relevant; (4) The church has become irrelevant and God's Laws have also become irrelevant.

Grant Jeffrey in the introduction to his book entitled, "The Signature of God – Astonishing Biblical Discoveries," (July 1196, Frontier Research Publications, Inc.) writes *"The primary purpose of the Bible is to reveal God's plan of salvation. However, whenever the Scriptures deal with history, archeology, nature, or since, it reveals advanced knowledge that is true and verifiable. Such biblical statements are far in advance of the knowledge of the time of the original human writer."* He goes on to write *"The Scriptures contain advanced medical and sanitation knowledge that was thousands of years ahead of its time. This medical knowledge from the Bible has saved countless millions of lives of those who followed its divine precepts over the centuries*

*since the Bible was written. In addition, its lifesaving commands still prove their worth in this century."* God's Laws were true then and they are true today. Yet, some insist some of God's Laws are no longer valid and therefore can be ignored.

God's Laws are written throughout the Bible. The two primary books dealing with God's Laws are Leviticus and Deuteronomy which are part of the Pentateuch, or first five books of the Bible. We are most familiar with the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:2-17). Note that these are commandments, not the ten "suggestions." The Old Testament book of Leviticus is one of the primary sources of God's Laws for daily living. The book may seem harsh and outdated, but as we learn from Grant Jeffrey, every law is designed for our health and well-being. Other writers of both the New and Old Testaments frequently take God's Laws into account. Deuteronomy restates God's Laws.

I recently recovered an old article from a retired USAF Fighter Pilot entitled "A Few Things I Learned as a Fighter Pilot," (M. Ross Shullmister, LtCol, USAF Ret dated 7 Dec 2004) Item number 5 on his list seems to apply not only to the Fighter Pilot profession, but also as an everyday application for you and me:

**5. "There are Rules and there are Laws"**

- a. The rules are made by those who think that they know better how to fly your airplane than you.
- b. The Laws (for example Physics) were made by the Great One (translation – God)
- c. You can, and sometimes should, suspend the Rules but you can never suspend the Laws.”

Item b. above applies to all of us. In aerial combat, there is constant trade-off between Kinetic Energy and Potential Energy (physics) but we always stay within the Laws of Physics, Aerodynamics, Energy Management, etc. Likewise, we need to remain within all of God's Laws to enjoy the gift of life we have been given. Has the culture abandoned all or part of God's laws? Has our quest for “cultural accommodation” instead of “confessional affirmation” driven this abandonment?

Here are some interesting facts about the Bible. There are 20 million copies sold each year. This equates to 1.66 million sold per month; 384,615 per week; or 54,945 per day. Did you know 85% of American households own a Bible? The average number of Bibles per household is 4.3!

Interestingly, only one in five Americans has read through the Bible at least once. Trends in reading habits over four years showed that a majority of Americans never read the Bible. A recent Gallup survey found that less than 50% of Americans can name the first book of the Bible. Only 1 in 3 Bible owners know it was Jesus who delivered the Sermon on the Mount. A popular answer is Billy Graham! And, 12 % of Christians believe Noah was married to Joan of Arc! So many Bibles out there and such little understanding!

The first thing we need to do to reverse the trend toward irrelevancy of God's Laws is to read and study the scriptural laws. In Leviticus, we learn about the necessity of cleanli-

ness for food, childbirth, diseases, etc. These Laws are found in chapters 11 to 15. The moral Laws are covered in chapters 18-20 and begin with unlawful sexual relations. These chapters continue and addresses incest, honesty, thievery, idolatry, etc.

In Romans chapter 1 beginning with verse 18, Paul reveals God's wrath. Paul writes “The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness.” According to Paul God's responsive action was: “.....therefore, God gave them over.” This means God allowed sin to run its course as an act of judgment. The verses that follow have been called “the 21-sin salute.” Each is followed by “.....therefore God gave them over.” God pulls his hand of protection against those that continue to sin. I will leave you to decide where our society or country is today. Is God about ready to “hand us over” or to pull His “hand of protection” over us?

A couple of weeks ago in my Sunday message, I referenced an upcoming special event at an L. A. Dodgers home baseball game. The L.A. Dodgers baseball team is preparing to honor a Catholic and Christian hate group known as “The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence.” They are a group of men who dress up in sexually explicit and rainbow-colored “nun” clothing with one purpose: To mock Christians. The group has entered churches and desecrated altars and even the Eucharist. They have even done “pole dances” on the Cross. They have contests to see who can be the most “drag” Jesus. How would you respond if they came to Bemidji and we honored them at the County Fair?

Whenever I hear about some new social concern or something that runs contrary to my upbringing, I like to see what God's Word has to say on the subject. This can be difficult at times. Some Bibles have a “Concordance” at the end with key words listed that help you find the

information. The best method I have found to date is through the internet. Use your internet browser and simply ask the question. For example, type in "Where is (fill in the topic) found in the Bible? You will be surprised how quickly it takes you to the subject. It also takes you to people's ideas that run contrary to what scripture says. Having trouble finding a particular verse in the Bible? Just enter a couple of words you remember from the verse you are looking for. Your browser will find it.

One thing I have never found in the Bible. I can't find where the Bible says where we are allowed to change God's Laws, or to dispense with God's Laws and/or totally abandon some of them (or even all of them)? I challenge everyone to look for our authorization to change scripture.

The bottom line to all this discussion is simply this: Has church become irrelevant because we have allowed God's Laws to be

come irrelevant? Or worse yet, has the church remained relevant but looked at God's Laws as being irrelevant today. Each of us needs to answer those questions and let our behavior match our answer.

*Blessings, Chip*



## Coffee Fellowship Update

Beginning in May, coffee fellowship will follow the church service on the first and third Sundays.

Table Fellowship (potluck) will move to a quarterly schedule. The next two Table Fellowships will be:

Sunday, July 2<sup>nd</sup> (picnic theme)  
Sunday, October 1<sup>st</sup> (harvest theme)



**FINANCIAL REPORT—Month Ending 5/31/2023****Monthly requirement to meet our budget \$10,705.00**

Total Income	\$10,820.46
Total Expenses	\$ 9,337.78
Net Income	\$ 1,482.68

**Thank you** for supporting our church**Sunday Worship Attendance****2023**

<b>May 28</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>June 4</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>June 11</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>July 18</b>	<b>33</b>



6 Jan Burger  
 15 Doug Cronemiller  
 27 Linnea Mostad  
 30 Jon Langhout

**July Head Usher: Gloria Phelps****Liturgist****Greeter**

July 2	Shirlee Harold
July 9	Mary Hayes
July 16	Dianne Roholt
July 23	Libby Underhill
July 30	Linda Wagner

Linnea Mostad
Nancy Weber
Donna Dickinson
Gini Sande
Carla Erickson

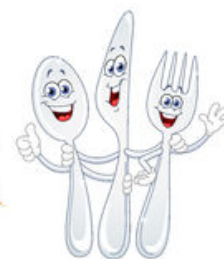
Kitchen: Terri Murray with helpers: Gloria Phelps, Dianne Roholt and Gini Sande

Communion: Set-Up: Nancy Weber, Gloria Phelps

Serve: Brenda Miller, Jenny Strowbridge



**5:30, at**  
**Supper Club**

**The Green Mill**

***Supper Club will be meeting on Thursday, July 15 at 5:30pm***

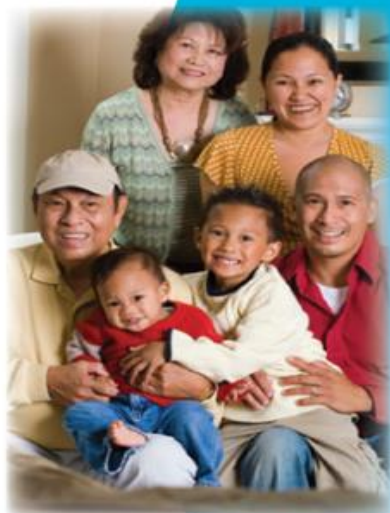
Please call Dianne Roholt directly at 444-2859 for your reservations!

This is an evening full of joy, laughter and good food.

**All are welcome!**



## Enhancing the Quality of Life



**NORTHWOODS  
CAREGIVERS**  
www.northwoodsnice.org

## Our Benevolence for the month of June

Connecting, Enriching, and Empowering the Lives of Northwoods Individuals and Families is the mission of Northwoods Caregivers. This mission defines all of the services we provide to our clients and their families.

Northwoods Caregivers are made up of people from all walks of life working closely with clients and their families providing crucial services such as respite care, transportation and shopping assistance, to name only a few.

**We offer visitation services which allows safe exchange to offer a positive, safe, child-friendly and neutral site where children and parents can be assured that a supervised visitation or exchange will be safe and conflict free.**

The mission of First City Visitation and Safe Exchange Services is to offer a positive, safe, child-friendly and neutral site where children and parents can be assured that a supervised visitation or exchange will be safe and conflict free. These services assure that there is no contact between parents or guardians during any of the offered services. All services are offered on a sliding fee scale in order to keep them affordable for the families who need services. Services may be utilized by parents, grand-

parents, guardians, foster-parents and all other situation where visitation may be required.

Do you have a neighbor or loved one that may be ill or could just use some extra help around the house? Rather than sending flowers, consider giving them a "Gift of Service!" Your thoughtfulness and generosity could enable their independence and help them remain in their own home.

Services available to give as gifts:

**1 hour of Respite Care (\$21.68):**

Services are provided by one of our qualified and compassionate Respite Providers who are at minimum, Certified Nursing Assistants. This gives the Primary Caregiver a chance to take a much-needed break away from the stresses a caregiving role can bring on.

**1 hour of Shopping Assistance (\$18.44):**

Shopping Assistance services are provided by one of our experienced and kindhearted Caregivers. They are available to provide the client with transportation to the grocery store or can simply pick up the items and deliver them to the home.

**1 hour of Homemaking (\$18.44):**

Services are provided by our skilled and caring Homemakers to those in need of assistance with daily household duties (laundry, cleaning, cooking, etc).

# Your session at work

## First Presbyterian Church

**Approved 6-20-23**

**Bemidji, MN**

**May 16, 2023**

The monthly stated meeting of the session of First Presbyterian Church was held in the Conference Room on May 16, 2023, at 1:00 pm. The meeting was opened with prayer by Moderator, Pastor Chip Holt.

**ELDERS PRESENT CONSTITUTING A QUORUM:** Cheryl Hiltz, Linnea Mostad, Bev Novak, Gloria Phelps, and Libby Underhill.

### QUORUM DECLARED

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA** - MSP to approve as corrected

**MEETING MINUTES** - MSP to approve the minutes from the April Session meeting.

### CORRESPONDENCE

Thank you note from the Bemidji Food Shelf for our benevolence donation  
Thank you note from the Village of Hope for our benevolence donation  
Proposed amendments to the constitution of PCUSA

### CLERK'S REPORT

First Presbyterian Church, Bemidji, MN, Clerk's Report - May 16, 2023

**Weddings:** None

**Baptisms:** None

**Deaths:** None

**New Members:** None

**Return to Active Membership:** None

**Request Transfer of Membership:** None

**Removed from Membership Roll:** 0

**Communion:** May 7, 2023: 26 served

**Membership** as of May 16, 2023: 66

### **Sunday Worship Attendance:**

April 23rd: 31	April 30th: 34	May 7th: 26	May 14th: 32
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**FINANCIAL REPORT** - Finances from April were reviewed.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Administration/Personnel** Chairperson: Bev Novak; no report

**Buildings & Grounds** Chairperson: Terri Murray; no report

**Finance & Stewardship** Chairperson: Cheryl Hiltz; no report

**Adult & Christian Education** Chairperson: Linnea Mostad; Seekers last class before a summer break will be May 24th.

**Outreach** Chairperson: Linnea Mostad reported that First Presbyterians served at the Bemidji Food Shelf the 4th Friday in April. Our church will serve Meals/Wheels June 5-9<sup>th</sup>.

**Worship & Music** Chairperson: Gloria Phelps; The church will host a Area Churches Musicians' program this summer on August 9th. Beverly Evert will play the organ.

### OTHER BUSINESS

**Computer Committee:** Chairperson: Cheryl Hiltz; no report

**Kitchen Fellowship Committee:**  
Session Contact Person: Cheryl Hiltz; The committee will be meeting with Chip following the session meeting regarding the upcoming funeral service and Area Churches Musicians' program.

### NEW BUSINESS

The dumpster from Waste Management has been removed. The church continues to receive a bill after sending three certified letters to stop.

Boundaries Training – This is a mandatory requirement from PCUSA that the church have written policies in place regarding the protection from harassment.

The proper storage of items was discussed. It is important that items are stored properly in their place so as to not create a fire hazard.

The funeral service for Bill Beck will be held Tuesday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> at 10:00am. The family will provide cookies and bars for the reception after the service. They have asked for church volunteers to serve coffee.

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 20th**, at 1:00 pm. in the conference room. Chip will moderate.

**MSP** to adjourn with prayer at 2:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Libby Underhill  
Clerk of Session

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### **Approved 6-20-23**

#### **First Presbyterian Church Bemidji, MN Minutes of Special Session Meeting June 13, 2023**

The session of First Presbyterian Church held a special meeting via email on June 12, 2023.

**ELDERS PRESENT:** Cheryl Hiltz, Linnea Mostad, Terri Murray, Bev Novak, Gloria Phelps, and Libby Underhill

The meeting was called to consider an update to the TV screen for the outdoor church marquee. Because of the marquee location, it

was discovered that the TV screen needs to be one that can take direct sunlight. This is an increase cost of \$2790.

The vote to approve the purchase increase of the direct sunlight TV was 5 “yes”, 1 “no response” and a “yes” vote from the moderator. Purchase approved.

The next regular session meeting will be June 20, 2022 at 1pm in the conference room of the church.

Respectfully submitted,

Libby Underhill  
Clerk of Session

### **I LIKE TO CALL IT PRAYER**

To seek the heights and depths of  
thought

And pause in silence there;  
Some call it meditation...

I like to call it prayer.

To look out on the troubled world  
And find the true and fair;  
Some call it contemplation...

I like to call it prayer

To give oneself for others.  
To lift and love and share;  
Some call it consecration...

I like to call it prayer.

To sense a silent, reverent awe  
At beauty everywhere;  
Some call it adoration...

I like to call it prayer.

Helen Lawrie Marshall

**Sundays**  
**10:00 am**  
**Worship**  
**11:00am**  
**Fellowship**



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 Pastor Chip communion Potluck Fellow- ship/Picnic theme.	3 Office Closed	4 Office closed 	5	6	7	8
9 Pastor Chip	10	11	12	13	14	15
16 Pastor Chip/ Coffee Fellow- ship	17	18  1pm Session Meeting	19	20  5:30 Supper Club at The Green Mill	21	22
23 Pulpit Supply Duane Geisler	24	25	26	27	28	29
30 Pastor Chip	31					



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