



First Presbyterian Church

Marshalltown, Iowa

September 2026

WORSHIP:

9:00 AM Sunday

10:15 AM Sunday School

WEBSITE

www.fpcmarshalltown.org

Word of Wisdom from Pastor Bryan Kunz

Tri-presbytery Potential Combination

A few months ago, I told you about the potential combining of three Iowa Presbyteries: North Central Iowa (which we are in), Des Moines (which includes the city and surrounding towns), and Prospect Hill (northwest part of the state). Over the past 18 months or so, a variety of committees and leadership groups have been discussing this possibility. At their next meetings, each presbytery will vote on whether to move forward with this combination.

I think this combination makes sense for three reasons. First, for the last 6+ years these three presbyteries have been in a shared staffing model, sharing three executive presbyters and an office manager. Currently, each presbytery pays a share of the staffing costs and each of the staff members works with all three presbyteries. Combining would simplify these costs and reduce the workload of the staff as, for example, three Commissions on Ministry might become one (one meeting for staff to attend instead of three).

Second, each presbytery has struggled with finding enough ruling elder volunteers to fill committees and commissions. Most churches are shrinking and aging, meaning fewer people are available to do the work of the presbytery. If the presbyteries choose

to combine, the number of committees and commissions required and, therefore, the number of volunteers, would be reduced significantly, though some of the committees would have to grow to handle the size and complexity of a larger presbytery.

Third, the PC(USA) broadly has struggled for years now with a lack of pastors. According to the statistics I can find about half of PC(USA) churches are without a pastor. This has been felt in Iowa as well, as among these three presbyteries there are about 30 churches without pastors. Additionally, only a third of the installed pastors are full-time. Clearly this means that the situation for the presbytery is very different than the time when the vast majority of these churches had full-time pastors who could lead and do the work of the presbytery.

From this perspective, it seems to make a lot of sense to combine the presbyteries. However, combining brings its own problems (geographical size, organizational differences, etc.) and I do not think combining solves the root problems. The root problem is that churches are shrinking and aging. While there is hope that combining the presbyteries might give funds, staffing, and volunteers to help churches, I have not seen any distinct change coming which would revitalize small churches. I also think part of the problem in the PC(USA) is that more traditional voices have been drowned out and ignored. I suspect combining the presbyteries might lessen the voice of individual churches again.

Overall, I have mixed feelings about the potential combination of these presbyteries. Please pray for wisdom and clarity for all of us involved in making these decisions. Ask God to lead and guide at the October presbytery meetings and, if it passes, the meetings to come afterward when we make decisions about the structure and plan for the new presbytery. I would also invite any elders (whether or not you are currently on Session) to consider serving on a presbytery committee. It can be an interesting and rewarding way to support other churches in our area and help to guide the life and direction of our presbytery.

—Rev. Bryan Kunz

Discipleship on Mission from Pastor LaCosta Van Dyk

September was a busy month for our education programs! We kicked off our preschool-12th grade Sunday school classes on September 13. Our preschool-5th graders are learning about Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus, and they are asking GREAT questions! Our middle school class is being led by Steve and Wynona Anderson again this year, and we're so thankful for their leadership. The high school class is joining with the adult Sunday school class to study Judges. They will have a rotating list of facilitators who will help tailor the conversation at their table to their interests and needs. Thanks to Valerie King and Mitch and Michelle Brown for being part of this group! If you're interested in joining the high schoolers as a facilitator,

please let me know. Our hope is to help our high school students learn more about God's word while also building relationships with other adults here at FPC.

Youth group also kicked off on September 13; we had pizza and played some student-favorite active indoor games utilizing our whole building. The following week we began a series called, "Can I Ask That?", exploring some tough questions people often have about faith but are scared to ask. The first week we discussed "Is it wrong to doubt God?" and the second week we discussed "Is hell real? How could God send someone there?" We've had a great group again this year. In October, we're looking forward to joining Journey Church for a concert on Wednesday, October 21. We're also planning a frozen cinnamon roll fundraiser just in time for Thanksgiving and Christmas, so keep your eyes open for an announcement about that soon!

The youth group is also busy planning and preparing for a mission trip to Costa Rica July 10-16.

CE has been hearing a lot of requests and desire for more small group opportunities at FPC, and we think this is a great way for people to connect with one another and with God. As a first step, Pastor Bryan and I will be leading a 4-week class this fall on a much-requested topic: parenting. Don't stop reading if your kids are older! We hope this will be a class that is beneficial for parents of all ages. We look forward to learning from the experience of veteran parents, and we will also tackle topics like grandparenting well and parenting adult children. The classes will meet on Thursday nights from October 29-November 19. Childcare will be provided in the Gathering Place, and supper will be provided by M&I. We will begin with supper at 6:00 p.m., followed by a time of teaching, panel discussion, conversation, and Q&A time. We will be finished by 8:00 p.m.! Signups will be available soon. (High school students going on the mission trip: mark your calendars. Helping with childcare can help pay for your trip!) We hope you'll all consider joining us. A second 4-week class on marriage will be offered in January.

Following these two short classes, we will begin forming more small groups around bible study, book study, and fellowship. If you have ideas, please share them with us! We're hoping to include as many people as possible.

Wednesday Club will also begin in October, and we're excited to welcome students from Franklin Elementary back to FPC.

There are so many ways to be involved in learning more about God here at FPC. I hope and pray you'll take some time to find an opportunity that fits your schedule.

**Grace and Peace,
Pastor LaCosta**

Youth Spotlight

**MHS football @ home —
Oct. 2 @ 7:00 p.m. (AJ Van Dyk)
Oct. 8 @ 6:00 p.m. (AJ Van Dyk
and Richard Ritter)**

Oct. 16 @ 4:30 p.m.(Richard Ritter)
Oct. 16 @ 7:30 p.m. (AJ Van Dyk)
Oct. 22 @ 6:00 p.m.(Richard Ritter)
MHS Choir Concert
Oct. 15 @ 7:00 p.m. (Payton Pietig,
AJ Van Dyk, Betsy Wirin)
MHS Cross Country @ home
Preston Johnson, Lily Johnson,
Naysa Rottink, & Betsy Wirin—
State qualifying meet -
Oct. 21

Youth Group

Youth group will meet the following
Sundays @ **5:30 p.m.**in the **Gathering**
Place!

Dates:

October 4
October 11
October 18
October 21 (Concert)

“Big Game” Food Drive

Once again the CyHawk game food drive was a wonderful success, even surpassing last year's drive. Thank you, Iowa, Iowa State, and UNI fans, and those of you who don't have a horse in the race, for your generous support of our little pantry. This year's drive brought in 1,258 items that can be put out in the pantry. UNI/other won on total number of items with 757. Iowa had 308 and Iowa State 193. There was a point system to incentivize certain items and make the contest a little more interesting. Through some creative game play, UNI also won on points with 1,691. Iowa had 455, and ISU had 393 (which means ISU beat Iowa on game play). Most importantly, our pantry is well-stocked and some excess/close date items were shared with another local food program.

—Missions & Evangelism Committee



October is Pastor Appreciation Month

October is Pastor Appreciation Month! We are blessed with two wonderful pastors, so let's show them our love and gratitude this month, and every month, by offering our prayers, support, and kind words. Ministry can be demanding, but knowing the church is lifting them up makes a difference.

In addition to your prayers, you can drop off a note of thanks, share a favorite sermon memory, or simply tell Pastor Bryan and Pastor LaCosta how they've made a difference. A basket for cards will be in the narthex throughout October.



On **Sunday, October 11** we will celebrate Pastor Appreciation Sunday with a breakfast served by the Membership & Involvement Committee in Fellowship Hall after the church service.

Wednesday Club

Wednesday Club, our after-school ministry to children in grades K-4, begins October 7 and runs through November 18, 2026. Please pray for the children and the volunteers as this ministry gets underway. Pray that God is working to prepare their hearts to receive and follow him. Pray that God equips the adults for their roles, too.

Are you thinking about helping? Spending time with Wednesday Club kids is rewarding and a fun way to share your faith. We need people to ride the bus and provide snacks and beverages. See Michelle if you'd like more information.

News & upcoming events

Membership & Involvement news:

Join us for **Game Day** on **Tuesday, October 13, 2026**, from **10:00 a.m. - noon** in Fellowship Hall. We plan on having Game Day every other month, and we won't be serving lunch this year. If you enjoy games and visiting with friends please join us. See you October 13th!

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Sunday, October 25th from 3:00 - 4:30 p.m. M & I is planning a **pumpkin carving and decorating session** for the whole family. M & I will provide the pumpkins, decorations, and the tools needed to carve the pumpkins. Adults will be responsible for the use of the tools. You are also welcome to bring your own tools. Pumpkins can be taken home with you.

M & I will provide snacks. Be looking for a sign-up in the narthex beginning in mid-October if you'd like to attend.

Deacons:

The deacons met Tuesday September 15 at 6:00 p.m. We inquired as to how many people had signed up as possible helpers to assist others with small jobs. It's not too late to sign up. We discussed upcoming events and how we would prepare for the Soup & Sing, ordering poinsettias and making fruit baskets. The highlight of all our meetings is the sharing time as each deacon reports on their visits with the friends they call on. We were saddened by the loss of Marilyn Sanderson.

If anyone has someone who you think would benefit from being on our deacon's friends list, please contact Pat or Mary.

Next meeting will be Tuesday, November 17 at 1:00 p.m.



Pat Hemming helps Georgia Smith work her puzzles during a visit at Bickford House in Ames.

Pat & Mary Hemming, Deacon Co-chairs

Quilters

Quilters will be making baby quilts again on Mondays in October. Everyone is welcome. You do not need to know anything about quilting! Sewers, cutters, "designers," pressers, and tie-ers are needed. We meet beginning at 9:00 a.m. and work until 2:00 or 3:00 p.m. (or when you can in that time frame). Bring a sack lunch and enjoy good fellowship.

Bonnie Bradbury

Circle News

Sarah Circle will meet in the Lower Lounge at 9:15 a.m. on Tuesday, October 20, 2026.

Elizabeth Circle will gather **Thursday, October 8, 2026, at 1:30 p.m.** in the Lower Lounge. We will be studying lesson 7 in the study book "Abiding in Christ." Please come join us for study and fellowship. This is a study you can join at any time.

Altar Flowers

There is only one bouquet left to be sponsored this year! The date is **November 1**, and the bouquet is \$27.

Recent Mission Blog Posts

We post to our mission blog every other Tuesday to update you on the work of the ministries and missionaries we support. All posts can be accessed here:

<https://www.fpcmarshalltown.org/blog>

September 1 ChildVoice prayer requests

September 15 Proteus

September 29 Lori Adams

Thank you

Dear church family,

Thank you for your prayers, sympathy, and memorial gifts following the passing of our mother. We are especially grateful to the deacons for their visits, cards, flowers, and gifts over the past several years, and to Pastors Tom and Bryan for their visits and support.

—The family of Daryle Willmott

Thank you to the deacons for bringing flowers to me. The were beautiful and greatly appreciated.

—Orlyn Langenbau

Thank you to the deacons for the beautiful flowers. Thank you for the prayers, too. I am doing much better now.

—Rose Elsbecker

A tip of the hat to —

Chad Pietig and Amber Young for serving with our youth group....Our faithful workers at the House of Compassion during the month of September: **Diane Bakker, Diane Broshar, Matt Broshar, Lavonne Watkins, and Lee Wilkinson.**

Little Pantry

Thank you for your continued support of our little pantry.

Items most needed at this time include **breakfast cereal & oatmeal, syrup, bread or tortillas, canned fruits, pasta sauce, crackers and canned soup, granola bars, and proteins, including peanut butter and tuna.** You may bring items to the wagon under the main entrance stairs any time.

Financial report

JULY 2026	Actual
Total Receipts	\$35,450.00
Budget	36,194.00
Total Expenses	(\$33,895.00)
Budget	(36,165.00)
Year to Date:	
Total Receipts	\$268,743.00
Budget	279,394.00
Difference	(3,651)
Total Expenses	(\$375,699.00)*
Budget	279,185.00
Difference	3,486

*This contains a \$100,000 transfer to the Gathering Place Fund.

August Session Actions

The Stated Session meeting of First Presbyterian Church, Marshalltown met in the Fellowship Hall, September 15, 2026.

Moderator Rev. Bryan Kunz opened the Session meeting at 7:07 p.m. and prayed. Session met with the deacons and discussed their work. Valerie King led devotions and prayer.

There was a quorum in attendance.

Motion carried to approve the minutes of the August 18, 2026, Stated Session meeting.

Lead Pastor's Report: Pastor Bryan said the fall sermon series will focus on biblical characters and include conversations with different congregation members. He has also been helping 4-5 homeless people recently mainly with food, showers, and the use of the telephone.

Associate Pastor's Report: Pastor LaCosta reported that she is encouraged and excited about youth group this year. There is a good group of kids who are bringing friends. The high schoolers will be joining adult Sunday school at their own table. A new small group opportunity will be starting on Thursday evenings in October.

Finances: Matt Broshar reported year-to-date giving is slightly behind last year at this time but it is ahead of the three-year average. He has added a line to the financial report to better account for one-time Session-directed transfers.

Committee Reports:

Vision & Values: Pastor LaCosta shared a revised statement that took into account concerns from the previous Session meeting. There was discussion over the new statement and Session will think and pray about the statement and the proper order of the parts for next meeting.

Gathering Place: The committee will share the information they've gathered with Session on September 24.

Property: Steve Anderson reported that for safety reasons the committee would like to determine balcony capacity. He has been unable to find information on it in the church records. **Motion carried** to spend up to \$5,000 to determine occupancy of sanctuary by a structural engineer.

Memorials & Special Gifts: Steve Anderson thanked Suzanne Brown for her service and valuable contribution to the committee.

Other: Session discussed General Assembly business and its affects on this church. Session will do more research and communicate what they learn to the congregation in the next month or two. **Motion prevailed** to approve Michelle Brown and Chad Pietig for elders on the Nominating Committee for 2027.

Motion prevailed to adjourn the meeting following prayer at 9:36 p.m.

Reminders:

October —Pastor appreciation month

October 18—Fall Fun Day

October 4—World Communion Sunday

October 20—Session

October 11—Pastor appreciation breakfast

October 25—Reformation Sunday

October 13—Game Day

October 25—Pumpkin Decorating

October Calendars

(on next page)



Volume 91, No. 8

Members in mission making a difference.

GOOD NEWS from First Presbyterian Church is published monthly. Deadline for the following issue is published in the calendar. Comments and contributions are welcome.

Church office phone: 641-753-5929

Web Site www.fpcmarshalltown.org

Email Church at church@fpcmarshalltown.org

Pastor at bryan@fpcmarshalltown.org

Associate Pastor at lacosta@fpcmarshalltown.org

Secretary/Editor at church@fpcmarshalltown.org

October 2026 Birthday/Prayer Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Praying for each other brings us closer together. Please pray each day for those listed.				1	2	3
4 Ama Afoutou	5	6 Angie Pietig Cindy Wax	7	8	9 Marsha Bristley	10 Brian Bovenmyer Afeafa Eklou
11 Dana Bresler	12 Karen Bacon Katie Lynch	13 Lucas Johnson	14	15	16	17
18 Karen Colwell Bonnie Grimmius	19 Doug Reese	20	21 Bonnie Bradbury	22	23	24 Jerry Rakowicz
25	26 Addie Halvorson Peter Wilkinson Sam Wilkinson	27	28	29	30 Brenda Miller	31



Role	SUNDAY SERVANTS				
	Oct. 4	Oct. 11	Oct. 18	Oct. 25	
Worship Leader					
Greeters	Mike Long		Garry & Terri Rottink	John & Lisa Simpson	
Door Greeter	Lee Wilkinson	Dave Freel	Mitch & Michelle Brown Family	Craig & Tedra Henze	
Fellowship Hosts	Don & Ruth Feld	M & I Committee	Ryan & Anna Grabau	Jackie Hughes	
Cup Washers	Michelle Wilkinson	M & I Committee	Jackie Hughes		
Donuts	Marlene Snyder	Marge Wolfe	John & Lisa Simpson	Greg & Suzanne Brown	
Nursery	Ryan Grabau & Abigail Stone	Allison Grosvenor & Abigail Stone	Anna Randall & Abigail Stone	Rhonda Buzbee & Abigail Stone	
Flowers	Mick DuBois	LaVerne Paul	Terry & Rhonda Buzbee	Lee & Michelle Wilkinson	
Deacons	Case Hegeman & Carter Strand	Joyce Anderegg & Barb Vovos	Michelle Wilkinson	Karen Schoell & Marlene Snyder	
AV Tech	Diane Broshar	Lindsey Van Wyk	Bill Lawyer	Steve Anderson	Lindsey Van Wyk
Usher Teams	FIRST SUNDAY	SECOND SUNDAY	THIRD SUNDAY	FOURTH SUNDAY	FIFTH SUNDAY
Team Captain	Terry Buzbee & Larry Schrum	Stan & Nancy VanWyk	Roger & Karen Schoell	Josh Grosvenor & Andy Randall	Dick & Barb McBride
Ushers	Tim Bell Mick DuBois Harlan Quick Bruce Wirin	Barb Vovos	Pat & Mary Hemming	Ryan Flack Lucas Johnson Matt McKibben Ross Turbiville Kyle Young	Chuck Colwell Karen Colwell Caleb Brown Isaac Brown Mitch Brown
Usher Alternates (any Sunday)	Bonnie Bradbury Craig Henze LaVerne Paul	Diane Broshar Pat Kremer Harlan Quick Barb Vovos	Doug Cooper Arlene Lange Anna Randall Lee Wilkinson	Bonnie Grimmius Dennis Ostrem John Simpson	Jim Grimmius Tracy Ostrem Lisa Simpson

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

OCTOBER 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 8:30a Flapjacks – Lower Lounge	2	3 7:30a Men's Group
	4 8:40a – Prayer - Conf. Room 9:00a Worship 10:15a Sunday school 5:30p – Youth group	5 9:00a Quilters 6:00p Worship & Music Comm. 7:00p Missions & Evangelism	6 6:30p Property 7:00p CE Comm.	7 3:30p Wednesday Club 6:30p Bells 7:30p Choir 8:30p Praise Team	8 8:30a Flapjacks – Lower Lounge 1:30p Elizabeth Circle – Lower Lounge	9 10 7:30a Men's Group
	11 8:40a – Prayer - Conf. Room 9:00a Worship 10:15a – Pastor Appreciation breakfast 5:30p – Youth group 7:00p – Mission Trip mtg – parents	12 9:00a Quilters 6:00p M & I Comm.	13	14 3:30p Wednesday Club 6:30p Bells 7:30p Choir 8:30p Praise Team	15 8:30a Flapjacks – Lower Lounge 2:00p FPC serves @ House of Compassion	16 17 7:30a Men's Group
			← Assistance League in Fellowship Hall →			
	18 8:40a – Prayer - Conf. Room 9:00a Worship 10:15a Sunday school 5:30p – Youth group	19 9:00a Quilters	20 9:15a Sarah Circle – Lower Lounge 7:00p Session <i>Newsletter Articles Due</i>	21 3:30p Wednesday Club 5:30p Youth @ Concert 6:30p Bells 7:30p Choir 8:30p Praise Team	22 8:30a Flapjacks – Lower Lounge 1:30p Memorials & Special Gifts – Fellowship Hall	23 24 7:30a Men's Group
25 8:40a – Prayer - Conf. Room 9:00a Worship 10:15a Sunday school- Fall fun 3:00p Pumpkin carving	26 9:00a Quilters	27 2:00p Proteus	28 3:30p Wednesday Club 6:30p Bells 7:30p Choir 8:30p Praise Team	29 8:30a Flapjacks – Lower Lounge 6:00p Parenting	30	31 7:30a Men's Group

PASTOR
Appreciation