

First Presbyterian Church of Alma



Thank you to those of you who could come and participate in my installation service on January 30! And many of you extended your greetings even though you could not be there. It's such a strange time with COVID—a weird time to have an installation service, to be starting as a new minister, really to be human—but I am grateful that I am on this journey with you all.

Rev. Mary Anne Evans-Justin explained the purpose of an installation service and why it happens at the weird afternoon time. (I'm truly grateful when you all speak up and add your knowledge to the mix—especially during COVID times I have found my brain to be quite full and I overlook important things like this, which are helpful to explain!). An installation service is a time to celebrate this new pastoral relationship. It's a reminder of ordination vows. It is also a commitment to one another—that I will be your pastor, and walk with you on this journey, but also that you will walk alongside me and do ministry with me. It's a reminder that we are all committing to the good community work and sharing God's good news with a hurting world.

I recently attended Catholic mass for the Feast of St. Paul. My experience in the Catholic church is limited. So, I leaned heavily on others to determine whether I should sit or stand or kneel, talk, sing, or stay quiet (I found staying quiet was usually the best option because when I grew too confident that I knew the Lord's Prayer I spoke very loudly while everyone else paused mid-prayer for the priest to continue!). Every faith tradition has those rituals that are specific to them, and newcomers quietly sit back and watch rather than participate—even Presbyterian churches. We just have fewer, or less obvious rituals, so it perhaps isn't as noticeable as in a Catholic church or Episcopal church. But, it's the responsibility of faith leaders (minister and ruling elders) to explain the meaning behind these rituals. We certainly don't want to throw out ritual, because there is great meaning and comfort and connection to God in ritual. It is when we use ritual to exclude, or tell people they cannot participate because they don't look like us or believe like us that rituals become weaponized. All churches, all faith communities have this power—and so I think it is important that we explain why we do what we do—and even question if it is a ritual or tradition worth keeping (sometimes the answer is yes—we just needed explanation! And sometimes the answer is “why do we do this? We don't know? Then let's do something else.”)

So, this is an invitation. First, if you ever wonder why we do something in worship, please ask! If I don't know the answer, we'll figure it out. Second, during the month of February I will be teaching a class about What it Means to Be Presbyterian. This is what I traditionally teach for new members, but I have often found that there are people who have been members for decades that want to know more. This class will meet every Sunday in February at 2pm. Please let me know if you're interested!

Session Notes:

Session met 01-17-22.

- Approval of 2022 budget
- Set date of Annual Meeting for February 27th following worship
- Annual Reports are due to the office by February 6th
- We continue to monitor the COVID numbers in the county and session continues to ask congregation to mask and distance and not sing in worship
- Next meeting February 21 at 6.30pm



Alma College Happenings:

As we begin this new partnership with the college, you can find exciting news and events here each month. You're always welcome to worship at Chapel each Sunday night at 7pm. Go Scots!

Rev. Katrina took four students to Montreat at the beginning of January for the College Conference: What's Next? Students led worship at First Presbyterian and the Chapel to share their experiences. (Pictured above: Gerrit Randall-Louw, Rev. Katrina, Justice Cuddie, George Amaoko, Kylee Lary)



Dear Congregation,

Thank you for your kind words and encouraging cards. I am truly grateful for this community and your friendship.

- Barb Weis

Do you have information you'd like to provide for the newsletter?

Have you moved and would like your address shared with the congregation via the newsletter?

What sort of information would you like to read here?

Send your thoughts and comments to Rev. Katrina for future newsletters: pastor@firstpres.net



This month during Matthew 25 worship time we will focus on systemic poverty. Matthew 25 churches commit to:

- dismantling structural racism
- Eradicating systemic poverty
- Building congregational vitality




From Rev. Katrina's installation service.

L: Rev. Libby Davis Manning, preacher, Director of the Wabash Pastoral Leadership Program

Below: Rev. Katrina and Rev. Glenn Grant, presbytery moderator



February 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Food Pantry 1.30-3	2	3 Community Café 5.30	4	5
6 Annual Re-ports Due 2pm PCUSA Class	7 9:30am Linus Ladies 5pm Buildings and Grounds	8 Food Pantry 1.30-3 7pm Spiritu- al Growth	9	10 Personnel 4.30 Community Café 5.30	11	12
13 2pm PCUSA class	14 9:30am Linus Ladies	15 Blood Drive 12 -5:45 Food Pantry 1.30-3	16	17 Community Café 5.30	18	19
20  Worship in Fellowship Hall 2pm PCUSA class	21 9:30am Linus Ladies 7pm Session	22 Food Pantry 1.30-3	23	24 Community Café 5.30 Rev. Katrina at Chaplaincy Conference	25	26
27 Annual Meeting after worship 2pm PCUSA class	28 9:30am Linus Ladies					