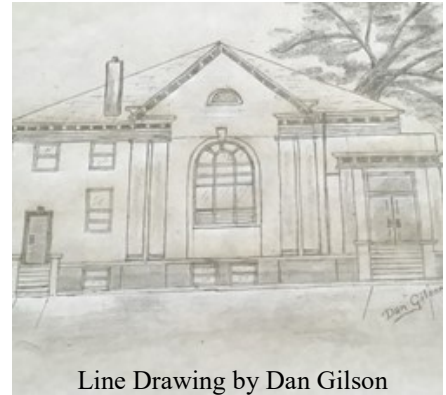


THE PUCC PERSPECTIVE  
Presbyterian United Church of Christ  
Aurora, Nebraska

JANUARY 2024



Line Drawing by Dan Gilson

PASTOR PENNY'S TWO CENTS.....

I want you to take this time to do something for me. I want you to raise your left leg, okay now you are starting off 2024 on the Right foot. I know this is tongue in cheek and if it were only so simple.

For many reading this, unfortunately, I know this last year has been unbelievably challenging. The beginning of a new chapter is starting off not like a brand-new start, but a continuation. So many are struggling not with just one thing here or there, but an onslaught of perpetual crisis. I know it's not the uplifting article you were looking forward to, BUT there is hope on the horizon. If you have listened to any of my sermons you know I love parallels. And I see the parallel right now in many of your lives with the story of a man named Job. While none of us stand jumping up and down for the gifts of long-suffering and faith, we may find ourselves right dab in the middle of just that.

With the story of Job, Satan was having a conversation with God, that's right he is free to move about. And God "ALLOWED" Satan to unleash the sins and unpleasantries on Job all in an effort to see what it would take for him to curse God. To Satan's dismay no matter what happened to him financially, family, physically, emotionally and mentally, Job still refused to curse God. Oh, he had questions and poured his heart out as to why all of this was landing in his lap, but he remained faithful and true.

As I thought about his example, I started seeing Job in a lot of other people throughout the years. Those who endured so much, had everything taken from them and yet still penned the words "It is well with my soul". That one was from Horatio Spafford, who in my mind is definitely a modern Job. Also, coincidentally the movie "The Shift" came out before Christmas and is a modern-day sci-fi depiction of the Job story. It is interesting and will leave it there.

We are a good way into our study on the Book of Revelation, the only Book of the Bible that promises a blessing just from reading or hearing it! While one may look at this book as daunting or too difficult to read, hopefully I have been able to break down those two barriers. It is a Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ and at the heart of the message is God's unfailing love and redemption.

One may say reading all of the doom and gloom, I don't see much love coming from these pages, but you would be wrong. If God wanted to end things, He could with just a word, ....but He doesn't. After the Church, the Bride of Christ is raptured up to heaven God still allows time for those to come to Christ. With each passing page the heat keeps rising and the pressure cranked down. All in an effort for each stubborn, hardened heart to hit their breaking point of bending a knee and humbling themselves to accept Christ. Unfortunately, there will still be those who will refuse no matter what.

It was so cool to get to reach Chapter 19 on Christmas Eve. In this Chapter Jesus is coming back as King of Kings and Lord of Lords all while riding a glorious white horse. So in case you ever wondered if there are animals in heaven ..... we will all be riding a white horse with him.

Jesus came as Emmanuel God with us as a baby, grown into a Savior who was the slain lamb that took away the sins of the world. But this next time he is coming as the Lion of Judah, the Mighty God, Prince of Peace and that is the HOPE we live for.

Knowing that, regardless of how your new year starts, what continuing crisis you are going through or what new one may lie ahead, we know beyond a shadow of a doubt if we have accepted Jesus, that we too will be coming back in the clouds of Glory as part of his army.

In Chapters 20 and 21 we will be captivated by the description of the New Heaven and the New Earth. One without sin, crisis, pain, heartache and evil. One where God is on the throne forever and ever. That is the Joy, Hope and Peace that we cling to and are given the charge to go and tell everyone we see the Gospel message - that salvation only comes in and through Jesus Christ. When we are obedient to that, just like Job, God will reward us in whatever form that may be. As for me I'm looking forward to my mansion over the hilltop in that bright land where we will never grow old.

Praying you had a healthy and happy Holiday season and to a wonderful New Year!

Shalom,

Pastor Penny



God, we come to you today to offer prayers for our family and friends. We ask that you look after them today and keep them safe. As you take time for prayer each day, please include:

The Family of De Sandell, Don "Sonny" Hofmeister, Zandee Nelson, Dick & Janet Grosshans, Shirley Barnell, Jim Ptacnik, Pastor Penny & John Schulz, Tanna Skarniak

**We also pray for all those in our congregation and beyond who may be suffering from with illness or the stress of a family situation.**

*We pray for those who suffer in silence  
that they may feel our prayers.*

If you want to add someone to our prayer list, we don't need to have a last name or know their situation. They do not have to be a member of our congregation – we pray for all the people. All requests are by permission only. Please contact: Linda Ptacnik ([lindap@hamilton.net](mailto:lindap@hamilton.net) or 402-631-9422 or [fcc@hamilton.net](mailto:fcc@hamilton.net)) I will see that your requests are shared – as well as updates as they are received.

**JANUARY BIRTHDAYS &  
ANNIVERSARIES**

Jan. 18 Ashley Schulz  
Jan. 21 Mike Allen  
Jan. 31 Greg Maul

Update your family & friends - send me an email  
to lindap@hamilton.net or call 402-631-9422

**Liturgists & Ushers**

Jan. 7 Ray Maul  
Jan. 14 Mike Allen

Doug Kliewer / January Ray Maul / February

**PROCLAMATION** rehearsals are now on  
Tuesday evenings at 7:00 PM

Rehearsals will begin again on Tuesday,  
January 2nd—7:00 PM

**FCC BIBLE STUDY**

**AFTERNOON Bible Study**

**Beginning January 16th—2:00 pm**  
**Aurora Senior Center**

**Lisa Harper—8-Week Study**

**Wonderful Words of Luke**

**\*\*Will not meet the 1st Tuesday of the  
Month**

**If you or someone you know would like to  
attend and need a ride, please contact  
Linda Ptacnik and she can make  
arrangements to have someone come for  
you. 402-631-9422**



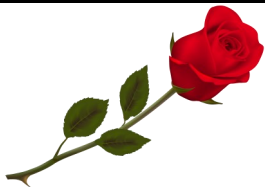
**Pastor Penny Schulz**  
**Phone 402-440-4605**

**Email: [pastorpennys2cents@gmail.com](mailto:pastorpennys2cents@gmail.com)**

**Website: [puccaurora.org](http://puccaurora.org)**

**YouTube: Presbyterian United Church of Christ of Aurora NE**

**Facebook: Presbyterian United Church of Christ of Aurora NE**



We extend our sincere sympathy to Heidi Bergen and her family.  
Heidi lost her Mother, De Sandell, last month.

YOUTH GROUP met only twice in December due to Christmas and New Year's school vacations. The kids signed Christmas cards for all our shut-ins and they were mailed the middle of the month. The last meeting was done doing competitive games—the “littles” against the “bigs” and the “littles” held their own. Pushing a baby marshmallow around cups with a straw was fun—and the “littles” were pretty darned good at it. Another game was using a straw to pick up an M&M candy and depositing it in a cup at the end of the table (without dropping it). The “Bigs” won that round, but not by much! Then everyone concentrated on their creative self making snowmen from marshmallows and pretzels! Fuel them kiddos with enough pizza and pop and it can get a bit rowdy. HAHAAAAHA

We will begin meeting again when school starts this month—2:15—3:30 in Friendship Hall on Wednesday afternoons.



SIGN UP AND REHERSALS are beginning Sunday, January 7th for the 2024 Easter Cantata! Rehersals will begin on Sunday, January 7th at 2:00 PM at the United Methodist Church here in Aurora. **“Once Upon a Morning” by Pepper Choplin!** Books will be available and are \$10 Each. \*\*Side note—last year Tanna Skarniak participated and she will be in the choir again this year.

Another gem found and shared by Pat Willis:

It is one thing to be *for* someone but another thing to be *with* someone, to stand by his or her side in good times as well as in hard times, times of sorrow as well as times of joy. This is our Lord's name: Emmanuel. He is with you right now. And when He left this world, He did so with these final words. “I am with you always.” (Matthew 28:20)

Lord, nowhere I go today will I be without You. You are with me always. In Jesus' name, Amen.