

Joy Letter - JULY 2025

First Presbyterian Church of Abbotsford

Pastor: Don Everhard

305 W Elm St. Abbotsford, WI 54405

Phone: 715-223-4001

Email: abbypresbyterian@gmail.com

Online: www.abbypresbyterian.org

YouTube: <https://youtube.com/@firstpresbyterianchurchofabbot>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/first>



Children Are the Church by Bekah Stoneking | July 16, 2021

My pinky toe is pretty small, but my entire body relies on it for balance. If my pinky toe was damaged or lost, running, jumping, and even standing would be difficult or even impossible. And my eyebrows—they're sparse and seemingly insignificant. But eyebrows are more than just decorative hairs. They communicate feelings and are a key feature of our facial expressions. Even their *shape* is important. Because of the way my eyebrows naturally arch and grow uniquely-fitted to my brow bone, they efficiently direct debris and sweat away from my eyes. God truly thought of *everything* when He created our bodies. There is another body God created with such care and intentionality—the church. The church is not a "what," but a "who." It is all believers throughout all of time and throughout all of history. All people who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and follow Him in a posture of faith and repentance are part of the church. God's design for the church is for Jesus to be the head of the body, for the members to depend on Him, and for them to relate to one another in the same way that the parts of the human body relate to one another. Just as our physical bodies relate to and rely on each part in order to function and thrive, our church bodies must relate to and rely on each member. And just like we don't wait for or expect our little pinky toes to grow larger before considering them significant, we must see and consider the significance of the little children in our churches. Children are not merely "the church of tomorrow." If a child is in Christ, she is the church of *today*. And as our physical bodies would fail to thrive without pinky toes and eyebrows, our church bodies are lacking and will not function properly without the intentional inclusion of our little brothers and sisters in Christ. Yes, even our tiniest members are significant and vital to our churches thriving. **ONE GOD:** As Christians, we believe in one God. He created each child in His own image. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ. He came to earth, lived a perfect life, suffered, died, and rose again according to the Scriptures, offering the free gift of forgiveness, restoration, and salvation to us all—including children. We believe in one Spirit. He helps people understand and accept God's plan of salvation, He counsels and convicts and comforts, and He helps us know how to live in ways to please God. The same one Spirit who indwells me and you and our pastors and the other members in our churches indwells even little children who have repented of their sins and trusted in Jesus. Just as God's Holy Spirit ministers to us, He ministers to kids. Just as He helps us know God and follow Him, He helps kids. Just as He helps us read, understand, and share God's Word, He helps kids. One God. One Son. One Spirit. One baptism. One forgiveness. *One church.* Our churches need the inclusion and participation of even our youngest or newest members. We aren't "one" if our body is separated or if some parts are not included to their fullest extent. **MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN:** Just as it is our responsibility—as parents, church leaders, and people called to children's ministry—to shepherd and minister to children, kids have duties and ministry responsibilities to their fellow church members as well. Saved by the same Jesus and indwelled by the same Spirit, young church members possess spiritual gifts. The questions for church members are: How can we help kids identify their gifts? And how can we train, equip, and release kids to use their gifts to glorify God and serve His church? Following Jesus and growing in His likeness, growing in sensitivity to the Spirit's leading, and reading, meditating on, and hiding God's Word in their hearts, young church members can also have spiritual insights. Sure, they may be young and still have much to learn, but don't we all? Further, we believe in a God who literally makes dead things live;

certainly He can teach and shape the heart of a child and prompt that child to share his learning, ask questions, or engage in dialogue with his church community. Oh, how wonderful! We certainly bear a responsibility to our younger brothers and sisters, and to young people who do not yet know the Lord. Ministry *to* children is integral to our own obedience to God (Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Psalm 78:4; Matthew 18:1-3; Matthew 19:14). Ministry *to* children is both Great Commandment and Great Commission work. And ministry *to* children helps make God's Word accessible and understandable to young learners of all ages and developmental stages. But the church must not stop at ministry *to* children. We must also consider and practice ministry *with* children. Created, loved, redeemed, and empowered by the same Father, Son, and Spirit, our church bodies need our "pinky toes." After all, sometimes the littlest members make the biggest difference.

Submitted by: Shannon Boschma

🎂 JULY BIRTHDAYS:

Happy Birthday Blessings!!!

- ★ Russ Palmerton - 5th
- ★ Nels Anderson - 6th
- ★ Cindy Koch - 9th
- ★ Cindy Anderson - 19th
- ★ Don Everhard - 26th



📅 Mark Your Calendars:

* July 7th – 11th, 6-7:30pm, Summer Bible School. Theme is "Discovering Jesus", for ages 5-11. Child Evangelism Fellowship (CEF) of North Central Wisconsin, will be co-hosting our Bible School week. If interested, please talk to Gloria Everhard.

* July 18th, 3:00pm at Gloria Everhard's home, Hebrews (Ladies) Study. Ladies are welcome to stay for dinner and fellowship following the study.

* July 29th, 6:15pm in the Church lounge, Romans Study session. Open to everyone.

* August 24th, 10:30am, 3rd Annual Backyard Worship Service and Picnic at Don & Gloria Everhard's home. Potluck signup and additional info to follow. Please join this day of fellowship!

✅ Check It Out:

Our presence on social media is growing! We are transitioning our Sunday morning live streaming to YouTube! You can also find our archived Church services on this site. Continue to follow us on Facebook and on our growing Website - address links to all can be found at the top of this month's Joy Letter.

🏠 Ministry Spotlight:

This Church Family may be small, but is so Mighty! There is an abundance of ministries, both in our local community and abroad, our Church Family shares their gifts and time with. Spotlight for July is **Heifer International**. Fresh eggs are donated and aluminum cans are collected to help support this mission, headed by John & Tineke Boschma. Heifer International is working to end world hunger in 19 Countries around 4 Continents, including the USA. The Church's monetary donations provide cattle, seeds and empowerment. Please check out their website to learn more, <https://www.heifer.org/>.

But Jesus called them to him, saying, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it." . – Luke 18:16-17