

The Bell

March, 2017

This year during the season of Lent, we are emphasizing the image of light growing throughout the season, and then being diminished on Passion Sunday as we move toward the enclosed tomb. Each worship service during Lent we will be lighting more and more candles and singing the song "Catch the Light".

As we read the passages from John during Lent, we see the amazing life that God gives, how God is repeatedly expanding the boundaries and opening doors to us and other outsiders. We celebrate the light that seems to grow as we observe God's activity in our world. And yet, on Passion Sunday, we recognize our participation in enclosing Jesus in the darkness of the tomb, as if we, too, like the Roman powers two millennia ago, believe we can somehow extinguish the powerful message that Jesus brought. It is an astonishing indictment.

There are many places that you can participate in during worship. Our choir really is wonderful but they are always looking for people who have a passion for singing. Al will teach you all you need to know. You could also be a worship leader, play a part in a small skit or reading or do a children's message.

We will begin our Lenten season with a worship service on Ash Wednesday March 1. We always worship with Trinity United Methodist at First Presbyterian following the fish fry (more information can be found elsewhere in the Bell). Pastor Terri will be preaching; the joint choirs will be singing; we will receive the ashes and celebrate Holy Communion. The offering will go to Carelink, our shared ministry.

There are many places for you to participate in the reenactment of Holy Week during the Palm Sunday worship service. Each year it is slightly different but always a moving remembrance of Holy Week. Please call Pastor Karel if you would like to participate.

We will be holding a Seder this Maundy Thursday during Holy Week at Trinity Methodist. We will need extra help in providing the ingredients and participating in the leadership of the event. The purpose is for us to appreciate our Jewish roots as a Christian congregation. Holy Week, the sacrament and story of communion and the Seder which is celebrated on Maundy Thursday are truly intertwined. Come learn how they are and call me if you would like to help.

Good Friday service is an ecumenical service that many churches participate in. This year the morning service will be a Chippewa Manor at 10 am and the evening service at 7:00 pm will be held at Zion Methodist Church.

Blessings
Pastor Karel

ASH WEDNESDAY FISH FRY AND SPECIAL SERVICE

The Annual Ash Wednesday fish fry sponsored by the Presbyterian Men will be served on March 1 from 5:00 to 6:00 with the last dinners being served at 5:45.

The menu this year will feature fried fish, baked beans, cole slaw, rolls, dessert and beverage. Tickets are \$9 for adults, \$5 for children 5 to 12 and children under five will eat free.

Reservation sheets and sign-up sheets to help set up, cook, serve and clean up are available in the Narthex.

Be sure to reserve your dinner early because this is always a very popular event that sells out early.

The traditional Ash Wednesday service featuring communion and the imposition of ashes will follow at 6:15 allowing a quiet time following dinner.

As in the past, this service will be held in conjunction with Trinity United Methodist Church. The sermon will be given by Methodist Pastor Terri Koca.

FPC TO BUY EASTER LILIES

The church will order a dozen Easter Lilies which will adorn the Chancel on Easter morning. These flowers can be purchased by the congregation as we have in the past. At this moment, we don't know the cost of each plant but last year it was \$9.00 and will probably be somewhere in that vicinity again this year.

Watch the bulletin for order forms which will have the current cost.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

A special offering for One Great Hour of sharing will be taken on Easter Sunday. If you would like to participate in this offering, you can make your contribution anytime during March or even early April. Donation envelopes will be available in the bulletin and pews during March.

SPRING BRINGS HIGHWAY CLEANUP

The snow is melting which probably means Spring is around the corner which probably means we will have a highway to clean.

The Spring cleanup date has been tentatively set as May 20 but that could change depending on Mother Nature. In the meantime, mark your calendars with that date and look for more information in upcoming Bells. Who knows, the melting snow may uncover buried treasure! One can only hope.

ANNUAL FPC THRIFT SALE

**FRIDAY, MARCH 10 FROM 9:00AM TO 4:00PM
AND
SATURDAY, MARCH 11 FROM 9:00AM TO 11:00AM**

We have something for everyone.
Lots of gently used clothing, household items, linens,
Kitchen tools, some big boys' toys and tools, books, tapes,
DVDs, CDS crafting supplies
Come check it out.

HELP WANTED

We will need help for the sale. If you can help at any time, it will be appreciated.

Tuesday (March 7), at 5:30PM we will be bringing all the “good junk” upstairs from the basement.

Wednesday and **Thursday** (March 8 & 9) from 9:00AM until we are finished will be sorting and set-up time.

The actual sale dates are:

Friday (March 10) from 9:00AM – 4:00PM and

Saturday (March 11) from 9:00AM-11:00AM

Saturday around noon is clean-up, pack-up, and take-the-stuff-away time!

Again, any help you can give is greatly appreciated and we thank you in advance. Even an hour will be appreciated.

Although you may bring items for the Thrift Sale at any time, we would like to request that, if possible, you bring them Tuesday afternoon or evening (March 7). Our room in the basement is overflowing with items!!! And then, too, we would need move the items just one time.

Thank you ~Presbyterian Women

CONNECTING WORSHIP, CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND HOME

Our worship and education programs are lectionary-based programs. There are many ways you and your family can study and connect worship, Christian education and home devotion time.

Each Sunday our Christian Education classes and worship follow a three-year cycle of scripture passages. For example, the scripture passages during February have come from the Sermon on the Mount in the Gospel of Matthew.

After the children's message during church, the children attend one of two classes and spend time learning about the same story only at their level. The two classes are divided by age. These classes are taught by our regular teachers Ruth Rosenow and Ellen Teske with the help of other volunteer teachers. They study the exact same passages (almost every Sunday) as the congregation does during worship. When parents and children go home, they are able to share in a conversation about what happened at church today.

Starting in January the Adult Education Class taught by Gene Peissig and Pastor Karel has also begun using the same passages as a basis for their class. They study the scripture passages for the upcoming Sunday. Then having thought about the passages during class and throughout the week, they can more fully participate in worship the following Sunday.

On the Welcome Desk as you enter the church there are pamphlets which contain weekly devotions for your family which follow these same passages. The current one which is available starts with Lent and goes through June 4 which is Pentecost Sunday.

Each week before worship you could deepen your connection with and understanding of the scriptures through your devotions at home, an adult Christian education class before worship, during worship and with your children.

SAYING GOODBYE TO CHERIE

Members and friends of FPC and of Cherie Andringa will gather on Thursday, March 23 at the Fill Inn Station to celebrate Cherie's almost 17 years of service to our church.

From 5 to 7 that evening, Cherie's friends will share old times and discuss future plans as well as enjoy pizza and beer.

All are invited but please let Margi Kohl, Corine Boos or Anne Welke know if you can be there.

If you are interested in contributing toward Cherie's going away gift, please contact Anne Welke.

2017 CONFIRMATION CLASS MOVES FORWARD

Some of you have asked about confirmation class. I thought I would tell you about it and ask for your support.

There are four students in this year's class - Keion Twyman (mentor David Gutknecht), Bradley Davies (mentor Erik Anderson), Rachel Hager (mentor Jan Koepke), and Beth Flater (mentors the Kohls).

As you can see, someone of the same gender is a mentor to each of the students. They have been asked to share their personal faith stories with the students.

There are about 20 classes that each student must attend. They also must attend worship two Sundays a month. There is a mission component. We are going to work at Clear Water Forest in May to help get the camp ready for the summer season. This will include cleaning, painting, getting trails ready, etc. Our mission trip begins on Friday May 19 after school (it's a 4-hour drive), returning May 22. I estimate that it will cost about \$1000.00 total for our mission trip. That will cover food, lodging and transportation for four kids and three adults.

Why have a mission trip?

1. The congregation will participate in funding the trip through the two fundraising events. They will hear a report from the kids when they come back complete with pictures of what they did and learned at Clear Water Forest. (Generations will be more connected.)
2. The confirmation students will put into practice a part of what it means to be a Christian and member of FPC through their service work at Clear Water Forest, our church camp.
3. It will be a more intensive time of worship, learning and fellowship which could produce a longer term bond between them as members of FPC.
4. The camp will benefit from their work.
5. I hope to be able to take them on a high ropes course (depending on the camp being able to arrange for it)
6. It will be fun, teaching them that church can be a lot of fun on top of it all.

I have settled on two easy to do fund raisers in addition to the 5th Sunday shake the can church offering. And of course, they include food. Presbyterians love to eat, you know. We plan to hold a pancake – sausage feed and a Spaghetti feed on two different Sundays - April 9 and May 7.

I need your help to stay for dinner after church on those days. In addition, we have five more spots open in the carriage house where we are staying. **I hope that five others are able to join us.** The more who go, the more we can help the camp, the more kids and the church connect and the more fun will be had by all.

Pastor Karel

TIME TO CELEBRATE!

Congratulations to the following people who are celebrating birthdays and/or anniversaries during March:

March 3	Karen Beighley
March 6	Robert Hoover
March 7	Abigail Owen
March 8	Mark Borofka
March 10	Jinx Smith
March 11	Carla Ingalls
March 13	Jan Koepke and Jerry Giedd
March 14	Chris and Chuck Norseng and Louise White
March 16	Pat Address and Jeannette Miller
March 17	Larry Stevens
March 19	Addie Ruhe and Erik Dickson
March 20	Traci Anderson, Anfin Anderson, Erik and Deborah Dickson
March 22	Andrea Brovold
March 27	Carol Ament
March 28	Gene Peissig

KEION TWYMAN SHOWS HE CAN MAKE HOOPS!

Keion Twyman, grandson of members David & Patricia Gutknecht, participated in the Wisconsin Elk Hoop Program in Eau Claire taking first place, with 23 of 25 baskets made.

From there he moved to the Regional playoffs in Chippewa Falls on January 29, placing second and taking home a trophy.

Students are eligible to participate from ages 8 to 12. Keion has competed the past four years and this was his last year for the Wisconsin Elk Hoop Program,

What a great way to finish! Congratulations, Keion.

TIME TO SET YOUR CLOCKS AHEAD

Daylight Savings Time begins on Sunday March 12. Mark your calendars and turn your clocks ahead before you go to bed on Saturday or you will be late for church and miss something wonderful.

METHODIST CHURCH GETS APPROVAL FOR TINY HOUSES

Trinity United Methodist Church has received overwhelming support for having two tiny houses on their property.

The congregation, Chippewa Falls Planning Commission, City Council and concerned citizens weighed in in favor of the houses which will be located in the parking lot on the west side of the church.

Now the work of installing the houses begins. That will entail making them permanently secure and hooking them up to the church's electrical system.

Since FPC doesn't have the space to have its own tiny house, we have been busy collecting things to help furnish the houses at Methodist. Once the installation of the houses is complete, we will be delivering blankets, pillows, a microwave and other necessities for daily living.

In addition, we are planning fund raisers to help with the considerable costs involved in this endeavor.

EMPTY BOWLS

A Benefit for Feed My People Food Bank Thursday, March 2 11:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. at Florian Gardens 2340 Lorch Ave, Eau Claire



Please join in supporting the 17th annual **EMPTY BOWLS** benefit for **Feed My People Food Bank** at Florian Gardens in Eau Claire. For a donation of \$20 you will receive a handcrafted bowl made by UW-Eau Claire art students, soup made by local restaurants, breads, dessert and a beverage. The meal alone is \$8, children under 10 are free.

Proceeds from this event help thousands of people struggling with hunger in the Chippewa Valley.

Tickets are available online at www.fmpfoodbank.org or at the door. Bowls are limited, so reserve yours early.

First Presbyterian Church Food Pantry in partnership with Feed My People.

FPC FOOD PANTRY VOLUNTEERS WORK TO HELP OTHERS

Larry Annett gathered the Food Pantry team on the February 16 when they talked about the issues surrounding the areas of responsibility that are handled by volunteers. Future meetings will be on the third Wednesday of every month at 4:00 pm in the Library.

Everyone is invited to come to a Food Pantry meeting. If you have a particular interest in helping, here is a list of those who are in charge of the various areas of the food Pantry. We can always use more help. Please call the Church office or any of those listed below.

The Food Pantry is open every Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm.

Anne Welke, Dick Kemp, Mary Flater and Mitch Mandelert are in charge of packing bags of food while Larry Annett, Gwen Bauman, Marlys Daniels, Pat Andres and Margi Kohl handle distribution.

Kathi Mandelert, Anne Welke and Dick Kemp order supplies which are received by Gene Peissig, Winston Baker and Dick Kemp. Gwen Bauman and Marlys Daniels are in charge of clothing.

Barb Shorrel and Gwen Bauman handle the budget and record keeping and Marlys Daniels and Margi Kohl keep track of statistics.

Pat Andres sends out thank you notes and advertising is done by Larry Annett and Pastor Karel. Larry Annett and Gwen Bauman are in charge of fundraising and Larry Annett, Anne Welke and Pastor Karel take care of the monthly meetings.

There are many more people who volunteer and support the pantry but there are too many to list in this article. This is truly a First Presbyterian Mission.

The Food Pantry team decided to add clothing as a permanent part of their winter program ensuring that they have coats and hats and mittens for those in need. They will also begin purchasing a limited amount of personal care items, such as diapers, tooth paste, tooth brushes, deodorant and have them on hand. These items are not available through Feed My People and people are not able to purchase them with their S.N.A.P cards. Dick and Margi will create a list of items the Food Pantry will carry and the cheapest source for these items. (If you know of an inexpensive place to acquire these, please let them know.)

Our Food Pantry continues to grow and serves a variety of people. On average they give out 3 or 4 bags full of items that do not need to be cooked to people who are homeless. They have many stories to tell of the resilience of many of the people they serve.

Last October a gentleman came who had recently lost all he had. He not only received food from us but also guidance and assistance in finding other needed resources. The gentleman came back last month to thank the pantry for their help. He said he now has an apartment, a job and has been sober. Our food pantry gives out much more than food. They care and support those who come in many other ways through prayer, resource information, job boards, clothing and fresh vegetables.