

The Bell

May, 2017

A LITTLE TALK ABOUT RAIN

Seeing as how we have had a bit of rain I thought I would make that my topic for this month.

There are many sayings about rain, perhaps you've heard a few. For example "Into every life a little rain must fall", "He is right as rain", "April showers bring May flowers". But they have also brought flooding and devastation.

I have been awakened by my dog Dax each time we have a storm. He can smell a storm hours before it arrives. The first time he woke me up, he was panting like crazy. He comforted himself by walking back and forth under my half-asleep hand which I dangled off the side of the bed, and finally he started to jump on the side of the bed. Half asleep I let him out, got him food, checked for burrs in his feet none of which helped. Then I remembered that he gets real upset when there is a thunderstorm. Sure enough about an hour later I heard the thunder. If there is a storm coming, Dax does all he can to be close to me.

There are several stories about storms in scripture. Matthew 7:21-29 tells the one about the man who built a house on the sand, and a man who built the house on the rock. The moral of the story is "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock.

Discerning God's will requires sincerity of belief in Jesus, in God's word and action. It seems as though Jesus' word to us today is to build our lives on the rock on belief in him and doing the will of God. I wonder all the time what is the will of God. I see people in difficult situations, some even at wit's end wondering the same thing. They and I want to be in that place, our life aligned with the kingdom of God less stressed, lonely, more joyful and fulfilled doing the will of God, being useful, making a difference.

But you wonder then about tornadoes, earthquakes, and flash floods. When I was in sixth grade, a tornado struck the street on which I lived and took the roof off of my friend's house, but ours was intact. It couldn't be because my friend's house was built on sand, or because we were more faithful.

There is another issue to this whole building on rock or on sand thing, at least for me. I can't help but notice that I try to build a lot of things in my life; a faith; a family vacation; as a pastor a place to serve; not one of them is a house that will truly protect me from a storm. I am as subject to accident, (continued on next page)

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sickness, tragedy as the next person. Does that mean I am building on the sand and not the rock? The good news, at least for me, is not that I have a choice about building on rock or on sand. The good news is that Jesus is the rock despite my choice.

You can do the right thing, according to this text: you can search out the bedrock foundation, build yourself a sturdy house, and rest secure. Or you can do the wrong thing: fall in love with a little beachside cabin on stilts with an airy front porch that overlooks the sea, and talk yourself into buying it anyway (even though the inspector's report points out that the cabin is five feet above sea level on a disappearing spit of land). Either way, your house is just a house. It is not the rock itself. When the house is swept away—and some go sooner than others, to be sure—what remains is the rock. Cling to that. Let the rock be your foundation, and your scaffold.

In these rainy, stormy days it is always possible to cling to the rock, to hear the word of God and like the wise man build on the rock once again.

Blessings,

Pastor Karel

“MEET TO EAT” FOR THE OPEN DOOR CLINIC

Thursday, May 18 will be the date for the annual “Meet to Eat” benefit for the Open Door Clinic.

That day 25% of all food proceeds will be donated to the Clinic by participating restaurants. Patrons can also enter a drawing for many prizes donated by local businesses.

This year the participating restaurants are Chippewa Family Restaurant, Duncan Creek Farm Store Grille, Lucy's Delicatessen, Deb's Café, The Sandbar and Grill and The Lodge all in Chippewa Falls; Harms Way Bar and Grill and Xpeditions Coffee Company & Market in Bloomer; Horizons Lounge and Banquet Center in Tilden; Old Abes Supper Club in Jim Falls; Goodies and High Shores Supper Club at Lake Wissota. Reservations are appreciated at High Shores and Duncan Creek.

This annual event is sponsored this year by A to Z Embroidery, Brown Builders, HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital, ITW Deltar Fasteners, Leinenkugel's, Marshfield Clinic, Mason Companies, Mayo Clinic Health System. Northwestern Bank, Oakleaf Surgical Hospital, Royal Credit Union and Security Health.

Plan a meal (or three) out at one of these restaurants on May 18 and know that 25% of your food bill will help fund the Open Door Clinic.

The Open Door Clinic receives the majority of its operational budget from local donations. More than 150 volunteers make the clinic run. The Open Door Clinic is celebrating its 11th year of operation and is open every Tuesday from 5-7:30 at our church. Services are provided to Chippewa County residents who are without a health care alternative and meet the clinic's income criteria.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR MAY AND JUNE

Summer may be a time of rest and relaxation, but we have lots to do first.

On May 7 we will celebrate the baptism of Sadie Jo Reemtsma and have a mission trip fundraising pancake breakfast following service. Come hungry.

On May 14 the members of our 2017 confirmation class will be confirmed and received into the church.

May 19 to 22 will find these new members, their chaperones and Pastor Karel on a mission trip to Clearwater Forest where they will ready the camp for summer activities as well as make new friends and share experiences with them.

On May 28, these “campers” will share their experiences and what they have learned with the congregation during worship.

On June 4 the time of worship changes to 9:30AM for the summer. We will welcome two new members, Jesse and Kathy Torres, into the church.

June 4 is also Pentecost, which marks the beginning of the church. Many special activities are planned for the service that Sunday to make it a very special and meaningful day.

APRIL INCLUDED SPECIAL SERVICES

In keeping with our tradition of making the Palm Sunday service special, this year we presented the story of Christ's passion from the viewpoint of the various items involved in His crucifixion and the time leading up to it.

Many thanks to those who participated in this special service either by supplying the items or bringing them to the communion table. They included Deb and Jeff Buckli, Mitch Mandelert, Terry Wiedenhoef, Erik Anderson, Keion Twyman, Esther Frazier, Beth Flater, Ryan Reemtsma, Lynda Butek, Michael Hager, Amelia Reemtsma, Owen Simonson, Ivory Anderson, Isabelle Harmon, Barb Meredith, Tricia Radke, Darin Flater. The coordinators were Lynda Butek and Esther Frazier.

On Maunday Thursday, we joined with Trinity United Methodist Church to present and explain the Seder. Many thanks for Anne Welke, Lynda Butek, Esther Frazier, Margi Kohl, Kathy Torres, Gene Peissi, Barb Meredith and Jeannette Miller for their work in making this event happen.

OPEN DOOR CLINIC WECOMES NEW COORDINATOR

Jill Cooper registered nurse started as the new Clinic Coordinator on April 24.

Jill works at St. Joe's as a registered nurse manager and house supervisor. With her background, she will be a great fit for the clinic. Mary Meyer will stay on as a volunteer to help with orientation and transition.

Jill's email is coordinator@chippewaopendoor.org

We hope Jill will visit us one Sunday soon so we can meet her and welcome her to the church.

LET'S CELEBRATE!

It's time to celebrate May birthdays and anniversaries:

May 1	Terry and Christine Wiederhoeft
May 2	Peggy and George Fleming
May 3	Corine Boos, Andrea and Steven Brovold
May 8	Ken Beighley
May 10	Kathy Facklam
May 11	Ray Address, Jim Mandelert
May 15	Roger Haglund
May 17	Alexander Haglund, Joanne Knoble, George Abendroth, June Kemp
May 20	Richard Teske
May 21	Ellen Teske
May 22	Ellen Devine, Corine and Earl Boos
May 24	Deb Buckli
May 27	Tiffany Brummond
May 31	Jackson Simonson, Sara Reemtsma

TIME FOR THE MOVIES

Now that the weather is getting warmer, it is also time to bring back Movie Night.

Stay tuned, we'll pick a Wednesday night sometime before school is out and have fun with it.

Any suggestions for which Wednesday or what movie please let Kevin Litten know.

kdlitten@charter.net

TIME TO CLEAN UP

Highway cleanup is scheduled May 20 at 10:30. If you are coming for the first time, you will need to wear old clothes and bring gloves. Bags, pick up sticks, & vests will be furnished. Gene Peissig will tape your long pants to ward off ticks, bugs & critters!

Twelve highway Presbyterians in four groups of three can cover the ground in 1 to 1.5 hours. Additional folks are welcome. Some could police the small parking area near the creek. Others are welcome for hotdogs on Margie & Vance's patio. Bring your own beverage.

Who knows – we may find sometime wonderful!

TREAT YOURSELF BETTER

In our church sometimes there seem to be more jobs than there are people to do them. And there are many matters that seem to have no good solutions. We all have concerns, but worrying “burns” valuable energy.

A wise woman, when asked if she worried about the safety of her husband and boys fighting to save wilderness cabins behind the fire line, responded, "Worry is not a positive emotion. I try to spend as little time with it as I can."

Thought for May - Substitute a positive emotion for a negative one. "Worry less, do more!"

CHANGING THE COLORS

All during Lent we decorated the sanctuary with purple, the color which can symbolize pain, suffering and therefore mourning and penitence.

Now we are in Eastertide and the color is white, symbolizing light, renewal and hope, celebrating the resurrection of Jesus over 50 days. This will last until Pentecost, June 4.

That day you will see red in the sanctuary. Red is the color of fire and symbolizes the presence of God, in this instance, a commemoration and celebration of the receiving of the Holy Spirit by the early church. John the Baptist prophesied of the first Pentecost where Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire. Pentecost signifies the beginning of the church and the start of our season of growth and renewal, which will be shown by green in the sanctuary.

But not before June 11, Trinity Sunday, when we will return to white. Then it's green again through summer and most of fall.

LET'S GO CAMPING AT CLEARWATER FOREST!

You have heard about the Presbyterian camp at Clearwater Forest in northern Wisconsin because that's where our confirmation class is going to get the camp ready for the summer.

With their help, the camp is just about ready for all our young people to enjoy as campers. The boats are ready to get in the water. The high ropes (which our class will enjoy while they are there) are ready to be traversed. The trails are ready for hikers. The cabins are cleaned. The arts and crafts have been sorted and the camp is ready to open for business in June.

If this camp sounds like something your children would be interested in, visit clearwaterforest.org for the schedule and online registration. There are programs for third graders through recent graduates as well as intergenerational programs like Family Camp and Grands Camp. There is something for everyone.

This summer's theme is "Branching Out: Connecting Through Christ." Campers will be exploring the many ways our relationship with Christ can connect us with individuals and communities for the rest of our lives.

The camp officially opens in June with games, boating, high ropes, hikes, worship, laughter, fun, triumphs, songs, skits, adventure. You name it!

If you are a bit nervous about having your child away for a week, come up for Friends and Family Day on June 10 when you can see what it's all about.

You are never too old to go to Clearwater. There are family programs, volunteering a week this summer, sponsoring a counselor or financially supporting a family member, friend or community member to go to Clearwater. For more information, visit the website above or call 218-678-2325.

SYRIANS STILL NEED OUR HELP

We have been hearing about the crisis in Syria for years but it really strikes home when we hear about some of our own.

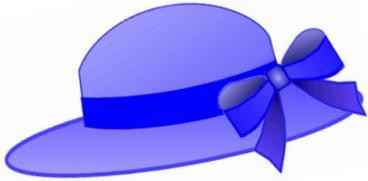
In March, 2011, violence, demonstrations and fighting were widespread in Syria. But things were to get worse until Christians from the Presbyterian Church of Homs were displaced. They lost their church, their houses, their property. This was quite a shock to the Syrians because for over 50 years, they had enjoyed quite a high level of safety. They weren't prepared for the crisis that was on their doorstep.

But Americans were able to help through the Presbyterian Foundation. They provided assistance directly to the families most affected, helping them with money for food, blankets, heaters and housing in safe areas. These are all things we take for granted but which they couldn't count on.

These people still need our help and we can help through the Jinishian Memorial Program. For more information on what our gifts can do, go to the presbyterianfoundation.org/jinishian.

NEWS FROM FINANCE...

SUBMITTED BY Barb Shorrel, treasurer



Thanks to all who pledged to the Easter Bonnet fund raiser to benefit the youth mission trip to Clearwater Forest in May. Twenty-one ladies of all ages donned many different styles of hats to add to the Easter service festivities.

If you have not paid your pledge, please do so soon. Please mark the memo line of your check "Easter bonnets." If you give cash, be sure to put it in an envelope with your name and "Easter bonnets" written on it.

SPECIAL OFFERINGS: ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

Contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing total \$572 through Easter Sunday. We sent the total contribution to our Presbytery on April 26. Thanks to all who contributed to this offering which is used for helping people around the world.

REMINDER: HAVE YOU PAID YOUR PER CAPITA FOR 2017? It is \$30 for every confirmed member.

ANNOUNCING MY RETIREMENT AS TREASURER EFFECTIVE JULY 31.

I informed the finance team at our March meeting that I would be retiring from my position as treasurer effective July 31. I began this job in the summer of 2013 after Holly Gintz resigned the position. Before that I had been chairperson of the Finance Team. I cannot remember how long I did that job.

Whenever change happens, it brings the opportunity to review how we do what we do. The Finance Team will be working on that process and will forward our recommendation to Session.

As always, we welcome ideas from you, our members and friends.

When we reorganized the finance positions back in 2013, we envisioned a larger Finance Team. It was an ambitious idea. We still have the need to have another person or two on the Finance Team. I hope that you will consider this. If you want to know more, please speak with me.

EASTER BONNETS SUPREME!

It was Easter Bonnet time again on Sunday, April 16 when 21 Easter hats appeared in the sanctuary.

What Easter extravaganza would be complete without some competition and ours was no exception. There were two winners of the drawing for hat of the year. Lea Dirks won a Whitman's Sampler and Emmy Ackerlund (Teske) went home with a special Easter Basket. Having Lea go home with one of the prizes was especially fitting since it was her hats that prompted the whole thing.

Just so the men didn't feel left out, they were able to sponsor all the hats this year. In all this sponsorship raised \$277 for the confirmation class fund.

All the ladies who wore hats received a Spring flower.

EASTER LILIES DECORATED THE SANCTUARY

This year, we had 16 Easter lilies purchased to decorate the sanctuary on Easter Sunday. The flowers were purchased and dedicated as follows:

Carmi Simonson	In memory of Mary Jo Willis
Carmi Simonson	In appreciation of Jackson and Owen Simonson
Alvina Drumm	In memory of Jeanne and Joyce
Beth Cripe	In memory of Gordon
Esther Frazier	In memory of Theodora J. White
Jesse and Kathy Torres	In memory of Bob Carvell
Jesse and Kathy Torres	In memory of Virginia Carvell
Jesse and Kathy Torres	In memory of Salvadore Torres
June and Dick Kemp	In appreciate of their grandchildren
Barbara Meredith	In memory of Bob and her parents, Myra and Willis Brooks, and in appreciation of family members
Pat and Dave Gutknecht	In memory of David A. Gutknecht
Pat and Dave Gutknecht	In memory of Emma B. Mika
Pat and Dave Gutknecht	In memory of Sister Frances Elizabeth Schmitz
Pat and Dave Gutknecht	In memory of James Eichinger
Bonnie and Doug Gullickson	In memory of their parents, brothers and sister
Lynda Butek	In memory of Carol

ABOUT THE FACEBOOK PAGE

Our Facebook page now has people from at least three continents. We will perhaps never see any of them sitting next to us in church, yet in a way they are with us in spirit. It is possible to develop a friendship without that person being actually present.

Those who have joined have reached out to us. We should in turn reach out to them. If you haven't visited our Facebook page yet, now would be a good time to do it.