



# The Bell

August, 2018

Monthly Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

## **A-PICNICKING WE'LL GO**

It's time for Presbyterians and their friends to get out their picnic gear and join us for this year's church picnic on Wednesday, August 1 in the main pavilion at Irvine Park

There will something for everyone to do and eat and activities for the whole family.

Setup begins at 3:30 and we hope to serve by 5:30. The picnic will last until just before dark. No worry if it rains (it wouldn't dare!) because the picnic area is covered.

It is a pot luck so bring a dish to share. The meat will be provided and there will be a free-will donation to cover the cost. Bring your own table service and beverage.

Ellen Teske is organizing the games so think about being competitive - in a friendly sort of way. While this is an FPC event, you are encouraged to bring a friend to enjoy the afternoon.

We will be recruiting volunteers to help set up, grill, etc. If you can lend a hand, contact Kevin Litten.

Last year's picnic was well attended and everyone apparently had a wonderful time so plan to join us this year.

## **JULY STEWARDSHIP BREAKFAST STRIKES A HAPPY NOTE**

Our July Stewardship breakfast netted just over \$500 to help our Operating Fund continue to do the work we offer to ourselves and our community. When the chips are down, you are all ready to go the extra mile to support our needs and causes. We certainly appreciate those who gave so much and worked so hard to provide a lovely, tasty, and beautifully presented brunch.

To make the day extra special, Jean Peissig donated a quilt which was won by Mary Jo Reemtsma.

The generous donations made everything so worthwhile. All you do is appreciated by so many...the people who come to our church for physical help such as food and medical care, those of us who come for spiritual help, and many who can call our welcoming place a home. You all are making it possible for us to continue to serve ourselves, the community and the Lord!

It is the hope of the Stewardship Committee that these special breakfasts will be held every month. Be sure to watch the Bulletin and the Bell for Stewardship Breakfast Sundays.

## GOD'S VISION FOR OUR PRESENT AND OUR FUTURE

Posted around church you will find a vision for our church approved by session in their April meeting. It is entitled: First Presbyterian Church God's Vision for Our Present and Our Future. Please take time to read it and help us as a congregation embrace and embody our vision. Some of the statements will be a challenge for us to embrace. Others are at the core of who we already are, and we are challenged to continue the joy of being the body of Christ.

One paragraph states: "We strive for a meaningful participation of all people, no matter their age, race or gender, and enjoy including them and finding a place where each person's gifts are used and shared. The passing of the peace is important to us not only in worship but in our life together. We enjoy fellowship through meals, activities and involvement in the life of our community." At its essence this statement celebrates the fellowship and participation enjoyed by our congregation, one which we want to continue and encourage.

This fall we will again be meeting each Wednesday night for a shared meal, Bible Study and choir practice. It is an important aspect of our life together as a community of faith. What I didn't realize was that these shared meal times were a building block of the early Christian churches or house churches. This practice is an essential building block of our common life together and has been so since the early church was formed.

The book of Acts, as well as other documents, gives us some clues about the early Christian churches. Acts 2:46-47 tells us some things about this early Christian life. "Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved." Most of the scholars who have studied this passage have concluded that this was a good description of the early "house churches".

The early Christians met in Synagogues all over the Roman Empire. They formed small communities and shared meals together, cared for each other, and learned and shared the stories of Christ. "Marshall rightly emphasizes communal meals in Acts as a continuation of Jesus' previous meals with his disciples, as well as a reflection of meal practices of other groups." These Christians who met in "House Churches" over time pulled away from the Synagogue and pulled closer together. These small communities were the building blocks of the Christian Church.

Life was very simple in these small communities. They were usually smaller than 20 or 25 people in each community. The largest room, referred to as the upper room as it was on the second floor, was the living room. It was generally the same width and length as the house. Some of these rooms could hold 20 to 25 people. It is hardly surprising that in this situation no one gave much thought to the organization of the infant church. These followers of Jesus were not concerned with appointing leaders or writing a constitution or setting up committees. Nor did it occur to them to establish an army of bureaucrats to direct their worldwide mission from some central headquarters. They already had the only organizing force they needed: the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Acts 4:31; Acts 5:1 Acts 13:1-3.

In Christ, Pastor Karel

## **ELDER LARRY ANNETT REPORTS ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTIVITY**

Every two years, representatives of the Presbyteries that make up the PCUSA are invited to attend a meeting of the General Assembly of our church. This year our presbytery was represented by Larry Annett, a former Elder of this church and member of the Committee on Ministry, and Rich Blood, current Moderator of our presbytery. Rich was chosen because he is the leader of our presbytery. Larry was called because of the extensive work he has done with the Committee on Ministry.

The General Assembly represents 1,300,000 Presbyterians in the United States and this week-long meeting is where they decide the issues of the church that face all of us.

Each of the 538 representatives was assigned to one of 14 committees which met during the week to discuss issues affecting the church and the country as a whole. The committees met and formulated recommendations which they presented to the General Assembly for a vote.

Larry's assignment was to the Environmental Committee which discussed the church's position on climate change. The PCUSA invests in companies that produce fossil fuels and although the committee's recommendation was to divest ourselves of these holdings, the General Assembly decided to retain their position with fossil fuel producers. It was felt that if we divested ourselves of these holdings, we would give up our opportunity to have further discussions on the subject and, hopefully, be able to affect change.

Another issue which came up for vote was the government's policy of separating parents and children at the border. The assembly voted to end this policy.

The issue of per capita was also discussed and it was decided to raise the General Assembly portion for the coming year.

The assembly also approved the considering changes at the top levels of our church.

Co-moderators Vilmarie Cintron-Olivieri and Cindy Kohlmann were elected co-moderators for the coming year. The former is a synod leader and ruling elder while the latter is a minister.

The assembly also voted to add Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "Letter from Birmingham Jail" to the Book of Confessions.

The assembly voted to partner with a Salvadoran church working to reduce gang violence in Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador.

The assembly also addressed the issue of pastoral sexual misconduct and agreed to set up a task force of survivors of sexual abuse.

The assembly called for a moratorium on imposing the death penalty in this country and to affirm the dignity and humanity of people of all sexual orientations.

A summary of the key items and how the assembly voted is available in the Narthex.  
(continued on following page)

(Continued from preceding page)

Elder Annett reported that the week-long meeting in St. Louis was extremely intense with hundreds of votes being taken during the duration. The General Assembly focused on marginalized individuals during their meeting.

The various agencies that make up the General Assembly are the Investment Loan Program, the Mission Agency, Publishing, Board of Pensions and the Presbyterian Foundation. The latter two groups deal with the financial aspects of the church. The Board of Pensions makes sure the churches are paying their ministers appropriately while the Foundation manages the church's investments and distributes funds to various agencies within the church.

The financial position of the PCUSA is very good even though membership has fallen from 1,600,000 to 1,300,000 throughout the country.

If you would like more detailed information on this important meeting, please contact Larry Annett.

## **SESSION APPROVES MISSION TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS**

Submitted by Barb Shorrel

The following recommendations were approved by the Session on July 17.

- To give the Family Support Center \$200. This money came from contributions to the 2107 Peace and Global Witness Special Offering and an additional \$73.75 from the money remaining in the Fund-raising account.
- To give the \$210.40 collected from the 2017 Pentecost Offering to Valley Vineyard Church for the backpack and school supply give away this August. We will add the amount collected on Noisy Sunday, July 29.
- To give Carelink \$154.33 from the Fund-raising account. This recognizes our church's commitment to Carelink.
- To support our Thailand mission, we are giving \$417.26. We are using \$300 from the money remaining in the Fund-raising account plus the money collected from Noisy Sunday contributions on April 29.
- To earmark \$200 from the Mission Coalition designated money for use by Barnabas Table as needed. Anne Welke oversees this fund.

Watch for more information on upcoming mission projects: Soles for Souls and the Feed My People Match Challenge.

**BE SURE TO STOP BY THE WELCOME DESK AND ORDER YOUR SCRIP CARDS.  
WE HAVE CARDS FROM GORDY'S AND KWIK TRIP.**



## **JUST IN CASE YOU WERE WONDERING**

if it was really necessary to repair our organ, this is a picture of the pipes that have been removed for replacement or repair. Nuf said.

## **WE HAVE A NEW BABY**

Tristyn James joined the Mandelert family on Saturday, July 21. Weighing in at just over 8 pounds and measuring 21 inches, Tristyn is the son of Cassie Greene and Elder Mitch Mandelert and the first grandchild of Jim and Kathi Mandelert. Congratulations to the new parents and grandparents.

## **JUST A REMINDER**

Sunday Service on August 12 will be in Irvine Park at 10 AM where we will join other protestant churches for the annual Pure Water Days Ecumenical Service. There will be no service at the church that day. We will join the congregations from Trinity United Methodist, Zion Methodist, Our Saviour's Lutheran, Central Lutheran and Christ Episcopal Churches in this special service.

In addition to communion servers, we will need at least two ushers who will also take the collection and 50 to 75 bars to serve after the service. If you can help, please contact Pastor Karel.

## IT'S SUMMER TIME

By Ann Weems

vacation time  
get-away time  
take-it-easy time  
slow-down time

establish-some-liberated-zones time  
learn-to-be-freer time  
become-more-creative time  
discover-the-enjoyment-of-leisure time  
“be-still-and-know-that-I-am-God” time

too-late-to-plant time  
too-early-to-pluck time.

For some, sadly, it's wasted time

for they do not see it as

time to be enjoyed  
time to celebrate creation  
time to remember Jesus  
time to worship God

in some of the usual ways  
or in some of the seasonal ways  
either inside the church  
or outside somewhere  
either with a gathered congregation  
or alone, or with family, or with friends.

But for us who believe  
it's “fair” time –

“Fair are the meadows, Fairer still the woodlands.....  
Fair is the sunshine, Fairer still the moonlight...”

and remember-Jesus time –

“Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer,  
Than all the angels heaven can boast.”

Have a wonderful rest of the summer. Please keep the church, and our ongoing missions in your thoughts and prayers as we continue our work as a Christian Community together.

Grace and peace to you

Pastor Karel

# August Schedules

## August 5 – Sunday

**Hospitality Team** – Team 3  
Led by Gary Shorrel and Corine Boos

**Communion Servers** – Bonnie Gullickson,  
Dick Kemp, Jean Peissig, Gene Peissig,  
Jeannette Miller

**Welcome Desk** – June and Dick Kemp

**Flower Provider** – Open

## August 12 – Sunday

**PURE WATER DAYS ECUMENICAL  
SERVICE IN IRVINE PARK**

## August 19 – Sunday

**Hospitality Team** – Team 5  
Led by Erik Anderson and Kevin Litten

**Welcome Desk** – Barb Meredith

**Flower Provider** – Bob Denman celebrating  
his sister, Debbie's, birthday

## August 26 - Sunday

**Hospitality Team** – Team 6  
Led by Bonnie Gullickson and Pat Address

**Welcome Desk** – Holly Gintz

**Flower Provider** – Chris Norseng and family  
commemorating Chuck's 53<sup>rd</sup> birthday

## **CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES**

The following people are celebrating a birthday/anniversary in August.

August 1	Randy Facklam
August 2	David Gutknecht, Michael Hager
August 4	Lilly Krenz, Bruce Rosenau
August 5	Dan and Karolynne Duffenback, Kathy and Jesse Torres
August 6	Rees Anderson
August 7	Gary Reich, Gary Shorrel
August 9	Deb Bieging
August 10	Chuck Norseng
August 11	Linda Annett
August 12	Larry Annett, Barb and Gary Shorrel
August 14	Tim Anderson, Joe Teske
August 16	Bill and Lynda Butek
August 17	Erik and Traci Anderson, Earl Boos
August 20	Rachel Hager
August 21	Patti Stiles
August 28	Matt and Carmi Simonson
August 29	Ky Anderson
August 20	John and Evelyn Jensen