

THE P.L.A.N.

**P.
PRESBYTERIAN
L.
LIFE
A.
ACTION
N.
NEWSLETTER**

**MARCH
2009**

Where We Are Now . . .

The PNC Committee continues to review applications, listen to tapes and interview. The committee meets at least twice a month, more often if needed and will continue to do so for as long as necessary. Please keep the PNC Committee in your prayers while they continue this important work.

Words for March . . .

If we could read the secret history of our enemies, we should find in each man's life sorrow and suffering enough to disarm all hostility.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Whoever wishes to be my follower must deny his very self, take up his cross each day, and follow in my steps.

Luke 9:23

Ah! If you only knew the peace there is in an accepted sorrow.

Jeanne de la Motte-Guyton

Go and learn what the Scriptures mean when they say, "Instead of offering sacrifices to me, I want you to be merciful to others." I didn't come to invite good people to be my followers. I came to invite sinners.

Matthew 9:13

Humanity is never so beautiful as when praying for forgiveness, or else forgiving another.

Jean P. F. Richter

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God's kindness leads you toward repentance. Romans 2:4

Please remember these members & friends with your prayers, cards and calls:

Helen Bradshaw
817 W. Hendrickson
Marion IL 62959

Bud Bradshaw
Marion VAMC NHC
2401 W. Main Street
Marion IL 62959

Joe Van Roekel
904 W. Osage
Hugo, OK 74743

Ken King
306-520 Foster Street
Esquimalt, BC V9A7P5
CANADA

Bill Neilson
1804 Wolf Drive
Marion IL 62959

Gen Thomas
Parkway Manor
3116 Will. Co.Pkwy
Marion IL 62959

Margaret Marsh
Parkway Manor
Marion, IL 62959

Pray for the Session and Pastor Nominating Committee of First Presbyterian as their search for a new minister continues.

Pray for these Missions:

Campus ministries, C.A.S.A., Hands of Hope Family Clinic, Habitat for Humanity, Prisoner Family Support, Hospitality House, Embangweni Hospital in Malawi, Marion Ministerial Alliance, Williamson County Child Advocacy Center, Shawnee Crisis Pregnancy Center, Camp Carew, Hospice of Southern Illinois, Lighthouse Homeless Shelter, Open Arms Ministry of Nicaragua

Pray for our collegians:

Jake Childers
Mishona Grimes
Max Martini

Pray for our missionaries:

Stephannie Tebow in China
new address:

No. 3 Xi Da Wang Lu,
Blue Castle Apt
South Side, Bldg. B, Unit 801
Chaoyang District,
Beijing 100026 PRC

Pray for our world: Our nations troops around the world.

Pray for those serving in the armed forces:

- ✠ Eric Alexander—National Guard
- ✠ Douglas R. Carlile, Jeff Marlow, Sean Richey, Army
- ✠ Charles Fosse—Coast Guard
- ✠ Josiah Grimes and Trevor Parks - Navy
- ✠ Scott Miller - Marines



In Our Prayers

Pray for these members of our church family with health concerns:

Helen and Bud Bradshaw, Betty Holloman, Verna Lee Hill, Bob Logan, Margaret Marsh, Stan Meyer, Jeri Morse, Bill Neilson, Pastor Dan Whitfield, The Emily St. Peter Family, Gen Thomas, Joyce Sheets, Judy Smits, Cindy Absher, Verna Belts, Ray Fosse, Kay Jackson, Dodie Logan's brother Fred, Ray Fosse, Friend of Betty Futch with cancer, DeMellow Family, Mary Lindley's son David, Pastor Cindy's Father and friends Daniel Stein and family, Justin Harbison's family and travels, Brad Stauffer, Marsha Taylor, Rev. Dr. Joe VanRoekel, the Markland family, members of the Ramey family, Georgia Ruhe, Baby Emerson facing surgery, Kay Pape, Mike Rogier, Dean Stevenson, Carol Schaley, Carrie Irwin, Marsha Odum, Nikki Rice, Mike Wilson, our Church Leaders, the new Leaders of our nation, the Homeless, Budget Issues, Victims of war everywhere in the world, Our nation's economic crisis, all travelers from our church family, the Homebound, our Session, our PNC Committee, and our Church in this time of transition, and the Families of victims of the plane crash in NY, Victims of fires in Australia.

Someone remembers, Someone cares

Your name is whispered in someone's prayers

-Author unknown

Prayers of condolences to Darrel Smits and family on the passing of his brother Theodore (Teddy) Smits, to the family and friends of David Grobe on his passing, to the family and friends of Dick Kobler on his passing.

CHURCH WEB SITE SURVEY

The Evangelism Committee is in the process of determining the church’s needs for a web site. We want to hear from you. Please complete the survey below and put it in the offering plate on Sunday or return it to the church office. Thank you.

1. Do you have internet access at home? 1 Yes 1 No

a. If so, what kind? 1 Dial-Up 1 DSL
1 Other _____

2. Please check the type of information that you would like to have access to from the church’s web site.

- 1 Bulletin 1 Announcements 1 The PLAN
- 1 Pictures 1 Church History 1 Mission
- 1 Evangelism 1 Christian Education
- 1 Stewardship 1 Building and Grounds
- 1 Worship 1 Spiritual Life 1 Prayer Chain
- 1 Prayer Concerns 1 Sermons 1 Community Information
- 1 Weekly Devotionals 1 Link to PCUSA
- 1 Presbytery Information
- 1 Other _____

3. Would you be interested in Podcasts of weekly sermons?

1 Yes 1 No

4. Would you be interested in the ability to purchase tickets for an event or church function from our site?

1 Yes 1 No

5. Would you be interested in the ability to direct deposit your offering? 1 Yes 1 No

What else?



Spiritual Life News

One of the Spiritual Discipline focuses for the March Event will be fasting. I have done some research on the internet and on the PCUSA site for some information. Below is one of the better definitions that I found to share:

WHAT IS A FAST?

Fasting is part of the faith life of religions old and new all over the world. In a fast, the believer chooses, for a set time, to do without something that is hard to do without. This is done so it does not come between the believer and God, so it cannot act as a god over that relationship and over the life of the believer.

Usually, the fast is to do without food. Food is one of the great blessings of God in our lives, a true pleasure and a true necessity. But humans tend to be gluttons; we want to eat more. Our hunger can compel us, force our hand, and occupy our thoughts. When we have anything in our lives that we don't or can't say no to, then it is lording over us. But God is in control. If something else takes up God's place in our lives, it is an idol, and we are living in something akin to idolatry. Fasting helps to bring it back into enough control for us to surrender it to God so it can be returned to its rightful place in life. Food is the foremost example of such a thing.

You can fast from some foods, and not others. You can fast from watching television, and buying pleasure items, even from buying ordinary stuff. You can fast from hobbies you crave, places you are unhealthily drawn to, music, books, news, and movies. You might even find it necessary to be fasting from use of the Internet. If you can be described as a 'junkie', 'freak', or 'fanatic' about something, that's a good thing to fast from.

There are many biblical accounts of fasting. I encourage you to check your Bible Concordances for scriptural references and stories about people that fasted and why they fasted.

For Christians, the practice of fasting is not only confined to the Lenten Season. There are other seasons and events in human life that call for time of intentional prayer, penitence, self-examination, sobriety, and focused attention on the Word of God.

Fasting has long been associated with the season of Lent. The practice of fasting in Lent folds together all of the biblical themes of fasting: repentance and mourning for our brokenness and sin, seeking the will of God, preparation to receive God's Word made flesh in the paschal mystery of Easter.

As we continue through this Lenten Season, let us consider the spiritual discipline of fasting as a way to help us identify with the sacrifice of God's Son on the cross. Let us all reflect upon how making any sacrifice in order to spend more time in prayer and contemplation of God's Love for us can help us to draw closer to Jesus and become a more willing vessel to be changed by Him.

MARCH EVENT

WHEN: March 29 during Fellowship Hour. WHAT: Fasting and the Passover Meal.

WHO: Everyone is encouraged to stay and participate. DEFINITELY FOOD WILL BE THERE!

Spiritual Life Elder-Nancy Doerge

Session Minutes February 2009



The Session met in regular session on Monday, Feb. 9 at 5:30pm. Elders present were Nancy Doerge, Denise Frye, John Johnson, Jean Johnson, Claire Kreutzer, Granger Odum and Andrea Wallace. Elders Tom Carlile and Gayla Martini were out of town. Moderator present was Rev. Cindy Bean. The meeting was opened with prayer by Rev. Bean. Elder Claire Kreutzer gave the devotion.

Letter of transfer was received from the Herrin Presbyterian Church for Dr. & Mrs. Roger Hendricks, and Transfer of membership for Mr. & Mrs. Fred Krump has been requested from DuQuoin Presbyterian Church. Rev. Bean presented her report for Jan. 13 through Feb. 9, 2009. Committee reports were given and approved by Session.

Properties Committee will seek a new snow removal company. They will have five of the young oak trees along the parking lot moved to better locations around the church building and three of the older sweet gum trees removed (in order to allow room for the nearby young oak trees to grow and thrive). The committee will also investigate the cost of adding more gravel to west end of the parking lot for overflow parking.

Worship Committee has filled pulpit on Sunday, Feb. 15 with Rev. Meg Overstreet. Elder Granger Odum will fill the pulpit on Sunday, Feb. 22.

Christian Education committee has received Lent resources, which will be made available to members. Plans are underway for VBS 2009. Education sheets on recycling project will be given to Deacons in order to assist with the recycling in the church.

Spiritual Life committee will host the first of their Spiritual Awareness Programs on Sunday, Feb. 22 at 4:30pm. Prayer Shawls were given to Rick Flanagan and Suzanne Kerley's father.

A Plant, Craft and Bake Sale will be held as a fundraising project and is being planned for Saturday, May 9.

Financial Coordinator Dan Selock presented the January statement. His report showed \$15,058.47 received and \$13,170.57 disbursed. Balance in checking at 1/31/09 was \$28,524.50.

GET READY FOR SPRING and our Spring Plant, Craft and Bake Sale!

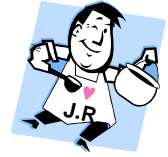


On May 9th, the Saturday before Mothers's Day, we are going to hit the front yard with lots of goodies. We need help with this so if you can sew, knit, crochet, paint, start seeds or bake something yummy, get going on it. It is only 12 weeks away. We only have 12 weeks to get this done, so all you crafty people are welcome to give us your ideas. See any Elder for more information.

Claire Kreutzer, Elder/Properties

Soup Kitchen Director's Notes submitted by J.R. Russell

During the month of January, we served 1231 meals including 41 children. The Food Pantry assisted 191 families, 16 of them new. We offered utility assistance to 3 families, rent assistance to 11 families, temporary shelter to 3 families, assistance to 2 transient individuals, and miscellaneous assistance to 1 family.



In comparison to January 2008 figures, we served 1231 meals this year, (compared to 1620 last year), 191 food boxes this year (compared to 269 boxes last year), 20 families were assisted this year (compared to 28 families last year) \$2690 Assistance Dollars this year (compared to \$3109 last year).

Ice, snow and sleet obviously had a significant impact on activity this month. The center was closed for 3 days, including a pantry day, due to the winter weather.

We did receive our DECO grant for \$5,000, which is to be used for food purchases. Given the state of the Illinois budgetary woes, this is received with much thanksgiving and appreciation!

Souper bowl totals should be available in next month's report. Again, due to bad weather, many churches had to postpone their collection. One encouraging note is that the Marion High School did a food drive for this event, collecting 800 cans, and we received financial donations from the local Kiwanis, Rotary and Lion's Clubs. It is exciting to see this program expand past just our church communities!

Also, a tremendous thank you goes out to John Phillips and his crew for replacing the ceiling tiles in the building! All the tiles in the kitchen, dining room and hallway were replaced.

Our March Alliance Board meeting will be held at Bennie's at 11:30 on Wed, March 4th. Bring a friend and personally plug into what's happening here!

SUGGESTED ITEMS FOR PROJECT MANNA:

Crackers, Canned Fruit, Cereal, Box dinners, Tuna Fish, Bar Soap, Shampoo, Deodorant and toilet paper.

Our new email address is: mma15@verizon.net.

2009 Schedule

for 1st Presbyterian Church to volunteer their service and serve in the Soup Kitchen:

May 11—15

July 27—31

Oct 12—16

Dec 28—31



Preparing for Lent

Lent is a time when we give extra attention to self-examination and repentance. In order to help us prepare our hearts for the Lenten journey, we have ordered the following resources:

- *Christ Our Hope: Daily Lenten Devotions* by Henri J.M. Nouwen
- *Holy Habits for the Holy Season of Lent* by Rich Bimler
- *Keeping Watching with Jesus: Daily Lenten Prayers Based on the Gospel of Mark*
by Mark Neilsen
- *Watch & Wait: Daily Lenten Devotions for Children* by Julia DiSalvo

These devotionals are now available for you to pick up and take home. They can be found in the narthex and in the Fellowship Hall.

Let's prepare our hearts and minds this Lent to receive the gracious gift of Easter.

COMMUNITY LENTEN SERVICES

Date	Time	Host Church	Speaker	Text/Theme
March 3	7pm	1st Presbyterian Church	Michael Doan	John 8:12-20 I am the Light of the World...
March 10	7pm	First Christian Church	Matt Holmes	John 10:1-10 I am the Door...
March 17	7pm	Community of Christ	Carolyn Rauschert	John 10:11-18 I am the Good Shepherd...
March 24	7pm	Zion United Church of Christ	Bill Harper	John 15:1-11 I am the True Vine...
March 31	7pm	Our Redeemer Lutheran	Deb Pollex	John 6:25-35 I am the Bread of Life...
(Good Friday) April 10	noon	Marion Civic Center	John Holst	

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

During the Lenten Season, Holy Communion will be served every Sunday during the month of March, the first two Sundays in the month of April, and on Thursday, April 9 which is Maundy Thursday.

On Maundy Thursday at 7:00pm, a Lenten Cantata will be performed during the service. Please come enjoy the service and sing along.

Colors of Grace



Lessons for Lent

A Cantata by

Joseph M. Martin

Directed by Granger Odum

Accompanied by Nancy Doerge

Presented by

The Choir of the First Presbyterian Church

Maundy Thursday, April 9, 7:30 p.m.

Communion will be served

In the suffering of this Holy Week, find joy. In its darkness, see Light.
“For Light still shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”

This is the power Christ’s grace and the source of great joy.

Mission Yearbook Available On-Line

The *2009 Mission Yearbook for Prayer and Study* provides readings for each day of the year about missions that the PC(USA) is involved in throughout the United States and worldwide. These thought-provoking articles, organized this year around the theme, "Do justice, love kindness, walk humbly with your God (Micah 6:8)," provide the reader with examples of faith and inspire us to remain hopeful and committed to doing mission. Each day's entry also includes a list of the day's scripture readings and a prayer in response to the article on mission. A few weeks ago in worship, we announced that the new yearbooks were available, and they were quickly "snapped up" by congregants.

The *Mission Yearbook* is available both in book form and on-line. Simply go to the PC(USA) website at [pcusa.org](http://www.pcusa.org) and type "Mission Yearbook" or enter the following url: <http://www.pcusa.org/missionyearbook/>. From this page, click on "Listen to the podcast" in the right-hand column to listen to today's reading, or, alternatively, you can subscribe to receive daily readings by e-mail by clicking on the "Get readings by e-mail" link. Check out this site. You may even decide to choose the *Mission Yearbook* as your home page. You may find it a wonderfully inspiring daily habit!

THERE ARE PICTURES IN HERE!!!

REGISTRATION FORMS NOW AVAILABLE FOR SUMMER CAMP AT CAMP CAREW

Camp Carew, your camp and retreat center, is pleased to announce that registration for the 2009 Summer Camp season has begun! Pick up a 2009 Camp Carew brochure from the church and use the registration form inside. Or go to www.CampCarew.com to see all the programs available for children and young people in grades Kindergarten through 12th grade and to download a registration form. To secure a space for the camp of your choice, go to www.CampCarew.com today! If you have any questions, please contact the Camp Carew office at CampCarew@gmail.com or 618-457-5596.



SHARKS 2009

The weather may have delayed our collection for Souper Bowl of Caring Sunday but it did not dampen our enthusiasm. February 1st brought snow and the cancellation of worship services. So, on February 9th, the children held their Soup Pots at the doors and collected over \$400. Along with the money collected that day, over 200 canned goods were donated to the Soup Kitchen. Several dozen nightgowns were donated and are waiting to be mailed to the Ranchod Hospice in Zambia, with more on the way.

Thank you, once again, to the congregation for supporting the children in their mission. They are learning, by your example, the joy that only helping others brings.



A Lenten Reflection

- Give up complaining—focus on gratitude.
- Give up pessimism—become an optimist.
- Give up harsh judgments—think kindly thoughts.
- Give up worry—trust Divine Providence.
- Give up discouragement—be full of hope.
- Give up bitterness—turn to forgiveness.
- Give up hatred—return good for evil.
- Give up negativism—be positive.
- Give up anger—be more patient.
- Give up pettiness—become mature.
- Give up gloom—enjoy the beauty that is all around you.
- Give up jealousy—pray for trust.
- Give up gossiping—control your tongue.
- Give up sin—turn to virtue.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY PHOTO AND CAPTION

WALKING THE LABRYNTH

Evangelism.... What?

I have been Elder of Evangelism now for a few months and I still feel like I am treading uncertain waters. In my quest to learn what Evangelism is to me and what an Elder of Evangelism is supposed to do, I ran across an article by Sherron Kay George, entitled: Reluctant evangelists? Telling the Good News may not come easy, but it is an essential part of a Christian lifestyle.

Here's an excerpt:

Do Presbyterians still believe in evangelism? I quickly discovered in the required class on mission and evangelism I taught at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary that many students had little interest in or even an aversion to evangelism. Isn't that something Baptists, Pentecostals, megachurches, and TV evangelists do?

We Presbyterians station smiling greeters at the front door, and we may take bread to visitors. We may invite someone to our church. But we generally do not feel comfortable speaking publicly about our personal faith.

Presbyterian pastors do not often preach evangelistic sermons or give altar calls, and door-to-door evangelism is rare among Presbyterians. Is there a way to practice evangelism without emotional manipulation and aggressive marketing techniques that lead to superficial decisions? Can Presbyterians reclaim with integrity our historical commitment to evangelism?

OK – so far so good. This article is substantiating what I already felt – an aversion to evangelism, children on street corners with signs, passing out of leaflets, cold-calling on the neighborhood.... Oh, my. Then I ran across this handy diagram that, at first look, overwhelmed me and I didn't even read what it said. I have since gone back to the "drawing board" and think that I may get a handle on this Evangelism thing yet. Here is how – I started thinking of Evangelism as A MISSION – not mission itself, but a mission that is performed. MISSION – now that's something I understand. That is something that this church has a tradition of and does very well. Let's take a look together.



Evangelism – The church as a messenger. I can be a messenger through my lifestyle, my words, my attitude (may need some work there) and my actions. Wow – is that Evangelism?

I can be a messenger by faith-sharing...sharing I can do but proclamation I don't know about yet.... Witnessing will need some work on my part.

I can be a messenger by inviting. I do it and so can you. "Hey, Jane, we are hosting the Community Lenten Service next week. Why don't you come?" See, not that hard. Welcoming – Pastor Cindy has said that we possess "radically hospitality." We know how to welcome. Assimilating – OK, the word geeks among us will hesitate here. My gut reaction was, "No – I will not become a part of the collective or minimize our Presbyterian differences." Then I actually looked the word up in the dictionary and found that assimilate can also mean to integrate new knowledge or information....something we should be doing in every aspect of our lives.

I can be a messenger through new church development – this is the scariest area for me...when you start using words like conversion and discipleship, my inner Presbyterian starts to cringe.... Oh, I may need to expand my horizons....I am way out of my comfort zone ...but then I feel better when I look at building the church....nothing wrong with building the church...all for that.

So, the bottom line (literally) is that the Evangelism task is not insurmountable We can do this together as long as we focus our minds and hearts on the larger goal – **God's reign of love, peace, and justice.**