

COMMUNITY CALL

Ministers: The People of God; Pastor: Rev. D. Matthew Stith
702 Sheyenne St., P.O. 546, West Fargo, ND 58078 701-282-4135 E-mail: office@cpcwf.org Web: <http://cpcwf.org>

YOUTH LEADERS NEEDED

Our middle school youth are energetic, bright, enthusiastic, and dedicated to spending one evening per week at the church for youth group activities. *However, unless volunteers sign up, they won't have a leader for every week.*

Meetings include dinner, devotions (in a binder in the S.S. cupboard), and an activity. Activities could include making cuddle-ups for PATH, playing Human Sorry, watching a movie followed by discussion, attending a Christian concert, and so much more.

Openings are posted in the narthex and in this newsletter. Please sign up now before you miss the chance to spend time with these special kids OR before they don't have a chance to meet.

BRING OUT YOUR RUMMAGE!

We know, we know. It's only February, but it's not too early to start thinking about bringing out your rummage for the Presbyterian Men's Rummage sale in early April. Look through those closets, hand down those old computers, cull those bookshelves, clean out the toy boxes, look through the basement, search the attic, and let's find some treasures to sell at the rummage sale. More details will be forthcoming in the March newsletter.



PASTOR'S PEN

I was talking to a colleague the other day, and the subject of Cub Scouts, and my involvement in Cub Scouting as a Den Leader, came up. "Wow," she said, "it's great that you can make the time to do that with your son." I agreed, and still do. But I've been thinking, in the days since, about her comment, and I have come to think that there is more that needs to be said. I devote my time and energy to Scouting not only because it's a way to spend quality time with Joram, but also because, as a Scout parent, a Scout leader, and a former Scout myself, I recognize the Scouting program as something good and valuable in its own right. I'd like to think that I would be involved in Scouting even if I didn't



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have a son in the program.

Boy Scouting, it seems to me, has a positive impact on society because it has a very positive impact on the millions of boys and young men who participate in its programs (I'm sure the same could be said of Girl Scouting as well, but I have much less direct experience of that program, so I'll stick to talking about what I know!). Scouts at every level are taught what we might refer to as civic virtues: good citizenship, patriotism, responsibility, teamwork, respect for others, devotion to duty, respect for the environment, leadership, and more. In short, Scouting aims to build good citizens and good leaders, and I give my own Scouting experience a great deal of credit for whatever degree of citizenship and leadership I have managed to exhibit over the years.

Now Scouting is not—explicitly not—a Christian organization. From its foundation (100 years ago this month, if we refer to the Boy Scouts of America), the movement has made a point of being open to boys and parents of all faiths, so long as they profess belief in God in some form. The twelfth and final point of the Scout Law is “A Scout is Reverent,” and “Duty to God” is given high place in all of Scouting’s oaths and ceremonies, but there are no specific requirements of creed, denomination, and so on. Nevertheless, I notice that a large number of Packs, Dens, Troops, Patrols, Crews, and other Scouting organizations seem to be affiliated with, and often sponsored by, churches. In fact, I’d go so far as to say that as a general rule, churches are as supportive of Scouting as they are of most explicitly Christian organizations. Why do you



suppose that is?

I can think of two related reasons right off hand. First, we Christians value an organization that shapes and encourages so many of our youth in developing the kind of values that we also support.

I think that the Scout Law—“A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent”—sounds awfully similar to what Paul wrote to the Philippians, “whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.” In short, we approve of what Scouting is about, because Scouting is, in some of its aims, like the church.

Second, not to put too fine a point on it, I think we see in Scouting something that the church is also supposed to be—an organization that aims to enrich and transform society by the sort of people it produces. Even though our first loyalty is to the Kingdom of Heaven, we are still called to be the salt of the earth, to be agents of transformation and reconciliation in the communities where God has placed us. Do we devote enough of our collective effort to forming our children, our youth, and ourselves into such people, equipping our own to go out and make a difference in the world? Could we do more?

As we celebrate the centennial of Scouting in the USA this month (look for uniforms in church on Scout Sunday, February 7), I will be thinking about how Scouting is like the church, and how the church might usefully try to be more like Scouting. I encourage you, as Paul did, to “think about these things,” too.



DECEMBER CLERK'S CORNER

Session met on Wednesday, December 16, 2009, at 7:00 pm. All except Carrie Leopold and Kent Vail were present. Steve Hanna was also there representing the Stewardship Committee.

Carolyn Meester, Treasurer, presented the financial report. It was noted that there was enough to pay mortgage payment for 2 months. The church still owes \$3,200 for per capita for this year. The note is at \$9,800. Giving is up from last year. Session approved the financial report.

Session approved letting Halftime by Sheri use a classroom or the entrance to play some games during their potato bake on January 9.

Session approved reinstating Vicki Grossnickle as a church member from the inactive rolls.

Session approved the request from Bob Galt to use the fellowship hall on Saturday, January 23, from 1-5 p.m. for a birthday party for Violet Galt.

Session approved the request from Vicky Whitcomb to use the fellowship hall on Sunday, January 17, after coffee hour, for a gathering following her grandson's baptism.

Session approved the removal of Bryan Riedinger, Dustin Smith, and Brandon Smith from the church rolls as they have not been active in the church for several years.

Nominating Committee has nominees for all the open positions for Session and is still working to find nominees for the Trustee and Deacon positions.

Trustees report that the church cleaning went well and that the kitchen project is

on track.

Worship Committee thanks the choir for the beautiful music they sang on Sunday, December 13.

Stewardship Committee is still working on the final budget and would like all committee heads to turn in their projected budget needs. The budget should be completed in the next couple of weeks.

The January mission project will be Teen Moms.

The Deacons reported that fruit baskets were delivered in December. In the next couple of months, there will be a training session for distributing the Lord's Supper to those who are unable to attend church.

Personnel Committee has asked for supervising committees submit their reports on paid church employees. The Personnel Committee reviewed Pastor Matt. The Trustees have reviewed custodians, Bob and Deb Wenzloff. Worship Committee needs to review the organist and music director. Matt and Carolyn Meester will meet with bookkeeper, Lora Wehrung, this week to review her work. The Christian Education Committee will need to meet with youth director, Craig Holden. Discussion was held regarding the new Presbyterian guidelines for pastoral salary.

Moderator Matthew Stith reported that the Casselton Presbyterian church will install Rev. Rick Kargard on January 17. Also for budget considerations: presbytery expects home churches to assist sponsored seminary students with training expenses. Hopefully, there will be a meeting with the Kenyan board in October 2010.

The clerk reported that there were 138
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persons served communion on Sunday, December 6. The funeral for Luella Friend, who passed away on November 23, 2009, was held at our church on December 5. She was interred at Sunset Gardens, Fargo. There is a need for people to help oversee the making of a new pictorial directory.

Meeting closed with prayer by Chuck Richard at 8:05 p.m.

Vicki Peihl
Clerk of the Session

**JANUARY
CLERK'S CORNER**



Session met on Wednesday, January 20, 2010, at 7:00 pm. All except Vicky Whitcomb, Jack Smith, and Melissa Eiter were present. Steve Hanna was also there representing Stewardship Committee.

Carolyn Meester, Treasurer, presented the year-end financial report and the January financial report. Giving was up from last year. The note on the bank had decreased thanks to designated donations and no borrowing since September. Presbyterian Women donated monies toward paying the per capita balance. All 2009 per capita has been paid in full. It was decided to do the financial report by the calendar month and not from Session meeting to Session meeting dates.

Session approved allowing Matt Stith to use the projector and screen, if another set was not available, on January 29 to broadcast the Cub Scout Pinewood Derby that will be held at the Lodoen Center in West Fargo. Session approved allowing the Chogoria Partnership Ministry Team to ask our church congregation for a fundraising appeal.

Session approved new flooring and

countertops for the kitchen using funds that were designated for kitchen remodeling.

Session approved the term of call for Pastor Stith.

The presbytery meeting is in Grand Forks on February 5 and 6. Matt was trying to find someone who could represent our church.

Session approved Carolyn Meester as treasurer of the church for a term of one year.

Session approved allowing Toni Stith and her Girl Scout troop to use the church for scout meetings this year.

Christian Education reported that Craig Holden will not continue as the high school youth director next fall. The committee is already working with personnel committee looking for someone to take the position.

Personnel Committee proposed salary increases for the church employees. Session approved its proposals.

Nominating Committee needs one more congregational member to be its committee.

Session approved the 2010 budget from the Stewardship Committee with one minor change. Also, there is still a need for more members to help with the all member canvass.

There were no additional items from Worship or Trustee Committees.

Moderator Matt Stith mentioned that there will be a silent auction of Kenyan items to help with proceeds going to the Chogoria Partnership.

The Clerk reported that 86 persons were served communion on Sunday, January 3. There was no Christmas Day service due to the stormy weather, so no com-

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munion was served. Ryan Whitcomb, son of Seth & Alicia Whitcomb, was baptized on January 17, 2010. There is still a need for co-chairs to help with a new pictorial directory.

Meeting closed with prayer by Vicki Peihl at 7:47 p.m.

Vicki Peihl, Clerk of Session

FINANCIAL REPORT

In upcoming newsletters we will go back to the format of showing how much giving is necessary to pay our 2010 expense budget versus how much general giving has been received.



Our operating expenses for 2009 came in well under budget at \$152,400. Operating income increased for the year and we ended the year with the operating note having a balance of \$8,000. We are beginning the year with funds in the POD account to cover the mortgage payments through April.

We thank God for your contributions and ask you to continue to enthusiastically support the work and mission of the church.

**PER CAPITA ASSESSMENT**

It's that time of year when we must pay the per capita assessment to Presbytery of the Northern Plains. The amount to be paid for 2010 is \$41.95 per member or \$12,794.75 for Community Presbyterian Church. Each member is responsible for their own per capita assessment. Each family is responsible for their children once confirmed as well. If members do not pay their assessment, it must come out of the General Fund! Your church really needs you to step up and take care of this obligation! Thank you.

FEBRUARY DATES TO REMEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 2-1 Cora Carlson
- 2-4 Nathan Whitcomb
- 2-5 Cody Matzke
- 2-6 Carolyn Koerselman
David Misheski
- 2-7 Tom Birrenkott
Dolores Kinslow
- 2-8 Ann Corneliussen
Jack Smith
- 2-9 Dean Hall
Blair Moorhead
- 2-10 Linda Bishop
- 2-11 Tammy Nelson
- 2-12 Gwen Keller
- 2-14 Randy Meyer
- 2-16 Stephanie Hall
- 2-17 Kevin Galt
- 2-18 James Binger
- 2-19 Esther Hemm
Alex Talley
- 2-21 Scott Meyer
- 2-24 Lia Dobrinz
- 2-25 Lisa Osborne
- 2-26 Patrick Steele

ANNIVERSARIES

- 2-6-32 – Tom and Julia Pederson
- 2-19-81 – Dixon and Mary Jo Moorhead
- 2-24-79 – Scott and Vickie Meyer

SALVATION ARMY THANKS

Thanks to everyone who helped serve 2009 Christmas meal at the Salvation Army. We saw new people surrounded and taught by "old hands" as they got a feel for this ministry. 180 meals were served. Thanks again for all your time and effort on this occasion.



Kindest Regards, Dixon



COMMENTS FROM CURT

Officially Half-way Done

As I mentioned, in finishing this past J-term, I am now just past half-way done with Seminary. Makes one start to wonder what one will do after seminary, and the answer is I still have no idea. Seems like there are equally valid options in a doctorate or heading into the pastorate. Either way, I will have plenty to think about over the next year and a half. Regardless, I am enjoying this education as it goes, loving the community that is involved, and looking forward to possible student pastor options.

Kadra and I were able to spend about a week in both North Dakota and Colorado over break. We were able to avoid weather as well as possible, but inevitably it would catch up with us on the way back to Dubuque in Des Moines. Even this, though, was not a loss, for we were able to catch up with one of my good friends from High School.

Throughout the holidays we are always able to focus more on family and faith. We were able to do so, and in that I felt like I was finally able to take a break. Which is a very good thing, for this coming semester, I believe, will be the hardest one of all in my time at Seminary.

Kadra is doing well; her work is on and off in terms of how busy it can get. Since we have gotten back from vacation, she has been able to start up craft nights again as I have started playing intramural basketball. I am beginning to realize how out of shape I really am.

What I'm Up to...

Here's what I will be up to this coming

semester:

Hebrew II, Philippians Exegesis, Doctrine, Intro to Preaching, and John Calvin. Each one of these classes may be a load in itself. There are three of us here at the seminary that are taking them all together. We may, or may not, be crazy. I just ordered the books, and I realize just how much reading I get to do. I will be learning a lot, but I may not keep up with these newsletters. To all of you who enjoy getting them, I will do my best to keep up.

Prayer Requests

- Haiti and all those involved. I cannot imagine the pain and loss. Lord, be with that unfortunate country.
- This coming semester, as we embark on yet another time of hard, but rewarding, work.
- For the sick and the poor, for the less fortunate and homeless.
- For those in danger.
- For loved ones, wherever they may be.
- Praise God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.

Curt and Kadra Brophy:
73 Collins St. Unit B
Dubuque, IA 52001
701-219-9486
brocur@yahoo.com



Curt and his nephew, Jace



THEOLOGY IN THE BIG APPLE

by Blair Moorhead

This January, I have been able to take several week-long classes at Union before we start our second semester in February. Currently, I am taking a class offered by an organization on campus called the Poverty Initiative (check them out! www.povertyinitiative.com). The Poverty Initiative was started in 2003 and is "dedicated to raising up generations of religious and community leaders committed to building a movement to end poverty, led by the poor." This means the organization forms networks with groups already mobilizing around human rights issues like housing, worker's rights, and student rights.

Recently, we had the opportunity to see some of these groups in action as we traveled from New York City to Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Wilkes-Barre, PA. Along the way we met high school students in Philadelphia who organized a march and rally on MLK Day to proclaim student unity in the face of harsh learning conditions. There we also met a media group dedicated to connecting social movements and telling their untold stories. We met workers in Baltimore fighting to make their harbor a humans rights zone in which workers are given fair wages and treated with dignity.

As you might imagine, this was a thoroughly intense trip. We heard so many stories, stories of hope and stories of injustice. Sometimes the stories of hope were hard to listen to among the doors

of foreclosed houses that surrounded us. We made the trip over Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, and his words, filled with hope and the recognition of injustice, surrounded us. Dr. King's last year was spent organizing a Poor People's Movement that would unite people across the country to fight poverty. The Poverty Initiative is picking up that movement and carrying it forward today.

This trip made it so clear that the fight to end poverty is also the fight Christians need to engage in. Loving my neighbor, a command found in Leviticus 19:18 and Matthew 22:39, means understanding the issues surrounding poverty and human rights is my responsibility. I am called to love; I am called to get involved.

LOOKING FOR A NEW WAY TO SERVE OUR CHURCH FAMILY??



The Board of Deacons is seeking church members to serve as communion visitors. The visitors deliver and administer the communion elements to members of our church family who are unable to attend regular services. Visitors must be ordained elders or a member of the Board of Deacons. Each visitation is a team effort (two persons), and the visit is on the same Sunday (usually the first Sunday of the month) that regular attending members receive communion.

Pastor Stith will be conducting a training session for all communion visitors sometime during the month of February. The process is easy, brief and rewarding. A script is provided for each participant.

If you are looking for a new way to serve, contact one of the deacons or the church office.

INTERVIEWS BY MS SOUL TRAIN: TONI STITH

Personal Information

Birth date - June 19, 1970
 Birth place - Houston, TX
 High school - graduated from Port-
 age High School in Indiana
 College - Purdue University
 Occupation - Elementary math
 teacher
 Married - Matt in West Lafayette,
 IN on July 23, 1994
 Children - Mayim (10 - 5th grade)
 Joram (8 - 2nd grade)
 Joined Community Presbyterian
 Church - July, 2003

Favorites

Hymn - The Gift of Love
 Sound - Joram laughing
 Favorite Chore - cleaning the bath
 Least Favorite Chore - taking out
 the garbage
 Season - fall
 Author - J.K. Rowling

Would You Rather

How well do you know Toni? Try to
 guess which answer she chose for each
 of the following questions. Her answers
 will be at the end of the interview.
 ... forget your sunscreen or your sun-
 glasses?
 ... forget who you are or who everyone
 else is?
 ... bake cookies in cooking class or do
 art projects in art class?
 .. spend the day surfing the internet or
 the ocean?
 ... be rich with an unhappy job or make
 less money with a job you like?

~~~~~

Toni Stith is, indeed, a member of the  
 church. In fact, she is the pastor's wife.  
 How well do you really know her? Do  
 you know all her fears? All her inner  
 most secrets? Before this interview is



over, you will learn much more about  
 Toni than you have ever known before!

And so the interview begins on a dark  
 day in Toni's childhood, a day in which  
 one of her favorite toys would never  
 work again. When Toni was a kid, she  
 had a special toy called "Baby-That-  
 Away." It was a realistic doll that was  
 able to crawl when turned on. Appar-  
 ently the toy looked so realistic that  
 Toni's little brother thought it would be  
 able to crawl down the stairs. You can  
 imagine how angry Toni was after the  
 incident.

One thing you probably don't know  
 about our friend, Toni, is what she dis-  
 likes. One thing that she dislikes is  
 when people don't put away things after  
 they are done using them, particularly  
 at home! Another thing that really  
 drives her crazy is buffets. She says  
 that she dislikes them because anyone  
 can touch the food and because of that  
 you have no way of knowing if someone  
 coughed or sneezed on your food. She  
 is not afraid to try new foods - she actu-  
 ally enjoys the taste of octopus!

I am sure you have not heard about  
 Toni's most embarrassing moment. Af-  
 ter asking her what it was, Toni replied  
 that she was "scholastically dropped"  
 from college, but that she re-entered  
 and graduated happily. I wonder if any  
 of Toni's students know this about their

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award-winning teacher. (Good job, Toni!)

I'm sure most of you know that Toni is good at singing and sometimes sings in church, but have you ever wondered if she has ever played a musical instrument? If you have, you will soon find out! When I asked Toni this question, she said that she once played an instrument in elementary school, but it was only a toy xylophone!

I hope you've enjoyed this article about Toni Stith and have learned more about her. If you want to learn more, then just ask Toni!

Interviewed by:  
 Erin Thostenson  
 6th grade  
 March 8, 2009

~~~~~

(Would You Rather answers: sunscreen, everyone else, cookies, ocean, less money)



CARD MAKING GROUP

The Card Making Group would like to thank everyone who has purchased cards at the church. Since last March, the ladies have sold approximately 720 cards for a profit of \$360. Money raised so far will be used to help install new counter tops in the kitchen.

Although the amount isn't great, the ladies feel that they are providing a service to the church members. Plus, they enjoy the time making the cards and having fellowship with each other.

If anyone is interested in joining the group, we meet on Thursday afternoons at 1:00 p.m. except the third week of the month when we meet on Mondays at 1:00 p.m. All materials are at the church. We have had many compliments on the cards.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SOUL TRAIN SCHEDULE



Feb. 7th - TBA -enjoy the Super Bowl - bring your favorite snack to share

Feb. 28th - 6:30-8:30 - interviews

Mar. 20th - meet at the church at 12:30 p.m. - service at the Great Plains Food Bank. Bring money for treats on the way home.

Mar. 28th - Easter Eggstravaganza

April 4th - Easter Sunrise service

April 9th-11th - Jamestown Retreat

April 18th - 6:30-8:30 p.m. - Bible Fun

April 25- 6:30-8:30 - TAG



FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD!

Christmas has been here and gone and Soul Train is getting back to a more normal routine. We are a hungry and very appreciative group. We meet on Sunday nights at 6:30 and usually eat at 6:45. Between the MS, HS and youth directors we serve about 25-30 people. If you can help us out by serving a meal we would greatly appreciate it.

The nights that are available are: February 21, 28; March 7, 14; April 18, 25; May 2, 9, 16. You can sign up in the narthex or contact Becky or Lisa.

Thanks for thinking of our tummies!

Becky 281-8122 tbdejong@cableone.net
 Lisa 282-5308 steffen2@far.midco.net

DON'T FORGET

Attention all Soul Train members and parents, don't forget to mark your calendars for the Jamestown retreat. The all-presbytery youth retreat will occur on the April 9, 10, and 11. You won't want to miss it.

