

COMMUNITY CALL

Ministers: The People of God; Pastor: Rev. D. Matthew Stith
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Beer Bread, Nana's Apple Cake, Garlic Garlic Dip... is your mouth watering yet? The Soul Train will be hosting a Tastefully Simple Fund-raiser on March 13.

You can come and sample all the delicious and scrumptious products that are for sale. The tasting will be at the church at 6:30. If you are unable to attend you can preorder any of the products and all orders will be filled the week following the party. Friends are welcome. Please sign up in the narthex so we will know how many to expect. Thanks for your support.

The Soul Train

**SUNDAY
SCHOOL
CALENDAR**



March 27 Easter
No Sunday School
April 3 Memorization Sunday*
May 1 Memorization Sunday*
May 22 Last Day of Sunday
School

*K-5 students have you been studying your animal sections? Have you colored your ark?

PASTOR'S PEN

As you have almost certainly noticed, we are known as Community Presbyterian Church. One of the things that this word, "Presbyterian," with which we identify ourselves means is that we, as a church, are a part of a Presbytery. In our particular case, we are one of the churches that makes up the Presbytery of the Northern Plains, a body that encompasses all of North Dakota, a section of Min-



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nesota corresponding roughly to the Red River Valley, and one church in Montana. I mention this not as a matter of simple information, but because our connection to the Presbytery and to our fellow churches within it has been on my mind a lot lately.

The Presbytery, in many ways, functions similarly to a local church. It has a number of committees that work together to keep things running, coordinating the mission and ministry of all the member churches, helping them to find and keep pastoral leadership, offering resources and program opportunities that they cannot manage themselves, and many other things. It is through our Presbytery that we maintain our partnership with the Chogoria Presbytery in Kenya, have our connection with the Clearwater Forest Bible camp, and much, much more (This is only the tip of the iceberg. For more, see the Presbytery web site, www.northernplainspresbytery.org.) Whether we realize it or not, we get a lot out of being a part of our Presbytery. In return, we have some responsibilities.

One is the payment of per capita. Each person on the roll of active members is asked to pay a particular amount each year, above and beyond their pledge to our church, and this money provides much of the funding for our Presbytery, as well as the higher governing bodies in our denomination, the Synod and the General Assembly. Another is to pray for and support the other churches in the Presbytery. You may have noticed that we pray for one such church each Sunday in the worship service. Third, the Presbytery needs people to serve on its committees and task forces. There are some members of our congregation that already serve in this way, but we could do more. As a member of the Presby-

tery's Nominating Committee, I have good reason to know just how acute the need is for people willing to serve God and the church in these roles. I want you to consider the possibility that God is calling you to be such a person.

A few committees require that members be elders, but most do not. Following is a partial listing of Presbytery-level opportunities to serve, with brief descriptions of the group's areas of responsibility:

Committee on Ministry

The Committee on Ministry's duties include most aspects of the work of ministers in the Presbytery's churches, including the following: Continuing education of ministers, encouraging and supporting lay ministry, monitoring ecumenical relations in parish structures, evaluating parish realignment and parish strategies, and appointing stated supply pastors.

Committee on Representation

The Committee on Representation works to ensure that the Presbytery is within guidelines for balanced membership on all committees and groups.

Committee on Preparation for Ministry

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry supervises the training and certification of candidates for ministry, and the training and ministry of commissioned/certified lay pastors. The committee is also responsible for the supervision of seminary interns.

Leadership Development Committee

The committee recruits, equips, trains, and helps develop the gifts of volunteers in congregations,

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oversees the Presbytery Resource Center, and encourages and lifts up Elders in their ministry using all appropriate available means and opportunities (i.e., technology, events sponsored by the denomination, consultants, etc.).

Mission Advocacy/Social Concerns Com.

This Committee interprets the mission of the Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly, promotes special offerings, oversees the Presbytery newsletter, promotes the Mission Initiatives Grants program and makes recommendations to Presbytery. The committee also coordinates programs for social issues including hunger, peacemaking, women's issues, and older adult issues.

Session Records Committee

This committee is responsible for the annual review of Session minutes and records.

Youth Connection Council

This council is responsible for providing Presbytery programs for youth and strengthening the connection of youth to the church.

Sexual Misconduct Response Training Committee

This committee is responsible for helping the Presbytery and its congregations understand and support healthy relationships and appropriate boundaries among its constituents and to respond to allegations of sexual misconduct according to its established procedures.

Budget and Finance Committee

The committee oversees the fiscal policies of the Presbytery and the preparation of the Presbytery

budget, and monitors the income, expenses, and investments of the Presbytery throughout the year.

Chogoria Partnership Committee

The Committee publicizes the goals of the partnership with congregations of the Presbytery, builds interest in visits to Kenya and organizes visits from Kenya, and assists in the planning and carrying out of mission goals of the partnership.

Any of these groups offers a wonderful opportunity to serve the Lord and his people, to get to know some fine folks from all over the Presbytery, and to strengthen your own sense of what it means to be Presbyterian. If you are curious, or if you think you may be called to serve in one of these capacities, please let me, or any member of Session, know.

**ARE YOU READY FOR THIS?**

It may seem early, but summer *is* just around the corner, and the Christian Education Committee is looking for a (or a couple of) Vacation Bible School coordinator(s). VBS curriculums come out in January, so this is a great time for someone to start VBS plans.

We are looking for one or two individuals with energy and a heart for sharing God's word with children to organize a week of biblical learning for our church's and community's youth.

Interested? Please contact Christian Education Committee members:

Becky DeJong
Melanie Hansen
Debbie Matzke
Boots Misheski
Lisa Steffens
Toni Stith
Gayle Thostenson

MAKING SOUND CHOICES

Would you like better understand the opposite sex or learn if he or she is right for you? Would you like to know how to honor your husband or wife or how to be better parents? Or, would you like to help the next generation learn how to live with sexual integrity? If you answered 'yes' to any one of these, this is for you!

Saturday, April 16

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

God's Design for Life, Love, and Legacy

Featuring national speaker,
Carrie Abbott.

Call First Choice Clinic at 237-5902 or Make a Sound Choice at 297-7548 to register. Cost is eight dollars for students, fifteen dollars for singles, and twenty-five dollars for couples.

WARNING: This may change your life forever!

YOU ARE INVITED

To: A Mystery Dinner Party

When: Friday, April 8th

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Place: CPC Fellowship Hall

Cost: \$10.00 per adult
\$5.00 per child

Sponsored by: the Junior & Senior
High Sunday School classes

This lively "who done it" will keep you guessing and entertained. The event will feature a three course meal and a three act play. The proceeds will be going to a mission project to be decided following the dinner.

Come and enjoy Camp Truth.
See you there,

Bonnie Thompson
Melissa Barenthsen



PALM SUNDAY BAKED GOODS SALE



How would you like to support our church's younger youth ministry, missions outreach, and get something good to eat along the way. Well, the opportunity for this will be here for you at this year's Palm Sunday Baked Goods Sale.

The proceeds for this year's Baked Goods Sale will go towards purchasing a portable puppet house. The members of CPC realize how lucky we are to enjoy the puppets during children's time, but wouldn't it be wonderful if Bonnie and her friends could go out into the community and share the messages that the puppets bring. Also, having a portable puppet house will allow for its easier moving for weddings, funerals, and other special events.

The cost for the collapsible puppet house is \$600.00, which means we need to have a lot of purchasers and goodies to share on March 20th. Also feel free to use the giving envelopes found in the church pews for additional contributions. Simply write, "Puppet House" on the giving envelopes.

PARENTS:



Mark your calendars for some free time on the evening of Friday, March 4, 2005. We will be holding a Kid's Night in the fellowship hall from 6:30 to 8:30. If you need some time to get some errands done, have dinner, or just have some quiet time, please sign up on the sheet in the narthex to drop off your children during that time for snacks, crafts, and games. We should have a great time. We are also looking for up to two more people to help with the activities. See you then. Contact Lee or Lia Dobrinz with any questions.



CLERK'S CORNER

The Session and Trustees met on Wednesday night, February 16th. The financial report, minutes of the January 6th special meeting, minutes of the regular January 19th meeting, and the February 1 special meeting were approved.

The Trustees reported that the filing cabinets in the nursery have been bolted together to make it more difficult for the children to pull the cabinets over. Kevin Galt volunteered to work out a solution to new microphones for the new pulpit and also solve some recording issues in the sanctuary. Jim Bjorklund requested approval to spend \$3,000 of the \$5,000 budgeted for expenses in planning for the remodeling project to hire an architect. Approval was given.

Roger Barentsen, mentor, and Michael Potter, a member of the confirmation class attended the meeting so that Michael could see what Session meetings are about.

Elders were assigned to serve communion on March 6, March 24 and March 27th. An advertisement will be placed in the Fargo Forum about the Maundy Thursday and Easter Services.

Approval was given to have either a credit or debit card for Pastor Stith to use for purchases from his continuing education allowance. There will also be a church credit or debit card to use when payment is needed in advance for events. The treasurer will work out the details.

The PW was given permission to use the fellowship hall to hold its annual spring brunch on April 23 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

The request from Mary Jane Martens and James Martens to transfer to First Presbyterian of Fargo was approved.

The following committee assignments were made: Christian Education - Boots Misheski, Congregational Care- Lee Dobrinz, Liaison with Trustees- Larry Peihl, Mission, Outreach and Evangelism- David Ruhnke, Nominating- Melissa Barentsen, Personnel- Lowell Wiese, Service and Fellowship- Susan Gross, Stewardship- Greg Sterup, and Worship- Anne Merrill.

Mission, Outreach and Evangelism Committee has chosen "One Great Hour of Sharing" as their charity for the month of March. They will have flyers in bulletins, minutes for mission, offering envelopes in the pews, and fish boxes for the children's offerings. Palm Sunday is the date scheduled to wind up of this project. They also are planning to send out flyers to residents of the residential areas on the south side of I 94 to invite them to the Maundy Thursday service and the Easter Sunday service. They were given approval to spend up to \$500 of their budgeted amount for this project. The charity project for April will be the YWCA.

The Session voted to allow committees to spend up to \$500 a month from their budgets without Session approval.

The Congregational Care Committee has scheduled the first Parents Night Out for March 4th from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Parents are welcome to leave their children at the church while they have two hours to do whatever needs to be done or whatever they wish to do. They still need volunteers to help with the supervision of the children. Please contact Lee Dobrinz if you can help. Lee is plan-

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ning to continue to give rides to Joy and Tom Taffe so that they can attend church. If you know someone who needs a ride or if you would like to volunteer to give someone a ride, please contact Lee.

Susan Gross and Pastor Stith are preparing a proposal for a grant to be used to finance the New Greeters Program. If you would like to serve as greeters for persons visiting our church please contact Susan.

Pastor Stith has invited the members of the Baker-Downer church to attend our Maundy Thursday service as they were unable to obtain a pastor to serve communion on that day at their church.

Pastor Stith reported on the Presbytery meeting in Grand Forks the end of January. He stated that CPC still owes \$2,094 for per capita in 2001 that we were unable to pay. He would like to be able to eliminate that debt this year.

He also reported that the Clearwater Forest Camp presented a very informative and interesting report on the activities available there. Our church does not take adequate advantage of the activities available such as Grandparents Camping Week-end, Ladies Activities, etc.

The coordinator of Church United for the Homeless presented a talk to the West Fargo Ministerial Association at our church last Thursday. They would like more churches to be members of their program. The Session approved a request from Pastor Stith that we join the Central Cities Ministers Communal Fund. This is a fund set up by various churches in West Fargo to handle requests for aid from persons outside of the member churches. In light of some bad experi-

ences by staff at some of the churches from persons who came for help he feels that it would be best to be able to send these people to one central location for help. He would still use the Pastor's Discretionary Fund to provide help the CPC members who need it.

Delores Horn, Clerk of Session

MARCH DATES TO REMEMBER



BIRTHDAYS

- 3-3 Julia Pederson
Karen Steele
- 3-5 Joram Stith
- 3-8 Troy Montgomery
- 3-9 Amy Matzke
- 3-10 Claire DeJong
- 3-13 Becki Hummel
Kristi Hummel
- 3-15 Irene Martin
- 3-16 Dustin Smith
- 3-19 Derrick LaCoe
- 3-21 Patrick Talley
Melissa Van Cleve
- 3-22 Bonnie Thompson
- 3-23 Ryan Kellerman
- 3-24 Dawn Larson
Clifford Sheeley
- 3-25 Michelle Ohm
- 3-26 Samantha Pyle
Keith Sebelius
- 3-28 Sam Barenthsen
- 3-28 Tom Taffe
- 3-29 Jessica Peihl
- 3-30 Jordan Birrenkott

ANNIVERSARIES

- 3-3-79 – Cliff and Gail Sheeley
- 3-4-78 – Bruce and Vicki Riedinger
- 3-5-51 – Ted and Evelyn Martin
- 3-7-70 - Lowell and Nan Wiese
- 3-14-64 – Chuck and Bonnie Thompson

ANNUAL EASTER EGG EXTRAVAGANZA



All eager egg hunters, pre-school - 5th grade, are invited to come to the annual Easter Egg Extravaganza at the church on Sunday, March 20 from 4:00 to 6:00. There will be fun, food, games, activities, and the all-exciting egg hunt. Please sign up in the narthex so that the Easter Bunny knows that you are coming.

Attention: All Easter Bunny helpers. The Easter bunny would appreciate the donation of wrapped candy to be given to the kids at the Easter Egg Extravaganza. He would like the candy any time before March 20. Have a 'Hoppy Easter'



MISSION MOMENT

A big "Thank You" to everyone who donated so much for Teen Moms during the month of February. The playpen was overflowing with items and many donated money for Teen Moms to use as they needed. This was a wonderful way to show God's love to others by giving as we have been called to do.

Mighty missions March on as we ask your support for One Great Hour of Sharing. Your contribution will help provide supplies, equipment for homes, schools, and hospitals across the globe.

It's amazing what your gift can do! Envelopes are provided in the pews and in your bulletins.

Please give lovingly this month to One Great Hour of Sharing.

The Mission Committee

PER CAPITA

Approximately one third of the \$7,447.00 necessary to pay our per capita apportionment has been received so far. Please pay this as soon as possible. It is \$26.04 per adult member. The sooner it is paid the less times you will see it in the newsletter. Per capita funds are apportioned as follows: General Assembly - \$5.57, Synod of Lakes and Prairies - \$4.47, and Northern Plains Presbytery - \$16.00.

It has been said that per capita apportionment is like a utility bill. Just as we pay heat, light, water, and telephone bills in order to remain connected to the utility system and benefit from the services provided, we also pay per capita so that the Presbyterian system can function on behalf of all of us. It is also like the dues we pay to other organizations to which we belong.

Per capita apportionment for a given year is based on the church's membership two years earlier. The 2005 apportionment is based on 2003 membership figures - the most recent figures available when budgets are adopted.

PRESBYTERIAN MEN'S ANNUAL RUMMAGE SALE



Once again the Presbyterian Men are giving you a chance to recover some space (clean out) in your garage or attic. We can use that un-used or unwanted item to raise money for many church projects. The annual rummage sale will be held on April 9th. More details will be supplied as the date gets closer. We have already started a box of these items.



SOUL TRAIN SCHEDULE

Feb	25-26	30 Hour Famine - meet at church at 6:00-6:00 - no meeting on Sunday
Mar	6	Father's Day Surprise
	13	Tastefully Simple Fundraiser
	20	Easter Egg Hunt - we will run the egg hunt and then stay after for dinner and fun. (time to be announced)
	27	Easter - no meeting
April	3	???
	10	???
	17	???
April	24	???
May	1	6:30-8:30 dinner and start planning Sunday School Carnival and plan Mother's Day dinner with Toni - I'm sure it will be scrumptious!!!!
	8	Mother's Day Dinner
	15	6:30-8:30 dinner and finish preparing for Sunday School carnival
	22	Sunday School Carnival - during the SS hour

PRIVACY RESTRICTIONS

Did you know that when you are hospitalized the hospital cannot notify your church? The Privacy Act does not allow them to give that information to anyone who does not have the patient's pass-word.

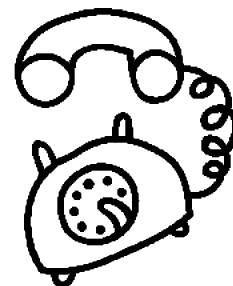
If you wish a telephone call or visit from Pastor Stith, you need to make sure that he is notified that you are ill. Please ask someone in your family to give him a call so that he is aware of the situation. Don't rely on someone else to let him know. He would much rather hear it from 10 people than not to hear it at all.

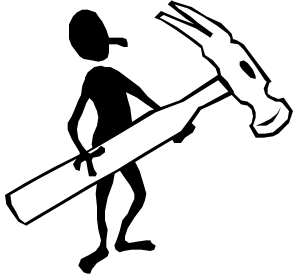
If you wish to be included on the "Prayer Chain" please notify Carol Sterup (293-6603 or g.d.sterup@juno.com), and she will send the request out to church members who have indicated that they are willing to offer prayers for people in need. If you wish to be a member of the prayer chain by phone or e-mail, just give Carol a call and she will add your name to the list.

Having people pray for you or your loved ones is a real comfort. I know. Prayers for LeRoy were much appreciated, and I didn't feel so alone.

PLEASE LET PASTOR STITH KNOW THAT YOU WOULD LIKE A CALL OR VISIT FROM HIM.

Delores Horn





WHAT'S UP WITH THE BUILDING TASK FORCE?

Over the past month the BTF and it's various workgroups have been busy compiling information for the Session and the congregation in our quest to provide physical accessibility for all members, friends, and visitors to our church. So far:

- The Financing group has evaluated our own and other institutional resources with representatives of the Presbytery. Once cost figures are sorted through (by other work groups), this group will turn its attention to visiting with various lending institutions and financial advisors to develop a game plan to fund the project.
- The Existing Building Appraisal group has contracted with a commercial firm to produce a valuation for our existing property. This report is to be completed the last week of February. This group has also reviewed the engineer's evaluation of our existing structure (which was conducted four years ago as part of our Master Building Planning process) and has consulted with the trustees regarding significant building deficiencies. Thus far, no serious surprises or defects in our building have been identified.
- The New Construction group has and is consulting with real-estate agents to get an estimate on land costs. Lee Dobrinz has and is con-

sulting with architects in the area to get a handle on what building construction costs would be for a structure of similar size to our existing building. To date, preliminary estimates have been generated for both, and firm estimates should be ready for analysis by the first week in March.

- The Remodeling group has met several times to do brainstorming and have toured an identical church building to our own in North Fargo. (This church recently went through a major renovation.) They have been in contact with the architect firm Shultz Torgeson (the same folks who worked with us on the Master Building Plan) and have negotiated a consulting agreement with them. At the February session meeting, this agreement was presented, reviewed and approved. The last week of February this group will be meeting with Schultz Torgeson to consider various scenarios and refine them for presentation to the session in March.

To date, the BTF is on track to produce a report for the session by the last half of March. After the session weighs in on it, it will be refined and recommendations will then be made to the membership during April.

If, after reading this report you see areas in which you can lend a hand or have questions, please call either Jim Bjorklund (282-4942 or jbjork@i29.net) or Andrew Thostenson (492-0630 or athosten@ndsuxext.nodak.edu).

PUTTING THE BUILDING PROJECT INTO THE PROPER CONTEXT

Why bother? Why indeed? After all, we have been talking about building onto our church for more than 20 years, and it has gone nowhere. Lots of talk and even effort has gone into this with no tangible results. Everybody agrees that we should do something to make our building accessible to everyone, but when the price tag gets displayed, sticker shock promptly ensues, and the doubts erupt:

- "We can't raise that kind of money."
- "We can't borrow the money and saddle our children with the debt."
- "We can do it cheaper than what the architects have proposed."
- "Why throw thousands of dollars into a 45 year old building that is located miles from the center of West Fargo's growth?"
- "For the cost of a remodel, we would be thousands of dollars ahead by building new."

These and dozens of other doubts are voiced like an old movie that gets played over and over again with many of the same actors. The ending is always the same:

- In 1987 the trustees and session asked Len Misheski to draw up plans, but for want of resources the plans went nowhere. (The drawings are still in the file cabinet in the office.)
- In the early 90's a group tried to come up with a scaled back plan, but strife among the membership, the loss of the pastor, and a huge operating debt sent the project into oblivion.
- And in 2000 and 2001 a Master Building process was undertaken with the aid of another architect. The result was that the session felt the project could not be undertaken in mass, but should be addressed over several years. (First the

back parking lot, then the boiler, then the carpet replacement, and then...?)

So, here we are, 20 years later, and we have done nothing to make our building accessible to all. The word nothing needs to be emphasized because for all our work, talk, and hand wringing we have collectively not done a thing to help people who are physically challenged enjoy fellowship in our church. Indeed, we have not even allowed them the dignity of using the bathroom without assistance. As a result, they don't come to church. They are deprived of being a part of the community of believers, and we are at a loss for not being able to build them up and encourage them.

Ultimately we have to ask ourselves if God is calling us to remedy this situation. The answer is clearly yes!

He is calling us because he has commanded us to spread the Good News to all, not just those who are able to negotiate the stairs. On our part we need to examine our hearts and decide whether or not we will heed the call. Acting on God's call is not always easy and in the case of addressing this accessibility issue it will require serious money. Without question, the successful completion of a new building or a major remodeling will require resources of a magnitude that this congregation has not undertaken since 1960.

Are we up for the challenge? The answer has got to be yes.

We have an awesome God. One who created the heavens and the earth and raised the dead. In that context, this project is a piece of cake. All we need to do is trust in God and respond to His call. He will provide. Pray that we are given the confidence we need to rely on Him.

Andrew Jhostenson