

# Notes from the Hill

The Newsletter of First Presbyterian Church  
February 2012



## A Note from Pastor Patrick

In case you missed the news the other week, Jen and I shared that we are expecting another baby, due around mid-August!



It's been interesting explaining this to people who say, "So this will be your *third* child?" Do we say, "Well, we had a daughter who was born and died back in 2006, so technically this will be our *fourth* child?" Or do we say, "We also had two miscarriages along the way, so technically this will be our *sixth* child?" It's an awkward and delicate subject to broach, because no one *likes* to talk about death and loss. Most times, when we answer that question by mentioning our losses, people don't know how to respond, and it basically kills the conversation.

I'd be lying if I said we weren't scared to death about everything that *could* go *wrong* with this baby. When you've experienced the worst of it, it's constantly on your mind. The challenge for *all of us*, though, as followers of Jesus, is to take our fear and worries and pain and *use them*; make them work *for us* instead of *against us*. The challenge is to *use* our struggles in life to lead us into a deeper *appreciation* of life.

All of my fear and nervousness regarding this pregnancy has served to remind me just how fragile and delicate and precious life is. When you've see everything that can go *wrong*, it can either lead you to *despair*, or it can lead you to *appreciate* the life that *is* around you; what a *miracle* it all is. We have *all* experienced loss, pain, and disappointment in life. The question is, do those experiences make us *bitter*, or do they make us *better*?

The reason I mention this is because this month marks the beginning of the season of Lent. Ash Wednesday falls on February 22, and it serves as a reminder of this very thing. Life is short. It is delicate. It is fragile and precious. It can be here one moment and gone the next. Each breath can be our last. We were formed from the dust of the earth, and to dust we shall *all* return.

Ash Wednesday (and the Lenten season which it inaugurates) reminds us that pain, suffering, and death are ever-present realities in all of our lives. We can either let that get us down, depress us, and cause us to despair (or even worse, *fear*), or we can choose to let it lead us into *awe* and *wonder* of how amazingly precious and beautiful life *is*. Let it remind us that each moment, each *breath* is a gift from God. And let it remind us that pain and suffering and death are not the *ultimate* realities in our lives. Jesus' story didn't end there, and neither do *ours*. The story of Lent ends, not with suffering and death, but with *resurrection*. New life.

So this Lenten season, may you be reminded just how precious and miraculous life is. May it lead you into awe and appreciation and wonder. And may it lead you to a renewed hope in what is *possible*, in life *and* in death.

## Worship News

**Sunday Night Celebration.** our casual, contemporary worship service meets every Sunday at 6 P.M. in the Fellowship Hall. If you are hungry before worship, we meet at 5:00 P.M. in Fellowship Hall for dinner.

**Communion** will be celebrated on Sunday, Feb. 5, at both worship gatherings.

**A brief congregational meeting** will be held on Sunday, Feb. 12, following morning worship for the purpose of electing one new Elder.

**Ash Wednesday Worship:** We will start the season of Lent by gathering to worship and share communion on Ash Wednesday, February 22, at 6 P.M. in the sanctuary.

**New Elders/Deacons** will be ordained and installed during morning worship on Sunday, March 4, with a backup date of Sunday, March 11.

**DVD copies of each week's sermons** are available for \$1 on the round table by the center sanctuary doors. There are also still copies of the Sunday School Christmas program available!

**If you would like to be a greeter** before morning worship, there is a sign up sheet on the bulletin board by the front doors. Greeting is really easy...just show up a little early with a big smile, and welcome people to worship!

## **FEBRUARY**

### **Ushers**

Steve Manstedt, Dennis Jeppson  
Mark Olson, Jared Ketner

### **Nursery Care**

Kelsey Tomjack

### **Acolytes**

Feb. 5 – Joe Pestal, Lynn Hanson  
Rest of Feb. – Joe Pestal

### **Greeters**

Feb. 5 – still needed  
Feb. 12 – Shirley Van Metre &  
Dorothy Klink  
Feb. 19 – Kyle Cooper & Kaitlyn Pfeiffer  
Feb. 26 – still needed

### **Coffee Time**

Feb. 5 – still needed  
Feb. 19 – Potluck Lunch in Fellowship  
Hall. Please plan to join us!

## Newly Elected Elders & Deacons

### **Elders (3 year term)**

Allen Mumm (2<sup>nd</sup> term)

Jared Ketner (2<sup>nd</sup> term)

Barb Shanahan (1<sup>st</sup> term)

David Markle (1<sup>st</sup> term)

There is one spot still vacant pending a Feb. 12  
Congregational Meeting.

### **Deacons (3 year term)**

Grace Ketner (2<sup>nd</sup> term)

Valerie Veach (1<sup>st</sup> term)

Launa Larsen (1<sup>st</sup> term)

### **Nominating Committee (1 year term):**

Sandi Massie (from congregation)

Lorri Urban (alternate from congregation)

1 Session representative

1 Deacon representative

## Joys and Concerns

(Please keep us posted.)

### **Birthdays, 75<sup>th</sup> & over:**

Feb. 17 – Elva Manstedt

Feb. 23 – Marie Stuart

Feb. 26 – Bill Stewart.

### **Wedding Anniversaries, 50<sup>th</sup> & over:**

Feb. 3 – Lloyd & Pat Mitchell (62<sup>nd</sup>)

Feb. 18 – George & Carolyn Welton (56<sup>th</sup>)

**The Sacrament of Baptism** was celebrated on Dec.  
11 with Sam & Allison DuBois.

**New members welcomed:** On December 11, Larry Swanson; Dorothy Klink; Kyle Cooper & Kaitlyn Pfeiffer; Todd & Lori Miller; Kevin, Amanda, and Fenina Rummel. On January 29, Karly Sullivan.

**Our hearts go out to the family and friends of the following on their deaths:** Donna Maly (mother of Doreen Peterson); Charles Lawver (brother of Denise Lawver); Michael Douglas (husband of Jacy (Bern) Douglas, son-in-law of Don & Dottie Bern, brother-in-law of Tim & Nancy Bern).

**Special Thanks** to everyone who made the Sunday School Christmas Program possible: Lynae Callan (director), Sandy Hutson & Jason Stevens (music), Shannon Hauswald & Shelley Maass (Sunday School Superintendents), the Sunday School teachers & helpers, and the Sunday School kids; and to the Chancel & Bell Choirs for the Christmas anthems in December.

## Sunday School News

**The Sunday School children** will be singing during morning worship on Sunday, Feb. 12, as well as hosting a Coffee Time and bake sale afterwards with proceeds going towards the Pete's Pig mission project. Students and their families in kindergarten, first, second, sixth, and seventh grade should bring baked goods for the sale and plan on helping serve. Other students and their families are welcome to donate items as well.

## Financial News

**Financial Update:** The General Fund was \$2,798.21 in the black as of December 31. Total receipts for the month were \$44,116.09 and total expenses were \$12,706.59. Please prayerfully consider how you might be able to support your church.

## Study and Fellowship

**Wednesday Night Lenten Meetings** will start on February 29 at 6 P.M. in the Fellowship Hall. We will be watching/discussing a series of DVDs called *Nooma* (the Greek word for *Spirit*), which covers a wide range of spiritual topics. We will meet each week throughout Lent to discuss things like: Where is God when we suffer? How do we hear God's voice in our life? What does it really mean to "follow Jesus?" This is a *great* series of short films that can draw us all into a deeper spiritual awareness and relationship with God.

**Bible and Prayer** meets on the couches outside the sanctuary at 6:30 P.M. every Wednesday night to study the New Testament a chapter at a time. We just started John's gospel, and would love to have you share this time with us!

**The Presbyterian Women** will meet Thursday, February 2, at 1:30 P.M. The program *Travels Abroad* will be given by Leann Jeppson. The serving committee is Phyllis Stewart and Elsie Barry. The next meeting will be March 1 at 1:30 P.M. when the group will continue planning for World Day of Prayer. Hostesses will beCarolyn Welton and Joy Wilt.

**World Day of Prayer** will be held on Friday, March 2, at 2:00 P.M. at our church. All women of the area churches are invited to participate in this worldwide ecumenical movement. Please plan to join us!

**Women's Bible Study** will meet Thursday, February 16, at 1:30 P.M. at Westview hosted by Joy Wilt.

## Youth Group News

**Middle School Youth Group** will meet Wednesday, February 1, from 7:00 – 8:30 P.M. to make Valentine's for the Care Centers in Wahoo and February 15 at **6:00 P.M.** for a pizza and movie night. Plans for an outing are in the works.

## Mission and Outreach

**Lincoln City Mission:** The Presbyterian Women will continue to collect items for the Lincoln Mission, which includes new or used clothing, household goods, toiletries, books, etc. Please take items to the back of Fellowship Hall.

**The Men's Stag Group** will meet Wednesday, February 29, at 9:30 A.M. at South Haven to have coffee and visit with some of the men who live there.

**The Presbyterian Fellowship Group** will meet Wednesday, February 29, at 10:00 A.M. at the Care Center.

## Session/Deacon News

**The February Session and Deacon meetings** will be on Monday, February 13, at 7 P.M. This is the last meeting for Elders/Deacons rotating off. The newly elected Elders/Deacons are also asked to please attend the February meeting.

**Special thanks** to the Elders rotating off Session: Charley Robbins (2 terms), Mert Oden (2 terms), and Nancy Hoppes (1 term); and to Deacons Susan Likes (2 terms) and David Markle (2 terms). Thank you for your years of service!

## Miscellaneous

**We are pleased to share** that on Sunday, February 19, our congregation has invited the Czech and Prague Presbyterian Churches to join us for morning worship and a potluck dinner following. We encourage the congregation to join together at this special time to welcome our guests as we join in worship and fellowship together to renew old friendships and inspire new ones.

**Recently the Presbyterian Women** have received \$1,000 from Sun Mart and \$500 from Corner Market for grocery and gasoline receipts collected by church members. A BIG thank you to the area businesses and to our congregation for saving their receipts. Boxes are under the coat racks outside the sanctuary for continued collection of receipts.

**Annual Reports** are available on the narthex table. If you missed the congregational meeting, please feel free to take one.

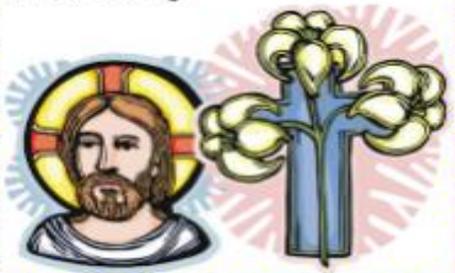
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### What is Lent?

Lent is an important season in the Church's year. Every year Christians use Lent to prepare themselves for the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, on Easter Sunday.

An illustration featuring a portrait of Jesus Christ with a halo on the left and a blue cross with yellow flowers on the right, set against a background of radiating lines.

### When is Lent?

Lent is the forty days before Easter. Christians do not include Sundays in the forty days because they celebrate Jesus' resurrection every Sunday. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday.

An illustration of Jesus Christ on the cross, set against a blue background.