

THE CHURCH'S LIFE
News of the First Presbyterian Church
Oregon, Wisconsin

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December 2009 - January 2010

Recently, Session announced that Reverend Douglas Loving had accepted our offer as Interim Pastor, starting November 2, 2009. Reverend Loving withdrew his acceptance for personal reasons.

The search committee will reconvene on November 12 and review all options.

Because of the holiday season, we will fill the pulpit with guest ministers through the end of the year.

In the meantime, the search committee asks for your prayers and continued patience as we seek our Interim Pastor. Thank you.

CHRISTMAS at CHURCH

Special events abound! Mark your calendars so that you can join in Advent and Christmas celebrations with your church family. *Each of the special events would be a great time to invite a friend to come with you!*

- November 29 First Sunday of Advent
9:00 AM Sunday Coffee Bar
9:15 AM Church School
10:30 AM Worship
- December 6 Second Sunday of Advent
9:00 AM Sunday Coffee Bar
9:15 AM Church School
10:30 AM Worship
Sacrament of Holy Communion
- December 13 Third Sunday of Advent
9:00 AM Children's Christmas Program
9:30 AM Triennium Youth Breakfast
10:30 AM Worship
4:00 PM Blue Christmas Service
- December 20 Fourth Sunday of Advent
9:00 AM Sunday Coffee Bar
9:15 AM Church School
10:30 AM Worship
Cantata Sunday
Christmas Joy Offering Received
11:30 AM Coffee Fellowship
- December 24 Christmas Eve
4:30 PM A Family-friendly service,
including the candle lighting ceremony
5:30 PM Soup and Finger Foods
Christmas Eve potluck
7:10 PM Christmas Carol Sing-Along
in the Sanctuary
7:30 PM Traditional Christmas Eve
worship, including the
candle lighting ceremony
- December 27 All Sunday School classes
will be on vacation
10:30 AM Worship
- January 3 All Sunday School classes
will be on vacation
10:30 AM Worship
Sacrament of Holy Communion
- January 10 Epiphany Sunday
9:00 AM Sunday Coffee Bar
10:30 AM Worship – Star Sharing
11:30 AM Coffee Fellowship

ANNUAL MEETING REPORTS DUE DECEMBER 8!!

A copy of all reports which are to be included in the Annual Report Packet are to be emailed to the church office no later than Monday, December 7, 2009. Karen Detra, our Office Manager, will then distribute them to the Session for the December meeting. Please be sure to get your report in on time. Thank you!

BLUE CHRISTMAS

Sunday afternoon, December 13
4:00 PM

In the church sanctuary

Christmas can be a painful time for some. It may be the first Christmas without beloved family members or friends who have recently died. The strong emphasis on family and togetherness promoted in the secular world can emphasize the loneliness of those who are separated from loved ones. The anguish of broken relationships, the insecurity of unemployment, the weariness of ill health, the pain of isolation. All these can make us feel very alone in the midst of the celebrating and spending.

If you have recently lost a loved one, or still find Christmas a difficult time after many years; if you tend to feel "blue" rather than festive during the holiday season; if you are feeling far away from those you love, then you are especially invited to the Blue Christmas service on Sunday afternoon, December 14, at 4:00 PM. We will meet in the church sanctuary for a quiet and reflective service where we can acknowledge both the pain and the joy that the season brings. And through our sharing, we will welcome the Christ Child once again.

All are welcome. If you would like to have childcare provided, please let the church office know by December 9.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

What would Christmas be without candlelight and the reading of the 2nd chapter of the Gospel of Luke? What would Christmas be without the music? What would Christmas be without church? You and your neighbors and friends are invited to join in any of the celebrations of Christmas that best fit into your family's schedule:

4:30 PM This "Service of Lessons and Carols" has become a favorite among many of our families. Familiar Christmas Scripture readings, lots of music, the ringing of bells, and the singing of "Silent Night, Holy Night" as we each light our Christmas candles are featured. Clearly a child-friendly service, childcare will be available for families with wee ones.

7:30 PM "A Traditional Christmas" This worship service will be more traditional in nature, with music provided by our Adult Choir and with the preaching of the Word. It too will conclude with the candle lighting ceremony as we sing "Silent Night, Holy Night." Child care will be provided at both of the Christmas Eve worship services.

Join us in worship as we celebrate the birth of our Lord... *together!*

CHRISTMAS EVE SOUP and FINGER FOOD FEAST!

Would you like to join others for a light supper on Christmas Eve? Would you like to join your church family for some Christmas Eve fellowship? As you make your plans for Christmas Eve, we invite you to join your church family for a Christmas Eve Soup and Finger Food potluck, in the church dining room, between the two Christmas Eve services, beginning at about 5:30 PM. Homemade soups will be provided; please bring a finger food potluck dish to share. If you're coming to the 4:30 PM service, stay for a snack or a meal immediately following the service. Or, come early to the 7:30 PM service and enjoy

fellowship and food with your church family prior to the service. Everyone is welcome!! Bring your family and friends! Let us enjoy a Christmas Eve supper ... together!

BRING YOUR BELLS! RING YOUR BELLS!!

Everyone participating in the 4:30 PM Christmas Eve service is encouraged to bring a favorite bell to ring as part of the service. Please bring a dinner bell, a cow bell, a jingle bell, or any bell that you like. Children, youth, and adults ... let's ring in Christmas together!

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES on CHRISTMAS VACATION!

All Sunday School classes will be on "vacation" December 27 and January 3. Worship will remain at 10:30 AM each of those mornings. Sunday School classes will resume January 10, beginning with fellowship at 9:00 and classes at 9:15 AM.

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

JOY TO THE WORLD -- The 2009 Christmas Joy Offering will be received on December 20, at the 10:30 AM service of worship. Fifty percent of the receipts to the Christmas Joy Offering are distributed to the Board of Pensions for assistance programs that provide support to retired and active church workers and their spouses and families. The other fifty percent supports Presbyterian-related racial ethnic education through the National Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council. This has been a Presbyterian tradition for almost seventy years and is one of the four special offerings designated by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA to provide congregations direct ways of supporting specific causes to help those in need. You are encouraged to read the bulletin inserts in the Sunday bulletins in early December and prayerfully consider donating to this special offering.

FROM THE TREASURER

All contributions that you would like reflected on your 2009 giving statement (for tax purposes) must be in the church treasurer's mailbox ***no later than 12:00 Noon on December 30, 2009.*** Thank you!

YOU ARE INVITED TO BREAKFAST

When: December 13, 2009

Why: Because everyone needs a good breakfast!

The High School youth will be serving up a delicious variety of egg casseroles and other breakfast items in the church dining room on December 13. Breakfast will be served at approximately 9:30 (following the Christmas Program and before the 10:30 church service). Everyone is invited (and encouraged) to attend. All donations will be used towards the High School Youth Triennium Trip in 2010. Thank you for supporting our youth!

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

Check out the Adult Sunday School class schedule below and plan to join in the stimulating conversation and good fellowship, every Sunday morning from 9:15 – 10:00 AM. We meet in the lounge, adjacent to the sanctuary ... ALL ADULTS are welcome to participate!

December 6 "Twelve Days of Christmas"
December 13 Children's Christmas Program
December 20 Forster Care Experiences led by Mike & Lori Johnson
December 27 and January 3
Christmas Break

EPIPHANY CELEBRATION

We will be celebrating Epiphany in worship on Sunday, January 10th. As we remember the gifts that the wise men brought to the Christ Child, we will also each receive a special gift from God for 2010. Epiphany Stars will again be received as we think about what spiritual gifts God may be bringing us in 2010. This service has become a special tradition in our church family ... don't miss it!

COMING ON JANUARY 18th...
SAVE THE DATE

No, it's not Consecration Sunday!!!! It's the Montreat / Triennium youth fund raiser at Culver's in McFarland. Culvers has agreed to donate 1% of their total sales on "Martin Luther King Day," January 18th. to the Montreat / Triennium Youth. So if you, your friends, loved ones or anybody you know have a urge for a Butterburger, Custard Waffle Cone or one of the many things they have on their menu , January 18th is the time to satisfy that urge. Open all day long , so Breakfast, lunch, dinner or just a treat. Hope to see you there and always "Thank You for all your support !!!!!!!!!!"
The Montreat / Triennium Youth

ADULTS' NIGHT OUT

On Saturday, January 23rd, the Fellowship Committee will repeat last year's hugely popular Adults' Night Out. Unfortunately, our previous venue has closed, so we'll be trying a different restaurant this year--Barber's Bay Inn located in Stoughton. We'll meet at Barber's at 5:30 PM for an evening of good food and fellowship. Order what you want and pay for what you order. Watch for announcements in the bulletin, and for the signup sheet in the foyer.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING: January 24, 2010

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held on Sunday, January 24th, immediately following worship. Please plan to stay for this important meeting as we review the work of the church in 2009 and dream together of what we are called to be and do in the years to come. Annual Report Packets (including all committee and organizational reports) will be available on January 17th so that people can read the information before the meeting.

PER CAPITA APPORTIONMENT

Each year, members of the church are invited to pay their share of the Church's per

capita apportionment. Enclosed in the newsletter of church members is an envelope for your convenience, which you may return with your per capita gift. This year's per capita is \$26.95. Please remember it is per confirmed member, not per household.

Our per capita gifts enable the denomination at the Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly levels to perform the necessary ecclesiastical functions of the church, thereby enabling the ministry of Christ to be carried out. Thank you for your per capita gift!

BILL'S FOOD RECEIPTS

In two short months we have already received \$250.00 from Bill's Food Center. Thanks to all of you who have turned in receipts. Shopping and supporting our local Oregon business is really paying off. With the holidays quickly approaching and many trips to the grocery store, be sure and ask the cashier for your orange sticker when you check out. Deposit your receipts with the orange sticker into the red striped canister on the coffee table in the back of the sanctuary.

WINTER CANCELLATION POLICY

If church is cancelled due to weather during the winter months, we will seek to notify the congregation via radio station WIBA 1310 and the following television stations: FOX (WMSN 47), ABC (WKOW 27), NBC (WMTV 15), and CBS (WISC 3). If a storm is headed our way, we will try to give the cancellation notice on Saturday night.

We count on the wise judgment of all our church members and friends and trust that no one will endanger themselves trying to get to church, even if worship is not cancelled. Please be safe!

FELLOWSHIP AUCTION ITEMS

I know February is a long way off, but now is the time to start thinking about what items you might like to contribute to the auction this year. Remember that it is a fellowship auction because fellowship is

exactly the item we are hoping people will buy. We are again looking for items mainly of the intangible kind. We are looking for ideas for services, social gatherings, and hobbies that you might be willing to donate to the auction. The event last year was a success due to the creativity and generosity of this congregation. Think outside the box again. If you can dream it, we can auction it off!

Some ideas to get you thinking would be hosting a Superbowl party, a pool party, or a game night. If you like to cook, maybe you'd like to host a Mediterranean night or make your own pizza party. Perhaps you'd be willing to share a hobby with a small group by having a stamping party, leading a group hike, or having a Wii party. Or maybe you have a service you'd be willing to do for someone like shoveling sidewalks, babysitting, or giving music lessons. I know there are lots of great ideas out there!

We are also hoping to have some tangible items for sale at the auction. These would include baked goods or hand-made items. If an item would require a significant investment of time or money, please consider auctioning it as a future order. (In other words, consider bringing a sample or idea of what you would like to make, but wait until someone actually orders the item at the auction to begin working on it. We would hate to have someone spend hours making a hand-made item that didn't get purchased!)

Thanks for cooking up your ideas and sharing them with our congregation. If you have any questions at this point, please contact Renee Martell at 835-8557. Also, we would like to form an auction committee to help oversee this event. We plan to meet 3-4 times prior to the auction. Contact Renee if you would be interested in serving on that committee.

SYMPATHY

The prayers and sympathy of the congregation are extended to the following families who have lost loved ones in recent weeks:

Bob, Erin, Paul and Susan Johnston
on the death of Bob's Grandma
Bob Compton, Camee Compton,
Myla & Jace Gustafson on the death of Marc
Jessica Barmack and family on the
death of Jessica's father

MEMORIALS

Generous memorials have been received in loving memory of Marc Gustafson. What a thoughtful way to remember a loved one! Thank you so much.

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH ARE TRIENNIUM 2010 BOUND

As an alternative to attending Montreat next year our High School youth have decided to attend the Presbyterian Youth Triennium 2010 to be held July 20th to July 24th, 2010 at Purdue University in Indiana. The youth and their chaperones plan to be part of the John Knox Presbyterian delegation to the conference.

Triennium is held every three years and next year's theme is "For Such a Time as This" which plans to be a program calling our youth to be courageous, faithful, and attentive to God. The youth will be learning ways to be agents of change and hope in the world around them by participating in presentations, daily worship, prayer, recreation, and small groups. Music will also certainly be part of their inspiration! For more information on this fantastic event visit their website at

www.presbyterianyouthtriennium.org

We are anticipating the expenses for Triennium to be considerably less than past trips to Montreat. Please hold the youth, their chaperones, and their parents in prayer as we plan for this very exciting new adventure for our high school youth.

Watch for more information to follow!

PIANO FUND CONCERT A SUCCESS!

On October 25, First Presbyterian hosted an afternoon of classical music, the third piano fundraising concert in our series to raise funds to purchase a new concert

grand piano for our new church. Wonderful music was provided by Andrea Wiltzius, soprano, (accompanied by Nancy Cox), and Christopher Pierce, pianist. The familiar arias of Puccini's "La Boheme," "Tosca", and "Turandot," and piano music of Debussy from "Children's Corner," and Bach, Beethoven, and other composers filled the church on that golden October afternoon. An audience of more than 35 music lovers attended and deeply enjoyed the concert. We wish to thank Christopher and Andrea for their much appreciated performances and kind donated efforts. We were the lucky recipients of a priceless gift of music that day. The Piano Fund received contributions totaling \$705.00. Thank you again to Andrea and Christopher.

ESPKN

(Extra Special Preschool Kindergarten News)

Why does paint make grown ups nervous? We were putting our painted handprints on a poster and we could see the adults feeling uneasy – so what do they think we are going to do with hands full of paint? We love paint and playdough! Did you know if you work with it and squish it through your fingers it will get under every fingernail?? It is just great!

We have been learning about the story of Ruth and Naomi with two other Sunday School classes. It is a story about faith in God and friends sticking together. We were stuck together in a three legged race that was a lot of fun. We learned what "gleaning" means and if you don't know, just ask us, we will be happy to explain.

We are still singing and signing and have started to sing songs for our Christmas program on December 13th. You better mark your calendar now...you won't want to miss it!!!

THANK YOU TO THE MEYER FAMILY

Many thanks to the Meyers, Bev, Matt, and Eva, for their thoughtful and useful purchase of a projection screen for

our church. The gift was given in memory of Bev's mother, Inga Thompson who passed away recently. The screen has already been put to good use in the Sunday morning adult class and will continue to be used for many years to come. Your generosity is appreciated

Received to date: \$2,259.50

BUILDING APPEAL

Amount committed: \$809,252.00

Pledges received to date: \$642,199.79

Can you help by meeting your financial commitment?

FROM OUR MAILBAG

Grateful hearts

Jim and I would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to the FPC church family for all your prayers, warm thoughts, and generous gifts in honor and now, memory of our grand-daughter, Nevaeh Wallace, who passed away in April of 2009. The diagnosis of Nevaeh's heart condition, her subsequent surgeries and hospitalizations and eventual death put our family on an unforeseen and challenging path. It has been through the thoughts and prayers and loving gestures of friends, family, colleagues and even complete strangers that have enabled us to get through this time of grieving. We cannot thank you enough. God bless you all.

Nancy Freeman and Jim Wallace

FOOD PANTRY NEWS

The need for Food Pantry keeps growing; in September, we served 122 families, representing 399 family members. With the holidays coming up, we expect a continuing increase in the number of clients.

In September, we spent \$3,400 for food, since our shelves were almost bare after summer. We would have been in worse shape if it had not been for the churches helping out with the summer drives. Thank you for your continued support.

Note: Food Pantry will be open December 17, rather than a week later, due to the holidays.

FINANCIAL UPDATE –

October 31, 2009

GENERAL FUND

Amount pledged year to date: \$114,007.50

Pledges received year to date: \$107,597.00

Per Capita bill: \$6,215.75