

THE BURNING BUSH

“Blessed be the Lord God for he has visited and redeemed his people.” Luke

From the Pastor’s desk………….

A new year is upon us and we wonder what it will bring. We experienced many changes in 2016 and we know there will be many in 2017. Will America be great again? Will our service men come home? Will warring end and will there be peace on earth? Our nation is in transition as we speak. Our minds cannot imagine what things will look like a year from now. Then I think about our Christmas season of Advent with messages of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. We celebrated Christ’s birth with all these images of what He brought and still brings.

Our Lord left His home in glory and light to visit us over 2000 years ago to show the great extent of His love before returning to His home of Light. I have to wonder if He is saddened by the dim glow that is left. The light glows brightly during the Christmas season. Our hearts are lifted, our voices sing praises, and we are united with family and friends for the joy of exchanging gifts and watching the faces of awe in the children. During this time we really are brightly lit with the Christmas glow. Then suddenly it’s over and the glow is reduced to a flicker.

Our New Year resolution should be to keep the light brightly lit all year long. Jesus is in our hearts. Why can’t we bring him out the rest of the year? He came that we might have hope, peace, joy and love always, not just for a season.

Perhaps I am simply melancholy. My mind drifts back to my childhood when we traveled to grandma’s farm. Life seemed so simple then. The ornaments were sparse because we made them. The gifts were simple, too. Often the only thing that was in my sock was an orange and some nuts. But that wasn’t the point. We were all together around the stove basking in the joy of one another. I never wanted it to end. But before my grandma died, she told us there would be no more coming home once she was gone. She was the glue that held it all together. After that we all scattered, but we had those Christmas’ with her to remember how it was. We truly enjoyed hope, peace, love and joy.

As we pick up our busy lives and get on with this New Year, I plan to try to hang on to the light and the spirit. I will play my part of keeping the glow and just maybe, if we all do, our little corner of the world will bring the Prince of Glory joy. My wish for all of you is that your lights will grow brighter and brighter with the knowledge of His presence and love.

Happy New Year!

Pastor Linda

SESSION SNIPPETS BY PAT WELKER

Notes from Dec 13 Session Meeting:

MINISTRY TEAMS:

CHRISTIAN ED: Bonnie & Carrie – The Christmas Program is December 18 and kids are ready.

FELLOWSHIP/MISSION: Jodi & Jay & Tammy – Next event will be the Steak Feed in February.

NOMINATING: The slate was completed and the Congregation voted to elect officers as presented. Elders are Lynsey Johnson and Janice Garlish; Deacons are Kathy Welch and Cozy Hoover (second term); Trustees are Randy Welch and Darren Berry.

The Session approved Gisela Schuman as the Treasurer for 2017 at the December Session Meeting.

STEWARDSHIP/FINANCE/MEMORIAL & PERSONNEL: Kathy & Jodi & Tony – The 2017 Budget was approved as presented/explained by Kathy.

WORSHIP: Jay & Sam & Tammy – The Team will cover duties usually done by Keith Quin in his absence due to illness.

EVANGELISM: Kathy & Bonnie (co-chairs) – nothing at this time

TECHNOLOGY: Jay – Tadd and Brady still working out bugs with the Internet Service as well as still working on the Sanctuary Computer. Bill Wilson's Memorial Monies were used for the purchase of the new computer. Thanks to the Wilson family.

MEMBERSHIP REVIEW: Pat & Kathy – The Team has completed its work and had updated the Active Member List.

DEACON'S REPORT: Nothing at this time.

TRUSTEES REPORT: Per Email from Kent Kowal, the following jobs have been completed by the Trustees in the last month – The new guttering system has been put on the north breezeway door. They have also filed the Annual Report with the State of Illinois.

The Trustees met on December 11, 2016 before Worship with Clark Evans, Tim Ulm, Dale Peterson and Kent Kowal in attendance.

Discussion on shoveling snow: Tim Ulm volunteered to use his tractor/snow blade to clean up to 5 inches of snow, anything heavier, Jay Ulm volunteered to assist. Other Trustees will hand shovel.

- Discussion on church office heating needs: decided against plastic covering the west windows. Decided to purchase two infrared heaters at a cost of \$100 each and suggest through Kathy

Welch that the donor who offered to pay for a new heater for the office purchase those (infrared heaters) instead.

Discussion on projects for 2017 in relation to the budgeted amount of \$2,500. The Trustees determined that this amount would be more than adequate.

The only project discussed for next year would be to improve drainage and drying outside the north breezeway and sidewalk. A sand pit was discussed.

Kent Kowal was assigned to submit the 2017 Annual Report for the Trustees.

OTHER CHURCH BUSINESS: The Sunday School Rooms have all been painted now. The last one was painted in November. So if you haven't been downstairs, take a look and how nice everything looks.

Installation/Ordination of new officers will be during worship on January 8. Elder Training will be January 19 at 1pm. All Elders should plan to attend, including the newly elected Elders.

The Annual Meeting will be on January 15 after worship. There will be a pot luck meal prior to the meeting to allow time to look over the Report.

The Book of Order has been making many changes in the last couple years and one of the things they changed is that they no longer dictate when the January Annual Meeting is to be held. They further state that the Nomination Team has to have the At-Large Members in the majority. Because of that, the Session voted to have 1 retiring Elder and 1 retiring Deacon on the Nominating Team so that means there has to be 3 At-Large members. These members are elected during the Annual Meeting. So think about this between now and then and pray about whether you can help with this task. The Team does not usually meet until the fall to get their slate of necessary officers for the next Class. It is a very important job but also very necessary. We need people to step up and help with these types of things.

The Session approved the following 2017 Communion Dates: January 1, February 5, April 13 (Maundy Thursday – will be by Intinction), April 16 (Easter), May 7, June 4 (Pentecost – will be by Intinction), July 2, August 6, September 3, October 1 (World Wide Communion), November 5 and December 24 (Christmas Eve – will be by Intinction).

Our Church Wide Mission Pledge will be \$100 per month. That will be divided as follows: Presbytery of Great Rivers @ 60%; Synod @ 35%; and General Assembly @ 5%.

PASTOR'S REPORT: November was pretty much a bust for yours truly. The much needed surgery was on Dec. 9th. Everything went well, without a shoulder in my knee! The surgeon was quite elated with himself, which is always a good sign. However, the short hospital stay was a real trip. I was so lucky to get nurse Crachett on my last day who reminded me of the movie "Misery". I was so glad to fill out that evaluation when it came. I always say, "if you don't like what you are doing, you should do something else rather than torture those in your path". Right away, I was all lined up for home-health therapy. They were wonderful, for whom I can give all the credit for my good progress. The following week after surgery, I returned to the surgeon's

office to have the staples removed. Oouch! Someone had put glue on top of the staples so that when they were being removed they came out with skin too! As I write, I am now in outpatient rehab, with real physical terrorists!

I was so cheered by all the cards and prayers on my behalf. I'm sure your support made all the difference. Even our Grand Pooh Pa, Executive Presbyter Allen Finnan prayed me up before the surgery and stayed until I was back in my room. I had a few visitors who made the trip to Pekin to see me. Thanks so much. After a while, it felt like the four walls were closing in. It helped to have a change of scenery even if it was in a face.

When I could, I tried to keep in contact with Meghan to proof the bulletins and forwarded any news I received.

I am glad to be back with all of you, my church family, who have just been wonderful to me.

Coat Closet is in need of boys and girls size large and extra large!

CE BUILDING USAGE

All usage of the CE Building has to be approved by Session, no exceptions. There is a form on the Church Website that can be filled out with the appropriate date and time that you would like to have the building. You can also contact Pat Welker, Clerk with your request so that the Session can be notified and submit their approval. Use of the building requires that all table/chairs be left as you find them, all areas cleaned, including the kitchen and trash taken out. Just putting it on the office calendar will no longer work. To assure no conflicts, all approvals must come through the Session.

Holiday Soup Supper and Bazaar

The Bazaar went very well again this year. The soups offered were Chicken Noodle, Chili, Stuffed Green Pepper and Potato. There were also Monari's Chili Dogs, Hot Dogs and Desserts for purchase in addition to the \$5 for unlimited soup and a salad. There was a steady group eating that evening and plenty of bids submitted for the Silent Auction items. Especially spirited bidding on a couple of the baskets and gift cards. Results are as follows:

SOUP - 112 soup dinners were sold and there were 16 refills of soup. The counts were= Chicken Noodle @ 22 + 5 refills

Stuffed Green Pepper @ 31 + 2 refills

Chili @ 26 + 5 refills

Potato @ 33 + 4 refills

CHILI/HOT DOGS – A total of 44 were sold

The counts were= Hot Dogs @ 14

Chili Dogs @ 33

DESSERTS – There were 62 sold

There was a Bake Sale and several of those items were sold. A Raffle was held for the Lego Set for boys and the American Doll for girls. The Lego Set was won by Tammy Barnard of Canton and the Doll by Amanda Carr of Yates City.

The following are the Silent Auction Items and the winning bidder-

Tower of Treats by Judy Dewester for \$16

Go Cubs Go Basket by Jay Ulm for \$40

Kids Books Basket by Melissa Herron for \$21

Star Medal Art by Leigh Ann Stephens for \$16

Doll Bed w/hand sewn linens by Deb O'Donell for \$40

OoLaLa French Basket by Jay Ulm for \$12

Kids Make Treats for Santa by Melissa Herron for \$23

'Cursive' Christmas Tree by Judy Dewester for \$43

Kids Game Basket by Sarah Perardi for \$50

Golden Chocolate Basket by Mary Ulm for \$25

Red Chocolate Basket by Shirley Bigliazzi for \$25

'Print' Christmas Tree by Tammy Duley for \$44

Christmas Ornaments from Diva Florist by Charles Houston for \$10

Christmas Ornaments from Diva Florist by Wally Newcomb for \$30

Pet Basket by Joyce Helle for \$10

Homemade Butterscotch Pie by Tina Gordon for \$20

Homemade Coconut Cream Pie by Jay Ulm for \$20

Homemade Lemon Pie by Hubert Schuman for \$25

\$25 Applebees Gift Card & \$25 Olive Garden by Joe Herron for \$60

Canton Family Fun w/Monicals Gift Cards & Lynn Lanes Bowling Games by Tammy Duley for \$40

Homemade Cherry Pie by Karen Wilson for \$25

Homemade Pecan Pie by Michelle Lane for \$25

Homemade Apple Pie by Tina Gordon for \$20

Homemade Cherry Pie by Kathy Kowal for \$25

Homemade Cherry Pie by Chuck Balagna for \$20

Homemade Walnut/Cranberry Pie by Melissa Herron for \$10

Homemade Chocolate Pie by Hubert Schuman for \$15

So as you can see, everything went well with the Bazaar again this year. Thanks to Paula Monari and Michelle Lane as well as all their helpers. Also thanks to all of you who either helped at the Bazaar, donated items to help with the food, bake sale or auction. Without all the hands, this project would not be possible. I have not heard any final figures on how much came in, but this event helps with the budget each year. Without this event, our financial situation would be a bigger burden for all of us. This is a fun way to help out the Church.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S COOKIE EXCHANGE/SOUP LUNCHEON

The PW Annual Cookie Exchange/Soup Luncheon was held on Friday, December 9 at the home of Pauline Sprowls. There were 13 ladies attending and we were grateful to be in such a comfortable home to enjoy the afternoon. Pauline has her home beautifully decorated for the Christmas Season. We are always very comfortable there.

The afternoon started off with the luncheon of Chili, Chicken Wild Rice or Potato Soup along with sandwiches from Subway. Everyone enjoyed the meal, trying various soups. The meal was followed by a business meeting at which time we took up our final collection for the year. Gisela, Treasurer, then notified us of the amount in the Treasury and we decided that we could donate \$550 to various charitable organizations. We decided to give to the following organizations in the immediate area: Salvation Army of Fulton County received \$150; Farmington Christmas Hope Chest received \$100; Peoria Rescue Mission, Peoria South Side Mission and Peoria Friendship House received \$100 each for a total of \$550. Our group was also able to fulfill our \$700 Mission Pledge to the Presbyterian Woman's Group of Presbytery. This is pretty good for our small group that averages 7-8 at most meetings.

Next on the agenda was the Christmas Trivia Game. We divided into two groups with Pat being the emcee. It was a new Trivia Game this year that contained more familiar questions but they still posed problems for the ladies. The winning team was Denise Lane (spokesperson), Marianne Taylor, Wanda Ohaver, Kathy Welch, Carol Roberts and Marj Guidi. Congratulations to them.

The final part of the day was spent over coffee and cookie sampling prior to picking out your favorite cookies to take home to enjoy later. It was a great day and everyone had a good time.



January Birthdays

1 Sara Hirz **5** Keith Quin Lindsey Danley **9** Mason Gomes Claire Herron **14** Conner Berry Tad Swanson **15** Darren Berry **16** Janice Garlish **23** Charles Houston **27** Clark Evans **28** Diana Houston

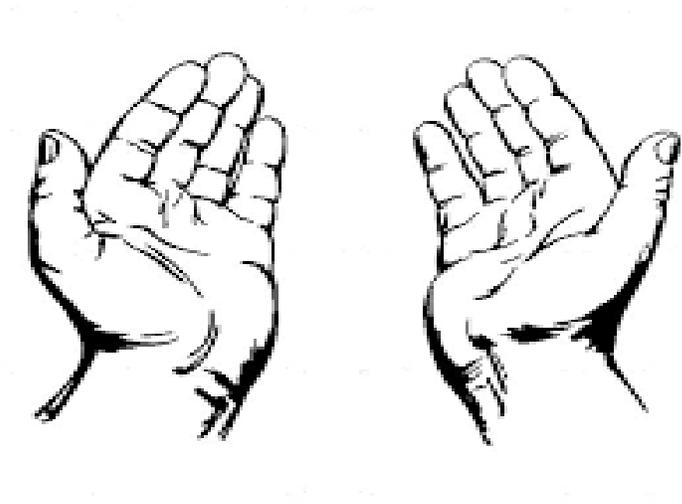
Prayer List

Ongoing Prayers: Todd Guidi; Wanda's brothers Butch and Kenny Johnson; Jeff Sturch; Pat Welker; Cally Posten to Mayo; Jodi Phillips' mom, chemo; Chris's friend has cancer--Stage 4; Ed Goggin; Charlotte Gates; Bonnie's workmate, Deb Parker, cancer; Kevin Martin; Angie; Carolyn Ludwig; Sally (Grebe) Seaman; John Ramsey (Leigh Ann's nephew); Cindy Duley, Craig's mother; Jacob Oest in Iraq; Carrie's dad, Doug Sinclair; Heather Tyler White; Gisela & Hubert Schuman; the persecuted Christians around the world; Kouri Hibbard-Fox family; Kari Berry; Conner Berry; Keith Quin; Jane's granddaughter Olivia Brady and her mother Michelle.

At Home: Amber Lercher

Those in Nursing Homes: Bernita Murphy and Barbara Frank at Courtyard Estates in Farmington; Dianna Threw, Sara Hirz at Farmington Country Manor; Hazel Morby at Courtyard Estates in Canton; Becky Urbanc Littell and Leigh Ann Taylor at

Heartland in Canton; Velma Petty Farmington Country Manor; Keith Quin at Courtyard Estates in Farmington



I apologize if the format looks different this time, I am working on fixing this but haven't quite figured out what the problem is yet! Thanks, Meghan.

JANUARY 2017

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 New Years Day! EPIPHANY Holy Communion	2	3 Bible Study with Dean 7PM	4 Choir 7PM	5	6	7
8 Annual Report Deadline *Installation & Ordination of Officers council churches 12:30	9	10 Session 7PM	11 Choir 7PM	12	13	14 Elder Training
15 Deacons Mtg. Annual Meeting & Potluck	16 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	17 Bible Study 7PM	18 Food Pantry open Choir 7PM	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 Burning Bush Deadline NOON Choir 7PM	26	27	28
29	30	31 Bible Study 7PM				