

First Presbyterian Church
321 N. 5th Street
Burlington, Iowa 52601

Connections

January 2014
Volume IX Issue 1

December Joy



Glimpses of God's Grace

In her book, *The Preaching Life*, Barbara Brown Taylor remarks: 'God is greater than my imagination, wiser than my wisdom, more dazzling than the universe, as present as the air I breathe and utterly beyond my control.

'That is, in short, what makes me a Christian. As the creature of a God like that, I need a mediator, an advocate, a flesh-and-blood handle on the inscrutable mystery that gives birth to everything that is. While Jesus is, in His own way, just as inscrutable, He is enough like me to convince me that relationship with God is not only possible, but deeply desired by God, who wants me to believe that love is the wide net spread beneath the most dangerous of my days.' (p. 10)

One of the joys of reading *The Story* week after week as a church family is that together we are re-discovering or discovering for the first time the truth of her words. God **is** greater, wiser, more dazzling than we can comprehend. God **is** the Creator of all and He desires an intimate relationship with each one of us, His children. That is amazingly good news! While there are days I do not want a relationship even with myself, I find it astounding that the God who knows me inside and out, warts and all, deeply desires to spend time with me, daily, weekly, yearly. He desires that of you as well, regardless of your past history, your current struggles or doubts, and even your warts and all!

I am delighted that many of you are seeking to understand that God and His story, and your story, on a weekly basis. If you have not yet committed to joining a small group, it is not too late. I encourage you to prayerfully consider joining one for the next 5 months. Each week we come as learners, seeking to understand and grow in our faith. Each week I come away with new insights and I have been told many of you have as well. As was said from the beginning, you are welcome to come and quietly contemplate, you are welcome to come and discuss, you are welcome to come and question. Jesus has said where two or more are gathered in His Name, He is in the midst of those gatherings. Why not join Him? And us?

I learned a long time ago that making resolutions at the beginning of a new year was often an exercise in futility. And yet, I encourage you to think and pray and resolve how you can have a deeper, more meaningful relationship with the Triune God this year. How you spend your time, talent, resources and finances is important to God. Why not spend them in a way that has long-lasting, far-reaching implications?

In His service,
Deb

2014 Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held following worship on Sunday, January 26, 2014 in Fellowship Hall for the purposes of receiving reports, presenting the budget, voting on the Pastor's Terms of Call, and forming a Nominating Committee.

From the Trustees...

Statement of Income & Expense November 30, 2013

| | Budget | Actual | Variance | Percent of Budget |
|-----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Balance For- | \$25,500.00 | | | |
| Income | | | | |
| Pledge | 175,510.00 | 155,416.50 | 20,093.50 | 88.6% |
| Non Pledge | 20,000.00 | 27,008.34 | -7,008.34 | 135.0% |
| Investment In- | 50,000.00 | 23,635.24 | 26,364.76 | 47.3% |
| PerCapita | 3,570.00 | 2,925.68 | 644.32 | 82.0% |
| Misc Income | | 1328.84 | | |
| Total Income | 274,580.00 | 210,314.60 | 64,265.40 | 76.6% |
| Expenses | | | | |
| Personnel | 164,000.00 | 136,857.75 | 27,142.25 | 83.4% |
| Educational Min- | 5,000.00 | 2,567.86 | 2,432.14 | 51.4% |
| Fellowship | 1,550.00 | 1,033.51 | 516.49 | 66.7% |
| Deacons | 750.00 | 291.77 | 458.23 | 38.9% |
| Mason Road | 1,400.00 | 1,229.35 | 170.65 | 87.8% |
| Mission | 25,190.00 | 19,748.88 | 5,441.12 | 78.4% |
| Property | 71,450.00 | 56,869.97 | 14,580.03 | 79.6% |
| Worship | 5,240.00 | 1,529.95 | 3,710.05 | 29.2% |
| Total Expenses | 274,580.00 | 220,129.04 | 54,450.96 | 80.2% |
| Differential | | -9,814.44 | | |

Per Capita
Apportionment
For 2014 is
\$34.02

Tales from Tammy

Do you have a child in 4th, 5th or 6th grade? If you do then SuperStart! is the place for them. This year at SuperStart! preteens will come to understand that true value is only found in God. They will join a crew of wacky filmmakers attempting to capture this idea that God treasures them and has done everything he can to show them how valuable they are to him. While the world teaches them to look in the mirror and believe that is who they are, God sees something different. He looks beyond the exterior and sees the true worth of those he has created. The cross gives us value – a value that never fades and that fills us with courage and boldness to accomplish the work God has for us in His Kingdom. This event will take place March 7th and 8th in Bloomington, Illinois. If you would like more information, please let Tammy know.

High school students, are you interested in going to a conference? If so, the Dare 2 Share is for you. Youth who attend this conference cannot wait to return the following year. It is 30 hours of fellowship with literally thousands of other Christian teens from the Midwest. They all gather for prayer, worship, music, live plays and speakers. They mingle with our country's top youth ministry team. They participate in a community service of some sort. It makes a difference in their lives. These students experience an amazing Christian event like never before. The conference is April 11th and 12th in Chicago, Illinois. If you would like more information, please let Tammy know.



Angel Tree/Cozy Tree Update

Thank you so very much to all who provided gifts for our Angel Tree this year. Every tag was taken and gifts purchased! You all helped make Christmas very special to some children this year. In addition to the gifts, each family also received a gift card from HyVee to hopefully buy food for their Christmas dinner.

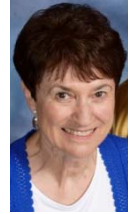
The Cozy Tree is still up in Fellowship Hall; we will take it down on Sunday Jan. 5th. If you haven't already purchased items for the Cozy Tree, there is still time to do so! We are still in need of sweat pants/shirts and underwear. Thank you so much for your consideration of this ministry.

Coleen Francik-Young, Cathy Brink, & Cheryl Lotz, Co-chairs

Newsworthy Notes



Please give a huge ‘thank you!’ to Rex Beetner for changing the lights in the choir loft. Rex used the lift when the painter was not using it, and now the singers can see again!



Please give a huge ‘thank you!’ to Marilyn Leight for her several years of service to our church family as Treasurer. Marilyn has retired and is taking a well-deserved break.

Have you ‘note’iced how fresh the sanctuary looks? We have now completed its painting and many thanks! go to Rex Beetner, Mike Gorman, Kel Stensland, Kevin Eibes, Randy Kinney, Ed Whitmore, Bret Stensland, Mark Scott, Charles and Chandler Yarber for their help in moving the lift, the pews, cleaning and shoring up the pews. It was a monumental task and thanks to these volunteers, thousands of dollars were saved as the painting progressed.



Please give a huge ‘thank you!’ to Terri Huddleston for buying new swags for the choir chancel, and for coordinating the decorating of the sanctuary (and outside doors) for Advent and Christmas Eve. Another huge ‘thank you!’ to Terri’s husband Jeff who created the stand on which our Christmas Eve star hung over the nativity.

Worship Schedule based on *The Story* for January

Jan. 5: Communion will be served; *The Story*, Chapter 13/Solomon; 1 Kings 2:1-4; 3:5-14; 10:23-11:6, 9-13; *Starting Strong, Finishing Poorly*

Jan. 12: *The Story*, Chapter 14/Kings; 1 Kings 11:26-33; 11:42-12:17; *Torn in 2*

Jan. 19: *The Story*, Chapter 15/Prophets; Hosea 4:1-3, 10-12; Hosea 1:1-3, 3:1-5, 11:1-4, 14:1-9; *God’s Amazing Love*

Jan. 26: *The Story*, Chapter 16/Fall of Israel; 2 Kings 17:7-23; 18:28-32, 19:1-4, 14a-17; *God’s Justice & Power*

The Story in '14

There is still time to join a small group as we look at God's story, the greatest story ever told, in further depth each week. In fact, now is the perfect time to consider joining, as we restart after taking a break for Advent and Christmas/New Year's. This study of *The Story* will take us through the week of May 18th.

Here are the open groups; if you have not yet purchased your copy of *The Story*, we still have some available for \$5 in the church office.

For Adults:

Sundays at 9 a.m. in the Chapel, led by Pastor Deb.

Mondays at 2 p.m. at Sunnybrook Estates, led by Pastor Deb.

Wednesday mornings; 7:15 a.m. for men in the Parlor; 8:30 a.m. for women in the Chapel, led by Pastor Deb.

Wednesday nights: 6 p.m. in the Chapel, led by Jay & Jolene Schafer; 7 p.m. in the Chapel, led by Pastor Deb.

Sunday school at 9 a.m. for middle and high school youth in the basement; led by Mark & Deb Scott.

For Children & Youth:

Sundays at 9 a.m. children through 5th grade in the Rainbow Room; led by the Godly Play teachers, Kevin Eibes, Jill Mehaffy-Nalley, Sue Sattler and Tammy Hulett.

Sundays at 7 p.m. for high schoolers at the home of Ed & Pat Whitmore; led by the Whitmore's and Arnie Anderson.

Wednesdays at 6 p.m. children and middle schoolers (light supper at 5:45 p.m.) in Fellowship Hall; led by Tammy Hulett, Julie Schulthies and Adele Coulter.

Start-up Schedule:

On Sunday, Jan. 5th, the group will look at Chapter 13.

On Monday, Jan. 6th, the group will look at Chapter 13.

On Wednesday, Jan. 8th, all groups will look at chapters 12 and 13.

You are encouraged to read ahead. If you have any questions, please talk to Tammy Hulett, Director of Educational Ministries.

Staff Reports

November 2013

Pastor Deb Kinney

| | |
|--|---|
| Worship | All-church work day |
| 4 worship services/seasons of prayer | Pew removal/clean-up (2) |
| 1 graveside | Advent decorating |
| Education | Presbytery Activities/Meetings |
| 20 <i>The Story</i> studies (1 Sunday morning, 1 | Committee on Preparation for Ministry |
| Monday afternoon, 2 Wednesday morning, | (secretary) |
| 2 Wednesday night) | Presbytery meeting |
| Connections | Moderate Session at Mediapolis |
| 28 Drop-ins/appointments/calls | Community |
| 2 home/hospital visits | Young House Board meeting |
| 18 cards sent | Homeless Shelter Soup Supper |
| Church Meetings | Other |
| Nominating | 1 Spiritual direction session |
| Session | Review of Young House policies |
| Trustees | Prep for <i>The Story</i> |
| Worship | Dealing with financial issues, worship con- |
| Staff (3) | cerns |
| Church Activities/Events I Attended | Planning for Mediapolis worship |
| Knitwits | <i>Connections</i> |
| Veterans' Day Potluck | Separate meetings with staff (4) |

Dir. Of Educational Ministries

November, 2013

Tammy Hulett

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Worship | Education |
| Young Disciples (4) | Children's Sermon Prep (4) |
| Church Meetings & Events | KidZone Prep (4) |
| Meetings with Pastor (4) | KidzQuest Prep (4) |
| Working in KidZone (4) | Led Godly Play (1) |
| Bible Study (4) | Led Sunday Morning Small Group (1) |
| Wednesday Night Youth Study (3) | MOMS Group Prep (2) |
| Kids Against Hunger | Starting to gather information on next year's |
| Veteran's Potluck | VBS |
| Contacts | Other |
| Phone-calls and e-mails: 30+ | <i>Connections</i> articles |
| | Prepared 3 meals for Wednesday nights |
| | Worked on the Children's Christmas Program |

Serving You

Last month we let you know of a new element added to our member care. In the event Pastor Deb is unavailable, and on weekends/holidays when the church office is closed. Mark Scott will be the Deacon to call **if you are unable to reach Pastor Deb via her cell phone (319) 750-6216** or through the church office. Mark will be responsible for making sure the Deacons are aware of the needs and then will contact the appropriate Deacon.

To contact Mark Scott: He can be reached at the following numbers: M-F at work, 752-2637; evenings and weekends, 753-2639 home and cell 750-6809.

For January, the Church office will be closed New Year's Day. It will reopen on Thursday, Jan. 2nd. Pastor Deb will be unavailable Jan. 27-30; she will be in Buffalo, MN attending training for new moderators for the Presbytery committee she is now moderating, the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

Church Happenings

PW News

January 8, 2014

Co-Hostess: Linda Tickel @ Church

Co-Hostess: Shirley Webster

Study Leader: Donna Siefken

Mission: Toilet Tissue



Card Showers

We have three special birthdays this month.

| | | |
|---------------|---------|---------------|
| Vi Ernst | Jan. 16 | 96 yrs. young |
| Sally Jamison | Jan. 17 | 90 yrs. young |
| Jane Snider | Jan. 15 | 92 yrs. Young |

A birthday card will brighten their day.

Yum-Yum Club

Yum-Yums will meet on February 20 at Uncle Ronnie's at 6:00 p.m.

Call Mike or Toddy Gorman to make reservations at 208-0842



Come to Church with a Can



CCC goal is 1200 cans for 2014.

From the Staff



SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP TEAM: Arnie Anderson, Charles Bell, Carol Brotherson, Dick Fischer, Jesse McCormick, Cindy Murphy, Marilyn Nuss, Julie Schulthies, Bonnie White, ruling elders. Ted Francis, Clerk

SERVANT LEADERSHIP TEAM: Nancy Beetner, Rex Beetner, (vice moderator), Barbara Blom (secretary), Curtis Blom (moderator), Cathy Brink, Adele Coulter, Ruth Francis, Barb Garcia, Sue Gilchrist, Sandy Russell, Mark Scott & Sandy Smith.

GOD'S STEWARDS TEAM: Carl Boley, Connie Bowen (Secretary), Jean Miller (Vice President), Kel Stensland (President), & Ed Whitmore (Treasurer).

| | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| January 3..... | Carl Boley |
| | Ken Velharticky |
| January 4..... | Jim Hugg |
| January 8..... | LaDonna Putnam |
| January 10..... | Libby Eibes |
| January 15..... | Jo Lynn Clayton |
| | Jane Snider |
| January 16..... | Vi Ernst |
| January 17..... | Rex Beetner |
| | Sally Jamison |
| January 18..... | Bob Sattler |
| January 20..... | Jeanine Anderson |
| January 21..... | Lauren Briggs |
| | Vickie Carhoff |
| January 23..... | Jolene Schafer |
| January 27..... | Pauline Johnson |
| January 29..... | Anita Erickson |
| | Brenda Frederick |

january



| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|--|---|--|--|---|
| | | | 1 Office Closed | 2 10:30 AM Gems | 3 | 4 |
| 5 9:00 AM 'Story' Groups 10:00 AM Worship 7:00 PM 'Story' Teens | 6 | 7 9:00 AM Staff Meeting 5:00 PM Trustees Meeting 6:00 PM Master Gardeners-Fell. Hall | 8 7:15 AM Men's 'Story' 8:30 AM Women's 'Story' 9:30 AM Knitwits 9:45 AM PW 6:00 PM The Story 7:00 PM Choir 7:00 PM 'The Story' | 9 10:30 AM Gems | 10 7:00 PM MOMS | 11 3:00 PM Taylor Jones Celebration of Life |
| 12 9:00 AM 'Story' Groups 10:00 AM Worship 7:00 PM 'Story' Teens | 13 | 14 9:00 AM Staff Meeting | 15 7:15 AM Men's 'Story' 8:30 AM Women's 'Story' 6:00 PM Handbells 6:00 PM The Story 7:00 PM Choir 7:00 PM 'The Story' | 16 10:30 AM Gems 1:30 PM Hope Haven Birthday Party 6:00 PM Yum Yum Group | 17 Office Closed | 18 |
| 19 9:00 AM 'Story' Groups 10:00 AM Worship 7:00 PM 'Story' Teens | 20 7:00 PM Session Meeting | 21 9:00 AM Staff Meeting | 22 7:15 AM Men's 'Story' 8:30 AM Women's 'Story' 6:00 PM Handbells 6:00 PM The Story 7:00 PM Choir 7:00 PM 'The Story' | 23 10:30 AM Gems | 24 Office Closed 7:00 PM MOMS | 25 |
| 26 9:00 AM 'Story' Groups 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Congregational Meeting 7:00 PM 'Story' Teens | 27 Connections Deadline 6:00 PM Mission Committee | 28 9:00 AM Staff Meeting | 29 7:15 AM Men's 'Story' 8:30 AM Women's 'Story' 6:00 PM Handbells 6:00 PM The Story 7:00 PM Choir 7:00 PM 'The Story' | 30 10:30 AM Gems | 31 Office Closed | Deb gone To MN Jan. 27-30. See Pg. 7 |

Wednesdays through May 21

The Story for men at 7:15 a.m. in **Parlor**; *The Story* for women at 8:30 a.m. in **Chapel**.

The Story for elementary children at 6 p.m. in **Rainbow Room**.

The Story for middle school at 6 p.m. in **basement**.

The Story for adults at 6 p.m. in **Chapel**;

The Story for adults at 7 p.m. in **Chapel**.

Handbell Practice at 6 p.m. Beginning Jan. 15

Choir Practice at 7 p.m.

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