

March Connections 2016

Celebrating Lent, Holy Week & Easter



Palm Sunday

March 20

9 a.m. Donkey Walk
Snake Alley

(No childcare today)

10 a.m.

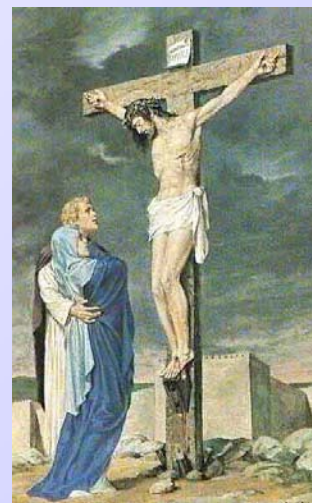
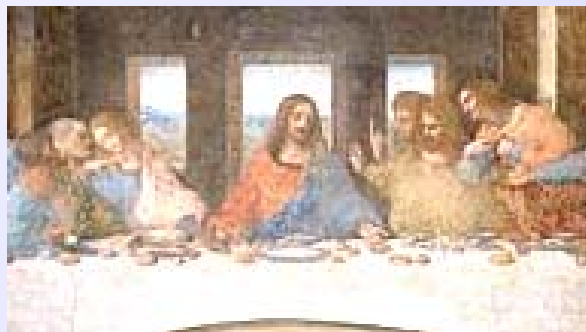
Worship Service



Maundy Thursday

March 24, 7 p.m.

The Chapel
The Lord's Supper



Good Friday

March 25, 7 p.m.

The Chapel



Easter Sunday

March 27

7 a.m. Sunrise Service

At home of Bill & Sue Carter

500 Washington Road, WB

Pancake breakfast following

10 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary

Trustee Report

Statement of Income & Expense January 31, 2016

	Budget	Actual	Variance	Percent of Budget
Income				
Pledge	179,254.00	14,885.00	164,369.00	8.3%
Non Pledge	21,028.00	2,201.80	18,826.20	10.5%
Investment In- come	17,700.00	2,906.70	14,793.30	16.4%
Misc Income		40.00		
Total Income	217,982.00	20,033.50	197,948.50	9.2%
Expenses				
Personnel	145,147.00	12,858.42	132,288.58	8.9%
Youth Ministries	3,580.00	208.50	3,371.50	5.8%
Radical Hospital- ity	2,235.00	165.22	2,069.78	7.4%
Deacons	760.00	78.54	681.46	10.3%
Property	62,210.00	4,854.31	57,355.69	7.8%
Worship	4,050.00	192.14	3,857.86	4.7%
Total Expenses	217,982.00	18,357.13	199,624.87	8.4%
Differential		1,676.37		
Estimated Income Hanna	\$29,000.00	\$8,868.77	20,131.23	30.6%
Mission Budget	\$30,580.00	1,896.14	28,683.86	6.2%
Differential		6,972.63		

**Per Capita
Apportionment
for 2016 is \$33.00**

Glimpses of God's Grace

Dear friends,

We have begun our journey into Lent, which is a time of spiritual preparation as we look toward the Easter resurrection. Many of us may wonder, why do we have to prepare? Why all the talk about fasting and prayer and almsgiving? Why all the discussion about 'giving up' something for Lent, like chocolate or television or the internet?

A simple answer might be: We forget. We forget what it cost Jesus, the Son of God, to save us from our sins. We forget that this world is not our final destination. We lose sight of how far we may have strayed in our relationship with God, if the busyness and the ever-increasing secularism of the Christmas season is any indication. We forget the promises in Scripture that every year remind us of why we are here (to glorify God and enjoy Him forever) as we get caught up in living our lives and trying to secure our futures.

Pastor Gordon Dragt, in 1989, wrote that Lent is a time to *'not just experience the salvation journey of Christ, but to respond to it and live it.'* How do we live the salvation journey? According to Dragt, we live Christmas when we are *'involved with newness, beginnings, encouraging potential, and making a commitment for celebrating life. ... We live in Palm Sunday when we risk involvement, enter into the center of things, take a stand, and make a commitment for ... doing what is right in behalf of others. We live Maundy Thursday when we are involved with caring, equality, sharing, and making a commitment for love, friendship, and the new life of Easter. We live Good Friday when we are involved with struggle, wrestling with the questions of life, giving of our self on behalf of others... We live Easter when we are involved with ... hope, celebration, and making a commitment for the rising of new life.'* (Reformed Worship, March 2016)

Lent, along with the rest of the holy days we celebrate, is an antidote to our spiritual forgetfulness. As we journey these 40 days of Lent, we can refocus intentionally on a new way of living life, which reminds us of our dependence on God alone.

I would encourage you this season to prayerfully consider taking up something for Lent, instead of giving up something. Intentionally take up praying for the church and its ministries every day. Intentionally take up reading the Scripture(s) used in worship the following week, taking time to let God speak His Word to you. Intentionally take up the practice of thanking others for their service or ministry. Intentionally take up a new area of ministry. Intentionally ask God what His desire for your life is, and then wait to hear His response. In so doing, you will be opening yourself up even more to receiving God's grace, God's love, God's forgiveness, God's presence. In other words, living the salvation journey of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

In His service,
Deb

Sandwich Ministry ...by Toddy Gorman

I presented the following to the congregation a few weeks ago. It is a new mission that our congregation is embarking on. The response has been fantastic, so now we can go forward with definite plans to get started. The more volunteers we have, the better, so please sign up if you are interested in helping.

To borrow a phrase from Martin Luther King, Jr., the Radical Hospitality Committee "has a dream" that once a week we can feed some of the nameless, hungry men, women and children in Burlington, by providing a sack lunch to anyone who shows up at the appointed time. This was a program I witnessed in Lexington, KY 20 years ago, so I know it can work. A small team of church members met each Sunday to prepare the sandwiches, and then went out to distribute them to whomever came to their drop-off point. Since it takes a village to make it happen, we are asking you to consider being a part of a team. Can you give an hour or two every 6 weeks or so?

The specifics: The tasks involve shopping for the food (you will be reimbursed), assembling the sandwiches, and handing them out. Each lunch will provide 2 ham and cheese sandwiches, some fruit, a bottle of water, and a Hershey's hug (with a note from our church reminding them of God's love for them). Perhaps the children can help assemble the lunches during Fellowship Hour, and then the team will distribute them right after that. We haven't yet determined where we will pass out the food. This will require at least a 3-month

(continued on Page 4)

Sandwich Ministry (continued)

commitment from anyone willing to join in this effort, because, once word gets out, hungry people will expect us to be there at the appointed time. Of course, the more volunteers we have, then the fewer Sundays each team would have to work. Each team will have 3 people on it. Perhaps one member can do the shopping, all 3 assemble the lunches, and then 2 people distribute them. As you can see, it is definitely a work in progress, and we will figure out what works best as we gain experience.

Our town is in crisis, and we can be part of the solution. It is difficult to imagine that there are hungry people all around us, but it is a fact. This is an opportunity to reach out in a personal way, face-to-face, smiling, and showing Christian love while giving nourishment. Are you willing to make it become a reality? I ask that you give this your prayerful and thoughtful consideration - it *is* a lengthy commitment, but a worthy one.

There is a signup sheet for the Sandwich Ministry in Fellowship Hall. If you feel drawn to this mission, please sign your name, call me (319-208-0842), or call the church office. I will be delighted to answer any questions you might have. Let's get out there and make a difference! Thank you.

Reflections from Randy Webster

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

We have entered the season of Lent, a period of 40 days before Easter (Sundays are not a part of Lent; they are “in Lent,” not “of Lent”) when the Church as a body and we as members of that body, look closely at our relationship with God, and how we choose to make that walk. We talk a lot about temptation and sin.

Temptation is a common theme through much of the Hebrew and Christian canon. One of the very first stories is that of Adam and Eve being tempted in the garden of Eden by the serpent to eat the apple so that they might be more like God. In that act humankind was to give us the gift of free will by God, to make choices for ourselves.

We have the ability to lead God-centered lives or to live “me”-centered lives. Our human nature is to choose the latter more often than not. We call that action sin. But we have also been given the gift of grace through the saving work of Jesus to be able to repent, which literally means to turn around, and return back to relationship with God, living a God-centered life. For most of us this happens many times every day.

We read in the synoptic gospels (the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke) two stories of Jesus being tempted by the Evil One, one immediately following his baptism in the desert, and the second in the garden of Gethsemane. The tempter gives Jesus the ability to sin, to reject his calling as a “beloved child of God,” rejecting a God-centered life for a “me”-centered one. In both cases Jesus rejects sin. One of my own favorite Lenten hymns is the African American spiritual “*Jesus walked this lonesome valley*” which speaks of this choice that Jesus made. *He had to walk this lonesome valley by himself.* That doesn't mean that God was not with him, but Jesus, being human, had to make the choice to sin or not. In both cases those trials shape the ministry of Jesus which would ultimately lead him to the cross and resurrection, and to our redemption.

Like Jesus *we have to walk that lonesome valley by ourselves and stand our own trial*, making the choice between sinning or not. No one else can make those choices for us. Hopefully our choices are shaped by our life of faith and our relationship with God. And it doesn't mean that God is not with us, God is always with us, but God cannot make the choices for us.

Many would say that God sends those temptations or trials to us. I don't think that the God I know does that. Evil does exist in the world because the creation is flawed and waiting for its redemption. Perhaps I found myself in a strange place, having been taught a line in the prayer that Jesus taught us which read “Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.” I had a very difficult time thinking that God would lead us into temptation. As I got older I discovered that the words of scripture are a translation from the original language (No, Jesus didn't speak English.) A more correct translation of that phrase in the original Greek reads “Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.” (*see page 73 in The Book of Common Worship.*)

Too many times we make life choices, whether big ones or little ones, that hurt the heart of God. The good news here, the “gospel,” is that, thanks be to God, like the father in the story of the prodigal son, God is always ready to greet us and welcome us back home! Amen!

Faithfully,
Randy+

Newsorthy Notes

In July 2010, the South Hill Neighborhood Association was formed. It was established because of street violence that was perpetrated on a law abiding citizen, Jon Hazell, who was riding his bike on Maple Street and was severely beaten in the heart of the South Hill neighborhood.

Garry Thomas called on the ministers of the South Hill area and other leaders in the community to discuss and find solutions to the issues of street violence, economics, social, educational and recreational concerns facing the people of the South Hill area.

The first meeting open to the public drew 75 members of the community to voice their opinions and concerns about issues ranging from racism, police protection and gangs. At the end of the meeting, the South Hill Neighborhood Association was established.

On February 6, 2016, First Presbyterian Church was awarded the Jon Hazell Award, which is a humanitarian award that recognizes outstanding individuals or groups dedicated to fighting indifference, intolerance and injustice. Recipients have shown their commitment to helping our community as a whole. The First Presbyterian Fifth Sunday/Dirty Hands Mission Group has helped us strengthen and renew our community by working with residents, one yard at a time. Thanks to all who have participated.



Worship Schedule

February 21

Lent 2: Standing Firm

Psalm 27, Philippians 3:17-4:1

February 28

Lent 3: Soul Food

Psalm 63:1-8, Isaiah 55:1-9

March 6

Lent 4: New Creations!

Psalm 32, 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

March 13

Lent 5: Winning the Prize

Psalm 126, Philippians 3:4b-14

March 20/Palm Sunday

Stones Cry Out

Psalm 118:1-4, 19-29, Luke 19:28-40

March 24/Maundy Thursday

Reflections

Exodus 12, 1 Corinthians 11, John 13

March 25/Good Friday

Near the Cross

John 18-19

March 27/Easter

Crying No More!

Isaiah 65:17-25; John 20:1-18

Staff Reports		January, 2016	Pastor Deb Kinney
Worship	5 worship services 1 memorial service, graveside	Education	Missions Worship Youth Ministries Staff
Education	6 Bible study groups 1 Sunday school class for children	Connections	Church Activities/Events Attended Knitwits
Connections	22 Drop-ins/appointments/calls 3 home/hospital/prison visits 15 cards/letters sent	Church Meetings	Other 1 Spiritual direction session <i>Connections</i> work Lent preparation Taking down Christmas decorations Presbytery book study Separate meetings with staff (8)
Church Meetings	Session Annual Congregational Radical Hospitality		

Minister of Faith & Worship		January, 2016	Randy Webster
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Sunday Worship services (4), 1 sick Funeral (and preparation) Mission Committee meeting Worship Committee meeting Radical Hospitality Committee meeting Yum-Yums Staff meetings	Worship planning and consultation with the Pastor Private practice Hymn festival preparations Connections submissions
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Health ...by Camille Reynen, Moderator of Radical Hospitality Committee

This is an enormous topic but I want to very briefly address it in large brushstrokes and provide some thoughts on how the topic of health has led to some recent conversations and changes in the way the Radical Hospitality Committee is approaching Fellowship Hour on Sunday mornings.

We cannot be the church and not deal with health. In the Gospel of John (10:10), Jesus tells us His purpose in coming was to “bring life and life abundantly.” We see throughout scripture that Christ’s intent was about bringing abundant physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, and communal life. This is also the definition of health.

As a committee, we have been charged with providing a fellowship time after church for the purpose of building the body (communal health). There have been comments from the congregation expressing a desire to see the preparation and serving of the food simplified, as well as comments on the “health” of the food being served. It is our hope as a committee that simplifying the preparation and serving of the food will lead to more people signing up to host on Sunday mornings. It is also our hope that as you decide what to serve on Sunday mornings you will include options that promote our church family’s physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, and communal health. To simplify even further, small paper plates will be provided and our custodian, Christine, will run the cups through the dishwasher during the week if you don’t have a “dishwasher” to run the machine!

We all have preferences in the “health” choices we make but we also need to continually ask whether our personal preferences promote our church family’s purpose or hinders it. The apostle Paul noted that, “all things are permissible but not everything is helpful (1 Cor. 6:12 and 10:23).” Helpful for what? Helpful for fulfilling our purpose... which is to promote abundant life. We could say that the food we share at fellowship may help promote conversation and the building of our communal health, but is that because of the food we share or the time we take to share it? In addition, there are members of our body who struggle with weight issues and others with diabetes - and what kind of example do we want to model to our children? 1 Cor. 3:16 says, “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?” We are called to be faithful stewards with the blessings of our time, homes, finances, families and church building. Why not our bodies, our health, and the health of our church family?

Church Happenings

PW News



March 2, 2016
At 9:45 a.m.

Co:Hostesses: Marilyn Malcom at Church
Marilyn Leight, Deb Kunz
Study Leader: Donna Siefken
Mission: Toilet Tissue for Hope Haven

The Treasure Chest was over-flowing with gifts!!!!

As I packed the gifts to ship to the University of Iowa Children's Hospital (3JC), it gave me a deep feeling of gratitude to all of our church family who took the time to purchase these gifts for the children. Your gifts help our friends who are going through a very difficult time. Thank you for letting them know how special they are.



Yum Yums



We will meet on March 17, 6:00 p.m. at Gator's in Burlington. There is a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall. We urge everyone to come. Call Bonnie White or Sue Carter for more information.

Blessings,
Janet

We received thank you notes to our church and the Mission Committee from Char Blodgett, Manager of the Burlington Area Homeless Shelter and from Sharon Ford, Director of Community Action of Southeast Iowa for the donations they received.

We continue to support our community through these and other organizations.






SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP TEAM: Charles Bell, Jim French, Steve Hemphill, Cheryl Lotz, Marilyn Nuss, Camille Reynen, Julie Schulthies, Ed Whitmore, JoAnn Williams (Clerk of Session), ruling elders.

SERVANT LEADERSHIP TEAM: Bill Carter, Sue Carter, Adele Coulter, (secretary), Ruth Francis, Barb Garcia (moderator), Craig Gilchrist, Carey King, Pat Saldeen, Jay Schafer, (vice-moderator), Jolene Schaffer, Sandy Smith, Pat Whitmore.

GOD'S STEWARDS TEAM: Connie Bowen (Secretary), Terri Huddleston, Larry Lazenby (Co-President), Francis McAllister, (Treasurer/Co-President), Chuck Rucker.

Marianne Briggs.....	03/01
Brian Opiekun.....	03/02
Tammy Hulett.....	03/03
Nadine Ibbotson.....	03/03
Irene Kress.....	03/03
Tanner Orton.....	03/03
Miya Lunsman.....	03/05
Polly Rein.....	03/09
John Dewey.....	03/12
Jim Elmer.....	03/14
Connie Bowen.....	03/20
Brock Schneden.....	03/20
Craig Gilchrist.....	03/21
Marilyn Lyday.....	03/23
Craig Francis.....	03/25
Fran Naifeh.....	03/30
Chuck Rucker.....	03/30

First Presbyterian Church
 321 N 5th Street
 Burlington, IA 52601

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 7:15 AM Men's Bible Study 8:30 AM Women's Bible Study 9:45 AM PW 6:00 PM Handbell Practice	3 Office Closed at noon	4 Office Closed	5
6 8:30 AM Choir rehearsal 9:00 AM Sunday School for Children 10:00 AM Worship		8 6:00 PM Worship Committee	9 7:15 AM Men's Bible Study 8:30 AM Women's Bible Study 9:30 AM Knitwits 6:00 PM Handbell Practice	10 Office Closed at noon 4:00 PM Trustees Meeting	11 Office Closed	12
13 8:30 AM Choir rehearsal 9:00 AM Sunday School for Children 10:00 AM Worship 	14	15 Connections Deadline 4:00 PM Youth Ministries	16 7:15 AM Men's Bible Study 8:30 AM Women's Bible Study 6:00 PM Handbell Practice	17 Office Closed at noon 1:30 PM Hope Haven Birthday Party 6:00 PM Yum Yum Group	18 Office Closed	19
20 8:30 AM Choir rehearsal 9:00 AM Donkey Walk 10:00 AM Worship 	21 7:00 PM Session Meeting	22	23 7:15 AM Men's Bible Study 8:30 AM Women's Bible Study 6:00 PM Handbell Practice	24 Office Closed at noon 7:00 PM Maundy Thursday Service	25 Office Closed 7:00 PM Good Friday Service	26
27 7:00 AM Sunrise Service @ Carter's 8:30 AM Choir rehearsal 10:00 AM Worship	28 7:00 PM Mission Committee	29	30 6:00 PM Handbell Practice	31 Office Closed at noon	