

Network

Volume 13 Issue 2

February, 2012

Dates to Remember:

JAN 29-FEB 5

Family Promise Week

FEBRUARY 2 & 16

A Just Harvest Dates

FEBRUARY 8

Annual Meeting

FEBRUARY 22

Ash Wednesday

FEBRUARY 24

Stations of the Cross Begins

Inside this issue:

CF News 2

Music Notes 3

Lenten Study 3

Comm. Kitchen, Missions 4

Trustee Update 5

Women's News 6

Mailbox, Family News 7

Stations of the Cross

Lent is soon upon us. It is a rich Church season of reflection and wonder. This year the Worship Resource Committee has developed a program to explore the spiritual practice of walking the Stations of the Cross.

For most of the history of the Christian Church, and in much of the Church still today, the story of the Passion of Christ was told visually through artistic mediums permanently installed in Church sanctuaries or Church structures. For a large illiterate population, this was a way to communicate the story of Jesus Christ and make it accessible to all.

To produce these images for our Church, artists from within our congregation have created images to share, in conjunction with different Stations of the Cross. The narthex will be filled with these works for you to enjoy, meditate on, and interact with during the six weeks of Lent. **Beginning Friday evening February 24 and continuing through Good Friday, April 6, the narthex will be open to the public from 6 to 8 p.m. for you to conduct your own walk through the Stations of the Cross.** A pamphlet of short meditations and prayers created by our community will help guide you through this experience. Additionally, the sanctuary will be open during this time for quiet reflection before or after your journey, and meditative music will be offered by Church musicians and friends.

You are welcome to walk the Stations as many times as you like. For many, walking the Stations of the Cross each week during Lent is a spiritual practice that holds much meaning and adds rich dimension to spiritual reflection. The Friday evenings are set-aside times to gather, but the narthex will be open other times during the week. Please check with the Church office to confirm these times.

Also, for those who wish to learn more about the history and meaning of the tradition and the journey of the Stations of the Cross, an adult Sunday School class begins on Feb. 26 and continues through Sunday, April 1, 9:45 a.m. in the Church's Upper Room. Dr. Mary Veeneman, assistant professor of Biblical and Theological Studies at North Park University, will be leading this class. Dr. Veeneman teaches courses in Church history and theology.

We begin our Lent together in fellowship and worship on Ash Wednesday evening, February 22. We share a soup supper at 6, and worship at 7. A blessed and Holy Lent is upon us!

Peter Hawkinson

CHRISTIAN FORMATION NEWS & EVENTS

| |
|--|
| <p>CHRISTIAN FORMATION MISSION STATEMENT of WINNETKA COVENANT CHURCH To teach the Christian faith and develop disciples growing in Jesus Christ through the Word of God, through the witness of teachers, through the family of faith, by the power of the Holy Spirit.</p> |
|--|

Sunday School for all ages at 9:45 each week.

Adult Sunday School choices:

- 1) **Joy Unspeakable: Paul's Message to the Church at Philippi**, taught by Max Lee, Professor of New Testament at North Park Theological Seminary. January 29 - February 19
 - ♦ Jan. 29 - Philippians 1: Joy from What Really Matters
 - ♦ Feb. 5 - Philippians 2: Poured Out and Yet Joyful
 - ♦ Feb. 12 - Philippians 3:1-4:6: Rejoice Because the Lord is Near(er Than You Think)
 - ♦ Feb. 19 - Philippians 4:7-23: Prayer and the Promise of Joy

The Bible study series will focus on the theme of joy which runs through Paul's entire letter to the Philippians. How anyone who was under house arrest and facing impending martyrdom could speak about joy is indeed a mystery. Yet joy is exactly what Paul experienced and shares with the church at Philippi. He found joy in the most unexpected places and through the most trying of circumstances. Joy in ministry, through suffering, as an eschatological promise, and shared through the fellowship of the church are just a few of the places where joy can be found. Come and hear what Paul has to say about an all-too-often missing dimension to our Christian pilgrimage.
- 2) **Intergenerational Class.** A time of experiential learning, storytelling, relationship-building and intergenerational fun in Room 203. For high school students and adults of any age. Quality coffee, hot chocolate and tasty treats are served every week.
- 3) **20's & 30's Small Groups.** New small groups for people in their 20's and 30's are now meeting on Sunday mornings from 9:30-10:30 a.m. Couples' groups meet every other week, and men's and women's groups meet on the alternative weeks. If there is interest, groups will also be formed that may meet on other days/times of the week. The groups meet for care, support, prayer, and engaging each other around topics that are pertinent to their faith and life. Please contact Pastor Andrea if you're interested in joining or would like more information.

February Rotation Sunday School: Jesus' Baptism

We are looking for workshop leaders for the following workshops, to lead three out of the four weeks of 2/12, 2/19, 2/26, and 3/4:

FOOD/DRAMA: Students will enter in the story of Jesus baptism by making "Honey Bugs" to eat, and act out the story of John baptizing Jesus.

GAMES: Students will play an object identification game and do a relay to learn about how the coming of John the Baptist and Jesus were the fulfillment of prophecies from the Old Testament.

TEMPLE: Meg Madvig will lead but would welcome a co-leader. Students will watch a video depiction of Jesus' baptism and go to the sanctuary to see the baptismal font, be part of a pretend baptism, and learn about what baptism means.

ART: Colette Quackenbush will lead but would welcome a co-leader. Students will make banners to remind them of/help them look forward to their own baptism. Needed: one workshop leader to partner with Colette Quackenbush.

Coming in March: "Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet"

August 6-11, 2012 is set for **Winnetka Covenant Church Family Camp at Covenant Point.** Save the date and be watching for more information in the coming weeks.

MUSIC NOTES



I'm always thinking about music selections, but today I'm struggling with an art piece - for our Lenten Stations of the Cross project. It's making me think deeper about a perennial favorite subject of mine: artistic messaging and meaning.

I was shocked and indignant about 12 years ago when I read in a best-selling book about worship, that music had 'no meaning' - only words have meaning. What planet was this writer on? Had he never heard a symphony - or been to a movie!! This was ludicrous and really idiotic, except that so many were buying it. I set out to research and write a rebuttal. The resulting incomplete 'theology of music' led me on an intense journey and ultimately back to what I knew before: music - as art - MOVES us - powerfully and often apart from our rationale. We respond and interact with it emotionally from our personal and cultural experience. More than that, we are whole beings; our labels - emotions, mind, body or heart, soul, mind and strength - are all integrated.

The other night, watching presidential candidate speeches, focus groups indicated their positive/negative reactions on little meters. As viewers, we watched their composite responses. It was noted that regardless of the political particulars, what people liked the most were uplifting, positive messages. Hm?!

So too in art. Beauty. Calm. Comfort. Home. We all like these - in our varying ways! Challenge? Stimulation? Contrast? Yes. We're creative, imaginative beings. We like the power of considering, evaluating, deciding - to a degree. We also like - and need - balance - order - refreshment - and HOPE!

What moves you toward good? By God's gifts and grace, we are all on the journey. We need each other. We need each others' vision and contribution.

What do you see?

Stewarding creation with you, Dawn

Words of Life? Good News? The Difficult Words of Jesus

A Lenten Inquiry, Beginning February 15
Wednesday Evenings, 6:45, Church Library

*Jesus came not to bring peace, but a sword?
If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off?
Did Jesus say that there's an unforgivable sin?
Turn the other cheek?
Is it true? Can faith really move mountains?*

Each week we will grapple with one of the difficult sayings of Jesus.
Suggestions from group members are most welcome.
We will seek to understand, and grow together.
Welcome!

ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

The annual meeting of Winnetka Covenant Church will be held on Wednesday, February 8.
Dinner at 5:30, meeting begins at 6:00.
Children's programs will be facilitated by North Park University students.

A JUST HARVEST COMMUNITY KITCHEN

Please join us on February 2nd and the 16th in our church kitchen from 1-3:30 in the afternoon as we prepare a tasty meal for our neighbors, the patrons of A Just Harvest's Community Kitchen. We have a great deal of fun in good company!

We will be serving this meal at the community kitchen on the 16th from 5-7 p.m. We need to provide at least

8 servers for this very gratifying work. There is a sign-up outside our church kitchen.

Thanks for your love and support of this mission.

John Anderson

WITH GRATITUDE

The beauty of our memorial garden and columbarium has been a wonderful and significant addition to our ministry here at Winnetka.

Recently that ministry has been enriched by the exceptional woodworking artistry of Rev. Edmund Train, who has made a beautiful mahogany vessel for the presentation of the containers of cremains to be used during memorial services in sanctuary and garden. It will be used for the first time at the memorial service for Elmer Carlson on Saturday, February 11, at 2:00

Art Nelson

MISSION NEWS

Remember Christine and Others

I first realized the value of Covenant Prayer Support in March 1953. I was studying French in Antwerp, Belgium, needing to pass the entrance exams. In order to be a nurse in Congo I had to pass courses in tropical diseases. The day of the French final my name was listed in the Covenant Home Altar (before the days of the missionary prayer calendar). I passed.

In 1970 our family was at the Protestant University; in Kisangani Cully was the resident architect. He had to be in Kinshasa on business 800 miles away (no cell phone or other communication). Marybeth, 8, James, 5, and I were very lonely. That evening our spirits were lifted as we found our picture in the missionary prayer book. We took courage.

Enroute home from Congo one of our trips, we were changing flights in Bruxelles. I was sitting with the children and watching our luggage. A young lady came up to me, "Are you a missionary?" "Yes" "Covenant missionary?" "Yes" "I recognize you from the missionary prayer calendar." She was on her way to teach in Tanzania from California.

Christine is pictured in the new prayer calendar on page 10 with a brief bio. All the others in the book would appreciate prayer also. We have representatives in 24 other countries.

Vivian Edstrom

Save the date - Zumbathon, Saturday, March 3, 2012, at Winnetka Congregational Church. Proceeds to support Family Promise Chicago North Shore. More details to come.

WINNETKA COVENANT PRESCHOOL NEWS

Registration is now open for the 2012/13 school year. We are now offering more program choices, including extended day options for the 2012-2013 school year. We very much appreciate if you can tell friends and relatives about our program, as they are making choices for their children. See our link on the church website for more information or contact Linnea Johnson.

TRUSTEE UPDATE

Straight talk about financial stewardship - In a few words, We Did It! As you were aware, we had a steep financial goal to meet in the last month of 2011. We are pleased to say that we met (within less than \$2K) our 2011 actual expenses. Thank-you for your generosity and commitment to your pledges. We are excited to share with you our proposal for 2012 at the Annual meeting. Hope you will join us then!

YTD Financials

- General fund giving through December 31 was \$1,059,613. This was up 4% from 2010.
- 2011 actual expenses were 5% below the planned budget.
- WCC cash position is very good, due to a strong exchange fund balance (offerings for specific projects).

Comparisons to Prior Year and Budget:

| | 2011 Actual | 2010 Actual | % | 2011 Budget | % |
|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------|------|-------------|-----|
| General Fund Receipts | \$1,059,613 | \$1,018,794 | 104% | \$1,134,759 | 93% |
| Expenses | \$1,029,148 | \$1,053,745 | 98% | \$1,083,736 | 95% |
| Net Operating Income/(Loss) | \$30,465 | (\$34,951) | | \$51,023 | |
| Debt Payments | \$32,108 | \$59,318 | | \$32,108 | |
| Net Excess/(Deficit) | (\$1,643) | (\$94,269) | | \$18,915 | |
| Cash - 12/31/2011 | \$244,321 | \$205,123 | 119% | | |

| | <u>12/31/11</u> | <u>12/31/10</u> |
|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| General Fund Cash | \$ (15,428) | \$ (41,187) |
| Building Fund | 3,050 | 2,750 |
| Exchange Fund | 136,320 | 108,169 |
| Depreciations Set Aside | 40,836 | 40,747 |
| Memorial Fund | 79,418 | 94,519 |
| Petty Cash | 125 | 125 |
| Total | \$244,321 | \$205,123 |

Capital Improvements

- No new capital improvements to report. New plans will begin depending on the congregational vote for the 2012 proposed budget.

Technology

- New (gently used) computers were installed for some of the WCC staff. Others planned to be installed, as needed.
- Plans are to upgrade the office software technology in early 2012

Columbarium Update

- Project is complete except for Wall Memorial

The WCC Board of Trustees develops monthly financial reports with further details. These can be referenced in the church office and will be summarized at the quarterly business meetings. Please contact Scott Hall, Treasurer or Roger Schmitt, Financial Secretary for any questions.

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES NEWS

Following are ongoing groups for the women of the church. They all welcome new participants at any time.

QUILTERS, KNITTERS, ETC. - Meet on the **second Thursday of each month** for fellowship and service. Watch the weekly bulletins for details and location of the meeting.

SHARING GROUP - We cordially invite all WCC women to join us on the **fourth Thursday of each month at 12:00 noon** for lunch and fellowship. We will meet on February 23 at Baker's Square. You'll enjoy the fellowship! Call Marian Eckhardt with questions.

STITCH AND STUDY - Stitch and Study, combining Bible Study, conversation, and craft/needlework projects, **meets on the first Tuesday of each month** at the home of Marilynn Nelson at 7 p.m. This month's meeting is February 7. We will begin using the texts for the coming Sunday, along with our own Covenant Hymnal as a resource for the study. New participants are always welcome to come for the study and conversation, with or without a project.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON BIBLE STUDY AND FELLOWSHIP - Looking to the New Year, we will be embarking on a new 8-week study done by Beth Moore, "James: Mercy Triumphs". This study examines concepts such as joy, hardship, faith, reversal of fortunes for the rich and poor, wisdom, gifts from above, and many more.

Start date was Thursday, January 12th (at 1:00 - 2:45 p.m. in the library) through Thursday, March 1st. The format is similar to past studies with 5 days of homework, meeting for discussion and then viewing the DVD presentation by Beth Moore. We hope your schedules will allow you to join us! We welcome any new attendees and hope those who've been unable to meet with us can join us once again for fellowship and spiritual enrichment.

Please RSVP if you are planning to join us. We are compiling a list and then Lisa Eiesland will send a follow-up e-mail with specifics for purchasing member books, etc. We're hoping you can commit early which will help us in the ordering of supplies. Contact Clare Macfarland with questions.

TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY - The Tuesday Women's Bible Study began the study of 2 Corinthians on January 10. Newcomers will benefit by joining at any time. With questions please call Sue Abram.

2012 WOMEN'S RETREAT - February 3-5, at Covenant Harbor Bible Camp in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin.

"Grace Happens at the Table" Confessions of a foodie who believes that God meets us in profound ways as we share food around the table. This is the theme of the 2012 Women's retreat, centering around the verse "For He satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things." (Psalm 107:9) Our speaker is Bonnie Sparrman. There is still limited opportunity to register - please call the church office and speak with Joan.

REFOCUS! REFRESH! REJOICE! Women Ministries of the Central Conference invites you to Spring Celebration 2012. March 16, 5:00 p.m. - March 17, 3:30 p.m. at Hillcrest Covenant Church in DeKalb, IL.

The keynote speaker on Saturday will be Meagan Gillian, new Executive Minister for Women Ministries of the Covenant Church. Her keynote address is entitled The Secret to Real Refreshment. Details of the entire event, including an interesting array of seminar sessions on Saturday afternoon, are posted on the bulletin board in the hallway or can be found on the WMCC website (www.centralconferencewomenministries.com).

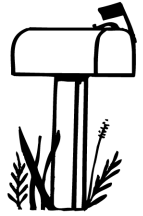
Save the date - On April 21 we will host a bridal shower for Jill Eskra and Adam Geake. All women of the church are invited. Please contact the church office if you would like to be a hostess.

This year's **Men's Retreat will be March 16-18** at Covenant Harbor, in Lake Geneva. Watch the bulletins for information on registration.

WINNETKA MAILBOX

The WCC Staff wishes to thank the congregation for the generous Christmas gift that we received. This is a wonderful place to work and serve throughout the year and it is so gratifying to get such a tangible expression of your love for us.

The Staff



Many thanks to all of you who again made it possible for every resident of Friendly Towers to receive a Christmas gift. I call it a "Christmas miracle" when we have passed out all of the gifts, and every person has had their wish fulfilled. They are so appreciative. Mary Gingrich and the young musicians make the evening so special. Quotes from some letters we have received: "Thank you for your sharing God's love with us. Bless you all at Winnetka Covenant," "Thank you so much for your lovely and gracious party." "This has become an event the seniors look forward to many months in advance, and talk about many months after. The wonderful meal, music, gifts, and the presence of your church members all make the evening so festive and memorable. Thank you for your many years of faithfulness to this ministry."

Be sure to look at the pictures of the party which are posted next to the office door.

Gladys Johnson

Dear Members or Winnetka Covenant,

Thank you so much for the beautiful party and gifts you bring to Friendly Towers every year. It is the highlight of the whole year for the senior residents. We so appreciate the time you take to come each year, often facing inclement weather and traffic to get here. It means so much to our seniors, and also to the staff, often giving us that Breath of the true meaning of Christmas. Your kindness and generosity are gifts that serve us all year long.

Many blessings in 2012.

Debra Strahan, Friendly Towers/Jesus People USA

Dear Peter and Andrea,

Once again I'd like to express my deepest gratitude to you and your wonderful congregants for another year of support of the North Park Friendship Center. Your work days at the Greater Chicago Food Depository, the unending stream of food donations, your budgetary support and the very generous Christmas Eve offering allowed us to continue to serve the needy in this community. As these dark economic times continue, more and more people are seeking the food, clothing, and comfort the Friendship Center provides. May God bless our common work in the new year ahead.

Joanne Ekberg, Executive Director

We extend our congratulations to:

- ◆ **Alex Johnson**, who graduated from DePauw University in December with a Physics Major
- ◆ **Julia Clausen**, who graduated from University of Arizona in December with a Bachelor of Science in family studies

Best wishes to both of these young adults as they enter the next phase of their lives.

Search Committee News - The search committee is excited to announce that the youth pastor position is now posted on both the Covenant and our church websites, and applications are already starting to come in. Our deadline for applications is February 29. Please direct any referrals or suggestions to wccsearchcommittee@gmail.com, and join with us in seeking God's wisdom and direction in our search. We deeply appreciate your prayers and support, and we welcome your input.

Jen Brunzell, Peter Hawkinson, Hal Jenkins, Nadia Jimenez, Cam Johnson, Kat Knotts, Rachel Kovacic, Sam Madvig, Liesel Magnusson, Cathy Norman Peterson, Melissa Schmidt, and George Tzanetopoulos.

OUR MISSION

*To be a Christian community and to proclaim the gospel,
Worshiping together in love,
Nurturing people in faith,
And serving others as Christian disciples,
Building a world of justice and hope in the name of Christ.*

GUIDELINES FOR LOVING RELATIONSHIPS

We hold grace as our highest value.

We practice honest, open, direct communication.

We speak the truth in love and listen in love.

We believe the best about each other, valuing others above ourselves, as Christ does.

We allow room for mistakes, acknowledging that mistakes are part of the growth process.