



PARISH PAPER

The United Church of Christ

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Gaylord, MN

A Monthly Newsletter

February 2009

Volume 37, 2

Come Listen, Go Serve, God is Still Speaking,



Ushers: Dale and Cindy Johnson
Bill Cowell and Sylvia Turbett

Greeters: Doug and Wendy Solomonson
2-1, 1-8
Kathy and Dale Tourtellott
2-15, 2-22

Acolyte: Cole Bruhn

Fellowship Hour:

February 1 Tourtellott Family
February 8 open
February 15 open
February 22 open

Lenten Services

Our mid-week Lenten services begin with Ash Wednesday, February 25



and continue through April 1. We will gather together for supper, fellowship and worship. The Men's Lenten Breakfasts will begin on Thursday, February 26 at 7:00 a.m. and will follow the theme of *The Lord's Prayer*. The schedule for our Wednesday evening suppers and worship is as follows:

5:00 - 6:15 p.m. Supper
6:30 - 7:00 p.m. Worship
7:00 p.m. Choir, clean-up

The Significance of Lent

Lent is the fourth season of the Christian year. Its length is the 40 days preceding Easter Day, not counting Sundays. This means Lent always begins on a Wednesday, known as Ash Wednesday.

Lent commemorates Jesus' fast and temptation in the wilderness of Judea Province, which, according to the Gospel, lasted 40 days. Just as Jesus confronted his temptations during these 40 days, Lent helps Christians focus on our most basic need as sinners: forgiveness.

The only way our Lord's forgiving power can become effective in our lives is by our taking the initiative to confront our sins, confess them and repent of them. In short, Lent is a season of penitence.

Some Christians fast during Lent. This denial of bodily comforts can help encourage self-reflection about the need for Jesus' forgiveness.

*From the
Pastor*



Readings for the Month February

Feb. 1, 2009: Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Exodus 24:12-18, Psalm 99, 2 Peter 1:16-21, Matthew 17:1-9. UCC Theme: Power To Do.

Feb. 8, 2009: Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7, Psalm 32, Romans 5:12-19, Matthew 4:1-11. UCC Theme: Source of Strength.

Feb. 15, 2009: Sixth Sunday after Epiphany

Genesis 12:1-4a, Psalm 121, Romans 4:1-5, 13-17, John 3:1-17. UCC Theme: Compassionate Community.

Feb., 22, 2009: Transfiguration Sunday

Exodus 17:1-7, Psalm 95, Romans 5:1-11, John 4:5-42
UCC Theme: Sense of the Sacred.

Feb. 25, 2009: Ash Wednesday

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; Psalm 51:1-17, 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21.

Remember in prayer: Jane Peterson, and Cal Schrupp.

Our sympathy and prayers go out to Beth Wilson and her family on the death of her father, Duane Wilson, on Tuesday, Jan. 20.

We pray for those who are home bound, have recently been ill or have lost a loved one.

We pray for Brian Pfarr deployed to Iraq and others who are serving in our military services.

Remember our Search Committee as they continue the process of looking for a new minister.

Thank you so much to my wonderful church family for the love, prayers, support, cards, calls and the beautiful plant that was sent after my dad's passing. Thanks to Cindy and Dale for feeding, walking and playing with my dog while I was commuting to Edina. It was so overwhelming to see those of you who were able to come up for the visitation. My mom and brothers felt the love and caring from this church also. You are the best!! Beth, Doris, Steve and Rick Wilson

Thank You

On behalf of the Santa's Helpers Committee, we would like to thank you for the special way that you contributed to the program this past holiday season. Those who benefitted from the program were truly grateful for the gifts. We are very appreciative for the overwhelming generosity you displayed. Because of your generous gift we were able to help brighten the lives of more than 492 children in Sibley County. Thank you for making a difference! Santa's Helpers Committee

Women's Fellowship will meet at 12:00 p.m. on **Monday, February 2** in the Fireside Room. Bring a bag lunch and come join us.



Fellowship News

Priscilla Circle will meet **Thursday, February 19 at 2:00** p.m. in the Fireside Room. Hostess is Liz Kuphal.

Men's Lenten Breakfast schedule is:

Thursday's at 7:00 a.m.

This year's theme is "The Lord's Prayer"

Thurs., Feb. 26 - "Our Father, Hallowed be Thy Name" at Immanuel Lutheran Church.

Thurs., March 5 - "Thy Kingdom Come" at Assembly of God Church.

Thurs., March 12 - "Thy Will be Done" at St. Michael's Catholic Church.

Thurs., March 19 - "Give Us This Day" at St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

Thurs., March 26 - "Forgive Us" at United Church of Christ.

Thurs., April 2 - "Lead Us Not Into Temptation" at American Lutheran Church.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting, held January 18th, was held with neither fanfare nor disruption. Brief updates were provided on the 7th Street House and the Search Committee, with no new revelations. These are two issues which deserve and require our frequent and earnest prayers.

The slate of officers was approved unanimously. I would like to thank all who willingly or reluctantly volunteered to serve the church in the coming year. Your time and talents are greatly appreciated and your service in any area will not go unnoticed. I may not have expressed my appreciation and gratitude directly, but please know that I am thankful for each and every person who accepted the call to serve.

Thank you, Phil Keithahn, for providing an excellent overview of our budget from 2006 year end to present. It was clear and concise and provided some challenges for the coming year. Phil noted that our deficit is primarily due to the money being paid for the 7th Street house and a substantial decrease in giving in 2008. Please give prayerful consideration to some form of a tithe, whether it's two percent, five percent or more. Making a commitment to give to your church, and standing by that pledge, is a rewarding experience and one you will not regret.

Information was presented on an exciting opportunity to become involved in renewing our spirituality and revitalization of our church. A meeting is planned for February 8th after church to share additional information with those interested in participating. A handful of members and the pastor will spend time studying a book by Martha Grace Reese called "Unbinding the Gospel." At the end of the study, it is hoped that we will be able to engage the entire congregation in studying "Unbinding the Church." This will require a commitment of time and prayerful discernment and discussion, but should prove to be spiritually invigorating and rewarding. Please watch for more information as the process unfolds.

Those in attendance at the Annual Meeting were provided with paper and pencils and asked to write any questions or make any comments for consideration by the newly elected Church Council. Those comments/questions will be reviewed at upcoming Council meetings and shared in this monthly message via the Parish Paper as appropriate.

Following adjournment of our Annual Meeting, we shared a pot luck meal and enjoyed a variety of delicious foods. All participants left with their appetites satisfied and many of us vowed not to eat that much next time.

Finally, I ask for your continued prayers for our Council as we embark on the year ahead, faced with new challenges, discussions and decisions. I cling to God's promise that nothing is too daunting and anything is possible as long as we put our faith in Him. I believe that serving as President of the Council for the next 12 months will offer opportunities to grow in my faith and spirituality. I pray that we will grow together, as a church family, in our faith and commitment to serve our Lord.

Peace and prayers to each of you,

Gail Estenson, Council President

Next Council Meeting – Wednesday,
February 11, 2009, 7:30 p.m.

Boards and Committees are reminded to sign up to serve one of the Wednesday night Lenten Suppers. The list is on the counter by the kitchen. Thank You.

Complaint dissipated

A woman called a newspaper office to complain that her Sunday paper hadn't arrived. Trying to calm her, the man at the office pointed out that the paper hadn't arrived because it was Saturday.

After a brief silence, the woman said meekly, "Well, that explains why there was no one in church today."

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This newsletter is a monthly publication of the United Church of Christ, Gaylord. Articles and announcements are due the second Wednesday of the month.

Sunday Worship—9:30 a.m.

Coffee-Fellowship Hour Follows Worship

Sunday School—10:45 a.m. Sept.—May

Communion is the 1st Sunday of the month

Interim Pastor, Rev. Keith Purscell

Council President, Gail Estenson

Office Manager, Cindy Johnson

February Birthdays

01..... Brian Turbett
02..... Agnes Schue
08..... Tia Johnson
11..... Ruth Klimmek
12..... Pastor Keith Purscell
17..... Candy Swenson
23..... Joyce Hamman
23..... Harriet Troidahl
26..... Gloria Sinell