

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
321 SOUTH SEVENTH STREET
SPRINGFIELD ILLINOIS 62701

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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH UPDATE

The monthly newsletter of First Presbyterian Church

March 2007

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

WORSHIP/CLASSES

Sundays:

9:00 a.m. Children's Sunday School
9:00 a.m. Adult Education Programs
10:30 a.m. Worship Service/Sanctuary

Wednesdays:

5:30 p.m. Vespers

Please submit all information for inclusion in
the newsletter to the church office to Cindy at
the e-mail address listed above.

Editorial Coordinator and
Production-Cindy Cass

AN INVITATION:

If you like to have fun and help our church grow at the same time, join us for our regular youth fellowship activities.

The office of Youth and Family Ministries, along with the Christian Nurture Committee, is developing an exciting slate of events for 2007! Our youth events are always fun, sometimes educational and often let kids pitch in to help others.

In 2007, we have plans to spend a day canoeing, help band humming-birds, have a cook-out and nighttime hike and help First Presbyterian Church volunteers assist the needy.

While our Rotation Sunday School, Vacation Bible School and Confirmation Classes programs provide the bedrock for our Christian Nurture efforts, fellowship activities help build memories and stronger connections within the First Presbyterian Church family. **And we need your help.**

We need kids and parents who want to participate and help out. We need grandparents and grandchildren. And we need your ideas.

With your support, we can rebuild our youth programs and help insure a bright future for Abraham Lincoln's church. With your help we can involve our kids in mission and train the disciples that will replace us.

Together we can help improve our Springfield community and our church community. Won't you join us?

See Shannon Yost or Chris Young if you can help by volunteering at a youth event, submit ideas, lead a Bible study, or be a member of the Christian Nurture committee. The possibilities for our youth are endless!

Pastors Column

The Gospel of Mark begins with Jesus' Baptism by John in the Jordan River. Immediately Jesus is led by the Spirit into the wilderness. There he is tempted and tested. Shortly afterward, Jesus appears in Galilee proclaiming, "Repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand." He calls disciples. They leave their families and businesses. Together with Jesus they go from place to place spreading the Good News. In Mark all these significant events happen in the very first chapter. Bible scholars insist, I believe rightly, that this swift development is an indication that Jesus is urgent about the Gospel. The fast pace he sets in chapter one continues. In the next three chapters, Jesus' popularity quickly grows among the people. At the same time his conflict with the scribes and Pharisees escalates rapidly. By the end of chapter four, we find Jesus and his disciples sailing across Lake Galilee in search of a little peace and quiet. It is here they are overtaken by a storm at sea.

Whew! The Gospel of Mark is moving at light speed.

Suddenly, in chapter five, Mark's narrative slows dramatically. Mark begins to describe in rich detail the healing of the daughter of Jairus and the woman with a hemorrhage of blood. I am convinced that Mark slows down his storytelling in this passage for at least two reasons . . . first, to tell the Gospel story about God's love in Jesus . . . this is the overriding purpose of Mark's Gospel . . . but secondly to give us some wisdom about how people of faith are to face the inevitable threats of disease and death. These two stories are intertwined. Together they offer us a picture of how we can respond to sickness in a way that is healing.

The first response, of course, is faith. In both of these stories, we see a vivid portrayal of faith as trust in Jesus. Jairus, the synagogue leader asks Jesus to heal his critically ill daughter, but before they can reach Jairus' home the worst possible news arrives: "It's too late. She is already dead." Turning to Jairus, Jesus delivers the shortest sermon of his career: "Do not fear, only believe." That is not just a word for Jairus. It is a word for us all . . . it is a word for us when we are up against things we cannot control. "Do not fear, only believe."

But the question quickly becomes: Believe what? . . . that our prayers will be answered . . . that things will turn out the way we think they should? That is the way faith seems to work in the Gospel stories – isn't it? 1. People call upon Jesus, and 2. They get what they ask for. The storm stops. The demon departs. The little girl gets up and walks around.

We want to figure out what those folks did right so that we can do it too. Only that is not what the stories are really about. These stories are not about how to get God to do what we want . . . which is our way of trying to stay in control. Mark's stories are about letting God be in control. "Not what I want, Father," Jesus prayed in Gethsemane, "but what you want."

We want peace and calm, but Jesus says, "My peace I give to you, my peace I leave with you but . . ."

Gospel of Mark Quiz:

1. The Gospel of Mark begins with John the Baptist preaching. What was the core message of John?
2. John baptized Jesus in what river?
3. Who drove Jesus into the wilderness – The Devil or The Spirit?
4. Who was the one in the Gospel of Mark to recognize Jesus as the Messiah – "The Holy One of God?"
5. Four men brought a paralytic to Jesus to be healed. The crowd was so great that the four men hoisted the sick man up on the roof, cut a hole in the roof, and lowered the paralytic so that Jesus would heal him. True or False: When Jesus saw the faith of the paralytic he healed him?
6. In regard to the man with the withered hand Jesus asked, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?" But they were silent. Jesus looked around at them: a. in pity, b. incredulous, c. with anger, d. with a forgiving heart?
7. In the story of "The stilling of the storm," what is there in the story that indicates that Jesus may well have been physically exhausted?
8. When Jesus healed the demon possessed man at Gerasenes the towns people: a. asked Jesus to leave their town, b. asked Jesus to come into their town to heal other sick people, c. worshipped Jesus, d. were afraid
9. Jesus raised the daughter of Jairus from death to life. After the little girl was raised Jesus gave further instructions about what the family needed to do for their child. What instruction did Jesus give to the family?
When Jesus returned to Nazareth why was he unable to "do mighty work there . . . except heal a few sick people?"
10. When Jesus returned to Nazareth why was he unable to "do mighty work there . . . except heal a few sick people?"

Answers on Page 3

Lenten Brown Bag Recital Series
 Wednesdays, 12:15 – 12:45

February 28 – Theron Strike – organist
 March 7 – Ma’ria Horva’th – pianist
 March 14 – Chad Ballantyne – baritone
 Nichol DelGiorno, accompanist
 March 21 – The Heritage String Trio
 Karen Frost – viola
 Susan Phillips – ‘cello
 Jean Ellen Tweet – violin
 March 28 – The Renaissance Singers
 Diane Dietz – Director
 April 4 – The Capitol Chamber Singers

Brown Bag lunches with beverage are available for purchase at \$5.00

For more details on performers, see our website at lincolnschurch.org

PLAN TO ATTEND THE EASTER SUNRISE BREAKFAST!!



Breakfast will be served after the *Easter Sunrise Service* this year. Plan to bring the entire family for a beautiful, heart-warming service, then share breakfast together afterward in the fellowship hall.

If you’d like to contribute a donation to the breakfast, please contact Shannon at church (528-4311) or via e-mail (Shannon@first-pres-church.org).



COME AND LEARN THE WALTZ, LEARN TO SWING, LEARN THE CHA-CHA!

Beginning Ballroom Dance Classes will begin this Spring! A six-week course, taught by Jo and J.D. Campbell, will begin March 18 and continue on 3/25, 4/1, 4/15, 4/22, and 4/29. Students will meet in Fellowship Hall from 4:00-5:30 p.m. for dancing and dessert! The cost is \$40 per couple. If you’re interested in registering for this class, please contact Shannon at church (528-4311). There is limited availability, so reserve your spot today!

Answers from Mark Quiz

1. “preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.” (Mark 1:4)
2. “Jesus . . . was baptized by John in the Jordan.” (Mark 1:9)
3. “The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness.” (Mark 1:12)
4. The demons – “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.” (Mark 1:24) “. . . and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.” (Mark 1:34)
5. False – “When Jesus say their faith (the faith of the four men) , he said . . .” (Mark 2:5-12)
6. “And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart.” (Mark 3:5)
7. “And a great storm arose, and the waves beat into the boat . . . but he was in the stern, asleep . . .” (Mark 4:37-38)
8. a & d – “and they were afraid . . . they began to beg Jesus to depart . . .” (Mark 5:15-17)
9. “. . . give her something to eat.” (Mark 5:43)
10. “. . . because of their unbelief.” (Mark 6:6)

Kasavada
Alfred J. Joyce

Children and

YOUTH GATHERINGS...

JR HIGH/HIGH SCHOOLERS: We're sending out an S.O.S.! That is we're sending out an invitation to help contribute to a meal at the *Springfield Overflow Shelter*. We'll make a sweet treat to contribute on March 22. Let's meet at church at 4:30 p.m. to bake up our contribution to the meal. We will then go to the SOS to help fellow church members serve a meal. If you need a ride or have questions call Shannon (528-4311 or 343-9917).



YOUTH OPPORTUNITY

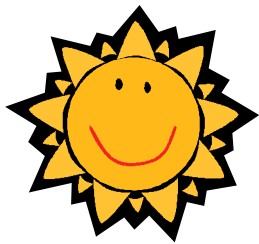
ATTENTION PARENTS WITH YOUTH AGES 3-10!

The Community Arts Center of Springfield offers dance/tumbling classes every Saturday from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. at a minimum cost. If your child is interested in participating, please contact Barb Olson (546-1252).

Transportation and some scholarships are available if you are in need of some assistance. If any members of First Presbyterian Church are able and willing to aid in transportation or sponsoring a child for dance classes, please contact Barb as well. This is a wonderful, low commitment, way of being a part of a young child's life!



LET'S GET READY TO FIESTA!!!



Mark your calendars! Yes, everyone! VBS 2007 is right around the corner and we're going to be ready to Fiesta...June 18-22. There are volunteer opportunities for anyone ages 13 to 100!

If you are interested and available to volunteer for VBS 2007, please call Shannon at church or send her an e-mail (Shannon@first-pres-church.org). It's never too early to reserve your spot to Fiesta!

Lock-In Some Good Times This Spring!

Spend some quality time with other young Presbyterians in March and April.


On **March 30**, Springfield Presbyterian Youth (SPY) will hold an "Almost Lock-In" from 6 p.m. to midnight. The location will be announced later. All 6th grade-High School students are invited to participate in SPY. SPY includes Westminster, Third Presbyterian, Hope Presbyterian, and First Presbyterian church youth.

On **April 13-14**, our Presbytery will hold a Youth Lock-In from 11:15 p.m. to 6 a.m. at Kicks in Springfield, 2744 South 6th Street. The event is open to Junior and High School students. The cost is \$25 that includes food and all the games. The Presbytery needs at least 100 people from area churches to sign up by March 27 for the event to happen.

Adult chaperones also are needed for both events.

See Shannon Yost or Chris Young if you want to participate or can help out.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

1 Shirley May Kelly Neal Sally Robinson	12 Charles Neal Jason Vaughn	24 Barb Olson
2 Andy Schick	15 Dorothy Chapman	26 Marian Worthy
3 Hannah Bosie Joan Kroll	18 Jane Luers	27 Chan Bohlen Jenifer Neal
5 Kati Forman David Wilson	19 Charles Northrup Jr. Scott Roberts	30 Hiram Phillips
6 Caroline Cunningham	20 Clark Olson Nancy Schwermin	31 Nancy Ashabugh Alexander Wentzel
8 Rick Patton Jr.	21 Kenneth Ackerman Betsy Chapin	
9 Jacob Pennell	23 Ron Davidson	

LENT

Lent is a time to take the time to let the power of our faith story take hold of us, time to let the events get up and walk around in us, a time to intensify our living unto Christ, a time to hover over the thoughts of our hearts, a time to place our feet in the streets of Jerusalem or to walk along the sea and listen to his word, a time to touch his robe and feel the healing surge through us, a time to ponder and a time to wonder.....

Lent is a time to allow a fresh new taste of God!

(From kneeling in Jerusalem by Ann Weems)

Don't forget to "Spring Forward" on Saturday, March 10, before you go to sleep.



THINK SPRING!



Members of the **Health and Healing Team** are:
Barb Murphy, LuAnn Atkins, Barb Olson, Susan Enlow, Carol Harden, Riitta Anderson, Linda Wheal, Sharon Bilotti, Barb VonBehren.



LECTIONARY FOR MARCH 2007

- 4th: Genesis 15: 1-12, 17-18; Psalm 27; Philippians 3:17—4:1
Luke 13: 31-35
- 11th: Isaiah 55: 1-9; Psalm 63: 1-8; 1 Corinthians 10: 1-13
Luke 13: 1-9
- 18th: Joshua 5: 9-12; Psalm 32; 2 Corinthians 5: 16-21
Luke 15: 1-3, 11b-32
- 25th: Isaiah 43: 16-21; Psalm 126; Philippians 3: 4b-14
John 12: 1-8

The Food Pantry Ministry

ALERT! FOOD PANTRY IN NEED OF DONATIONS

During the winter months there is great need among the working poor. Our food pantry is extremely strapped and donations are not matching the need. The featured food item for March is **chunky soup or stew**, but any items are welcome although protein is paramount. Please throw some extra cans into your cart for the First Pres food pantry whenever you do your weekly shopping. In January the pantry ran short several days and was actually unable to open. We have all been preoccupied with seasonal concerns, but we cannot forget that there are many less fortunate who depend on our food pantry to provide basic sustenance. Your help is greatly appreciated.



A Garage Sale Is In The Works!

First Church will be hosting a sale sometime soon. Start collecting items now for this event! Drop off dates and times will be forth coming. We request that no clothing be brought for this sale.

Let's make this sale a success as we did the Craft and Bake Sale!



WELCOME TO JERRY AND JANET!

It's almost unfair to refer to Jerry and Janet Cole as new members. After all, Jerry already is seated on the Building and Grounds Committee, agreeing to serve shortly after the couple was accepted into membership by the Session on January 18.

Jerry and Janet joined First Presbyterian Church in Springfield after moving from Decatur where they were members of First Presbyterian Church in Decatur.

First Presbyterian in Decatur also is a downtown church.

"We were only without a church for about a month," Jerry says. "For a time, we were going both places."

The couple previously lived in Macon, and moved to Springfield upon retirement to be closer to family. A daughter and son-in-law live in Springfield.

"I like Springfield," says Jerry. "It just seemed like a good fit, and it satisfied our yearning for a change."

Both were active in their Decatur church. Janet has served as a deacon, and Jerry was an elder.

Janet says she looks forward to getting to know the members of First Presbyterian Church in Springfield before getting more active.

Jerry chaired the Building and Grounds Committee at his former church. He says he is looking forward to being involved.

"I just like being active, and I enjoy sitting on the (Building and Grounds) committee," he says.

Please welcome Jerry and Janet!

WELCOME



Getting Ready for Easter, Lent is for Preparation

An excerpt from Cokesbury's Church Office Network

Consider any big event in life—a wedding, a family reunion, or maybe a retirement party. While some celebrations are impromptu, most of the time you can be sure that a lot of planning went into the event to ensure that each detail is just what the host wanted.

Easter is a big event in the life of the church, and our Host desires us to take time to consider Christ's resurrection and how we may bring renewal to our own lives. The preparatory season of Lent offers us forty days to reflect, study, examine our lives, and discipline ourselves before we enjoy the celebration of Easter.

How can we be faithful to the purpose of Lent? Our busy lives seem to allow little time for contemplation and reflection. And yet, at this time of year it is so important that we find time to stop and be quiet, so that in the stillness we can connect more deeply with God's presence. It's difficult to find that quiet place when we keep such busy schedules that prayer only happens at traffic lights or in between meetings, or when we squeeze in study and reflection over a sandwich at lunch break. Thinking about our Lenten discipline does not produce the benefit of keeping the discipline.

Careful time management is the key. Stay on top of life's tasks at home and at work, so that everyday stresses don't spill over into your time with God. Plan time away for yourself and be faithful to your plans. Use the time to deeply consider Christ's presence in your life and how you may refocus and recommit your life to him.

This year, make time for thoughtful, deliberate planning and preparation during the season of Lent. And when you come together with the church to celebrate the joyous resurrection of our Lord, you'll enjoy deeper fulfillment and a greater sense of wonder and blessings of the Christian life.

All activities take place in the church unless otherwise noted

March 2007

1*THURSDAY

4:30 p.m. - Personnel Committee
7:00 p.m. - Deacons

4*SUNDAY

8:45 a.m. - Nursery Opens
9:00 a.m. - Adult Programming
10:00 a.m. - Fellowship Interval
10:30 a.m. - Worship Service/Annual Meeting
11:30 a.m. - Fellowship Hour

5*MONDAY

1:30 p.m. - Building & Grounds Committee

6*TUESDAY

7:30 a.m. - Bible Study Section II

7*WEDNESDAY

12:15 p.m. - Lenten Brown Bag Recital
5:30 p.m. - Chapel Worship Service
6:00 p.m. - Midweek Gathering
- Christian Nurture Committee
6:30 p.m. - First Pres Knitting Group
- Film Club
7:00 p.m. - Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal
- Friends of the Sangamon Valley Board

8*THURSDAY

7:00 p.m. - Mission Committee @ Sally Robinson Home

10*SATURDAY

6:00 p.m. - Second Saturday Supper Club

11*SUNDAY

8:45 a.m. - Nursery Opens
9:00 a.m. - Adult Programming
- Children's Sunday School
10:00 a.m. - Fellowship Interval
10:30 a.m. - Worship Service
11:30 a.m. - Fellowship Hour

13*TUESDAY

7:30 a.m. - Bible Study Section II

14*WEDNESDAY

12:15 p.m. - Lenten Brown Bag Recital
5:30 p.m. - Chapel Worship Service
6:00 p.m. - Midweek Gathering
6:30 p.m. - First Pres Knitting Group
- Film Club

7:00 p.m. - Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

15*THURSDAY

7:00 p.m. - Session

16*FRIDAY

9:30 a.m. - Fairhills Circle @ Presbyterian Home

17*SATURDAY

7:00 p.m. - International Women's Day Concert

18*SUNDAY

8:45 a.m. - Nursery Opens
9:00 a.m. - Adult Programming
- Children's Sunday School
10:00 a.m. - Fellowship Interval
10:30 a.m. - Worship Service
11:30 a.m. - Fellowship Hour
4:00 p.m. - Ballroom Dancing Lessons

19*MONDAY

7:00 p.m. - Faith Circle

20*TUESDAY

7:30 a.m. - Bible Study Section II

21*WEDNESDAY

12:15 p.m. - Lenten Brown Bag Recital
5:30 p.m. - Chapel Worship Service
6:00 p.m. - Midweek Gathering
6:30 p.m. - First Pres Knitting Group
- Film Club
7:00 p.m. - Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

22*THURSDAY

10:00 a.m. - Phil Blackburn Meeting
4:30 p.m. - S.O.S. Sweet Treat Bake

24*SATURDAY

8:00 p.m. - Classical Guitar Society

25*SUNDAY

8:45 a.m. - Nursery Opens
9:00 a.m. - Adult Programming
- Children's Sunday School
10:00 a.m. - Fellowship Interval
10:30 a.m. - Worship Service
11:30 a.m. - Fellowship Hour

27*TUESDAY

7:30 a.m. - Bible Study Section II

28*WEDNESDAY

12:15 p.m. - Lenten Brown Bag Recital
5:30 p.m. - Chapel Worship Service
6:00 p.m. - Midweek Gathering
6:30 p.m. - First Pres Knitting Group
- Film Club
7:00 p.m. - Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

30*FRIDAY

5:00 p.m. - Kershaw/Andruskevitch Wedding Rehearsal

6:00 p.m. - SPY "Almost Lock In"/ *Location to be announced*

31*SATURDAY

4:00 p.m. - Kershaw/Andruskevitch Wedding