

Clare Congregational Church Newsletter

March 2024

Comments from Pastor Connie

“Happy Easter.” I’m praying coming to worship on Easter Sunday is on your agenda. There will be an Easter drama. Breakfast will be prepared by the council and everyone is invited to attend at 9:00 am. Wanda has been preparing decorations and has a crew to help her turn the sanctuary into a place of art.

Easter Sunday used to be a Sunday pastors looked forward to. Every pew was full and chairs were often added. Fresh flowers filled the sanctuary. The church choir would often perform a cantata. Children were dressed in their finest clothes. Ladies wore hats and gloves. The morning was filled with the presence of God.

Times have changed. This year my heart wasn’t into planning an Easter service for many reasons. I reminded myself when Jesus rode into Jerusalem people took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him yelling Hosanna! “Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.” Just a week later these same people screamed, “Crucify Him.”

Jesus taught, “For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them”. Matthew 18:20. These words are a great reminder that numbers are not important. Jesus also taught, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only son, who ever believes in Him shall not die but has eternal life.” John 3:16. I am truly thankful for a Risen Savior who loves each of us as individuals. Hallelujah! Easter changed the world.

God’s blessings,
Pastor Connie

Moderator— Karen Jones

Hello March!

We are really getting ready for Spring In our church. Our kitchen is going to be completed by Easter. Excitement fills the air!!

So many activities are planned for March. Council meets on the first Tuesday. Second Sunday is Potluck after service. Pioneer Easter luncheon will be on the 19th of March.. We also look forward to Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday this month. Rumor has it that there will be a play on Easter Sunday, and I must not forget about the Easter Breakfast prepared and served by your church council. If others wish to contribute, please see Karen Jones.

As always, I feel very blessed to be a part of this church.

Thanks be to God!

Your Moderator,

Karen Jones

Our council meetings are the first Tuesday of each month at 12:15 and are open to everyone. Hope to see you there.

To contact church office:

E-mail: office@clarecongregational.org

Phone: 989-386-7582

Office Hours: Tuesday through Thursday, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. Church website: clarecongregational.org

Pioneer High — Bill Newkirk

Youth Outreach Update

Pioneer High School

March 1, 2024

The Youth Outreach Program we provide to the students at Pioneer High continues to give blessings and positive support to these young people.

On February 13th, 30 bags of Valentine Day treats were delivered to these students and an additional 10 bags to the Girls at New Hope. The smiles of appreciation, and the many 'thank you (s)' that we received make all our efforts worthwhile! Our service to these youth is not only a blessing to them, but it is also heart warming to all of those involved in this program!

We will be following up our February support to these students with our annual Easter dinner on Tuesday, March 19. Work on the menu continues and those individuals who have helped in the past are being contacted to assist again with this meal. We will definitely be serving brownies after the way they were received at the Christmas dinner! Plans also include Easter treat bags for all of them!

Everything we do for the students at Pioneer High is supported by the cash donations you make to this program, and by the countless bags of returnable bottles and cans that have been donated by our Church family and the community as a whole. Your willingness and commitment to this program is truly creating another 'Miracle on Fifth Street'!

To donate resources or time to this program, please contact Paula or Bill Newkirk in person, or call Bill's Cell phone (989) 513-0732.

Sewing Ladies

Rebecca is looking forward to meeting with the sewing group when the weather improves. She will be teaching how to make a small tote bag. Cost is \$15.00 and that includes supplies. More info as to when it will be coming soon. If you are interested, please call Wanda or Pastor Connie.

New Hope Girls

Thanks to everyone who donated candy and little gifts for Valentine surprises. Pastor Connie and Frank sent lasagna, salad, cupcakes and drinks for Valentine's dinner. The girls were thankful. A hoodie was also given to each girl as a special gift donated by a church member. Thanks to everyone who helped.

Adult Sunday School

There is an adult Sunday School class offered Sunday morning from 9:30-10:15 in the parlor. Currently the class is using Max Lucado's book, "How Happiness Happens" as a guide. Come and join others from the congregation.

Members Class

Anyone who would like to join the church or learn more about the church contact Pastor Connie.

Maundy Thursday

Maundy Thursday service will be held in the fellowship room on Thursday, March 28th at 7:00 pm. Communion will be offered.

Good Friday

Good Friday service will be held at noon at the Assembly of God on Colonville Rd.

Clare County Baby Pantry

The Baby Pantry continues to serve the community. Many people have been generous in donations this year. Pajamas, size 2-6 are needed and also winter coats. Thank you to everyone who helps.

Outreach Opportunity

Many of you are aware Pastor Connie's daughter Sarah teaches in Newberry in the U.P. She works with a team of teachers. They are in need of the following items:

1. journals (most dollar stores carry them)
2. play Dough
3. stickers
4. Small bouncy balls
5. Fidgets
6. Slime
7. Trinkets used for rewards

Thank you in advance.

Ladies' Meeting — Wanda Agle

The Ladies meeting on February 22, 2024, was a small group, but we had a lot of fun. The ladies enjoyed the luncheon and 2 of our newest women in the church joined us. Hope they enjoyed it as much as we did.

We discussed the Hot Dog Sales at Witbeck's. We all agreed that if we can't get enough workers, we are going to cancel this year. We need approximately 3 people for each 2 hour shift. The dates are May 1st and June 6th. We do three shifts. Men or women are welcome to work. We have the set up and first shift covered for both days.

We have decided that our Christmas sale last year was a great outreach and that we should do it again. The date this year will be November 2. That said, we need Christmas items. Ask everyone you know if they have any Christmas items to donate. We do not charge for anything. All donations.

We are changing the meeting days to the second Wednesday of each month. Because we just met in late February, we will not meet in March. Mark your calendars and be ready to meet on April 10th. The meetings will still be at 12:00. I will be sending out text or emails with more details. We are having our next meeting at a local business and enjoying a lunch there. Each gal will be responsible for their own lunch. Hope to see more women involved this upcoming year. We have a great time at our meetings.

New Faces

We are thankful to see all the new faces in worship. Please make certain you fill out a visitors card, available at the ushers desk.

Coffee Hour

There are many dates available to host coffee hour. Sign up sheets are on the board outside Wanda's office. Cases of bottled water for use in the fellowship hall are always appreciated. Thanks!

March Birthdays

Andrew Schunk	03/08
Matthew Forsberg	03/15
Ruth Fretz	03/18
Janet Kunse	03/21
Kelly Edwards	03/24
Steve Newkirk	03/29



Facts & Figures: Month of February

Date	Attendance	Offering
Feb. 4	31	\$ 496.00
11	34	6841.00
18	33	196.00
25	39	1108.00

Serving month of March

Officiating:	Pastor Connie Bongard
Liturgist:	Dr. Kurt Keppner
Ushers:	Jim Sutton & Darcel Nicholas
Accompanist:	LuAnne Humphrey

REMEMBER IN PRAYER:

Tom Johnson, Patty (Humphrey) Hazen, Mike Humphrey, Lee Agle, Phyllis Carrigan and Pam Gaffner, and LuAnne Humphrey, and Lynn Schumacher.



Please help keep the prayer list current; if you know of any changes, or additions, please call the office at 989 386-7582, leave a note for the secretary, or send an email to: office@clarecongregational.org