



The Bell

March, 2025

Monthly Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE AND FISH FRY PLANNED

The traditional Ash Wednesday worship service will again take place in our sanctuary on March 5. The service, which will begin at 6:15, will include communion and imposition of the ashes. As we have done in recent years, the ecumenical service will be shared by worshippers from Trinity United Methodist, Zion Methodist Church and Christ Episcopal churches in Chippewa Falls.

Joining Ed Williams in conducting this service will be Rev. Eddie Crise of Trinity United Methodist, Rev. Paolo Vasquez of Zion Methodist and Deacon Rose Ruthy of Christ Episcopal.

The ashes used during the service are obtained by burning the palms from Palm Sunday and are applied in the shape of the cross on the forehead of worshippers. The ashes are often accompanied by some variation of the words "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

As we have done in the past, the Ash Wednesday service will be preceded by the Fish Fry hosted by the Presbyterian Men. The dinner will include fish, Denman baked beans, cole slaw, dessert and beverage.

Dinner will be served beginning at 5 PM with the last serving at 5:45. The Fish Fry and Ash Wednesday service are open to all.

EASTER LILIES TO DECORATE THE CHURCH

It may seem early, but Easter is rapidly approaching.

As we have in the past, this year FPC will purchase Easter lilies to decorate the sanctuary on Easter morning, April 20. These flowers can be purchased by the congregation and taken home following the service. Any plants that are not removed on Easter Sunday will be replanted by one of our Food Pantry volunteers or given to shut-ins.

Lily order forms will be available in the church office during regular business hours or at the Welcome Desk on Sunday mornings beginning March 16.

YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING – SO DO WE

Communication is the life-blood of our church. We try to keep you, the congregation, abreast of events and general happenings in the church by sending you the monthly Bell, regular eBells and supplying the Sunday bulletins. But in order to give you the latest information, we have to receive it first.

Tiffany has created a “communication form” for each church group to supply that information. Please complete that form now for regular meetings and again whenever those dates change or there is a new event to announce. Note on the form if the event is recurring, plus any special details and where you want the information to be listed – eBell, the Bell, Sunday bulletin or even all three.

The new forms are available in the workroom mailbox marked “communication forms”. After the form is complete, just drop it in the office mail slot or give it to Tiffany if it is during regular business hours.

In the past, many of you have relied on telling Tiffany or Lynda about an event. That can result in missing or wrong information, so we need to know what's happening in writing. In the case of an emergency eBell (bad weather, a funeral, etc.) obviously the notification will have to be immediate and probably verbal but that should be an exception rather than the rule.

In order to get the Bell to you BEFORE the beginning of the month, the deadline is usually around the 20-24 of the preceding month. In the case of Sunday bulletins, the information is needed in the office at least one week before the service.

With your help, we will be able to keep you advised of everything that is going on in our church.

THANK YOU FROM ESTHER

We have received a note from Esther Frazier that reads: “Thank you every one who came to my birthday party. I want to thank everyone who had any part of the celebration. We had people from Washington, Florida, California, Illinois and Hawaii. May each of you experience this milestone.

IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN

Yes, it's time to reset the clocks to Daylight Savings Time. The actual start of the time change is 2:00 AM on Sunday, March 9 but it's a good idea to set your clocks ahead before going to bed on Saturday night. That will guarantee that you will come to church on time.

From the Mission Team...

Submitted by Barb Shorrel

Carelink: Thank you for your contributions to Carelink. You contributed \$600 during the month of January including Noisy Sunday at the end of December.

Christmas Joy Offering: Thank you for your contributions to the Christmas Joy Offering. We sent \$530 to the Presbytery from you.

One Great Hour of Sharing: During the Lenten Season we will be collecting for our second special offering of the year—One Great Hour of Sharing. This offering is distributed to three different programs...

- The Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) that works to help communities recover after disasters and support of refugees.
- The Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP) that works to alleviate hunger and the systemic causes of poverty.
- The Self-Development of People (SDOP) “invests in communities responding to their experiences of oppression, poverty and injustice and educates Presbyterians about the impact of these issues.”

You will be hearing about these programs in the coming weeks. We will collect contributions through Palm Sunday.

From the Food Pantry...

STATISTICS FOR 2024

TOTAL \$ FOOD PURCHASED		\$41,536
TOTAL OTHER EXPENSES		\$ 6,998
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$48,536
TOTAL INCOME		\$50,574
TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS SERVED	2319	TOTAL INDIVIDUALS SERVED 7088
TOTAL DAYS OPEN 101		TOTAL LBS FOOD GIVEN OUT 137,427

STATISTICS FOR JANUARY 2025

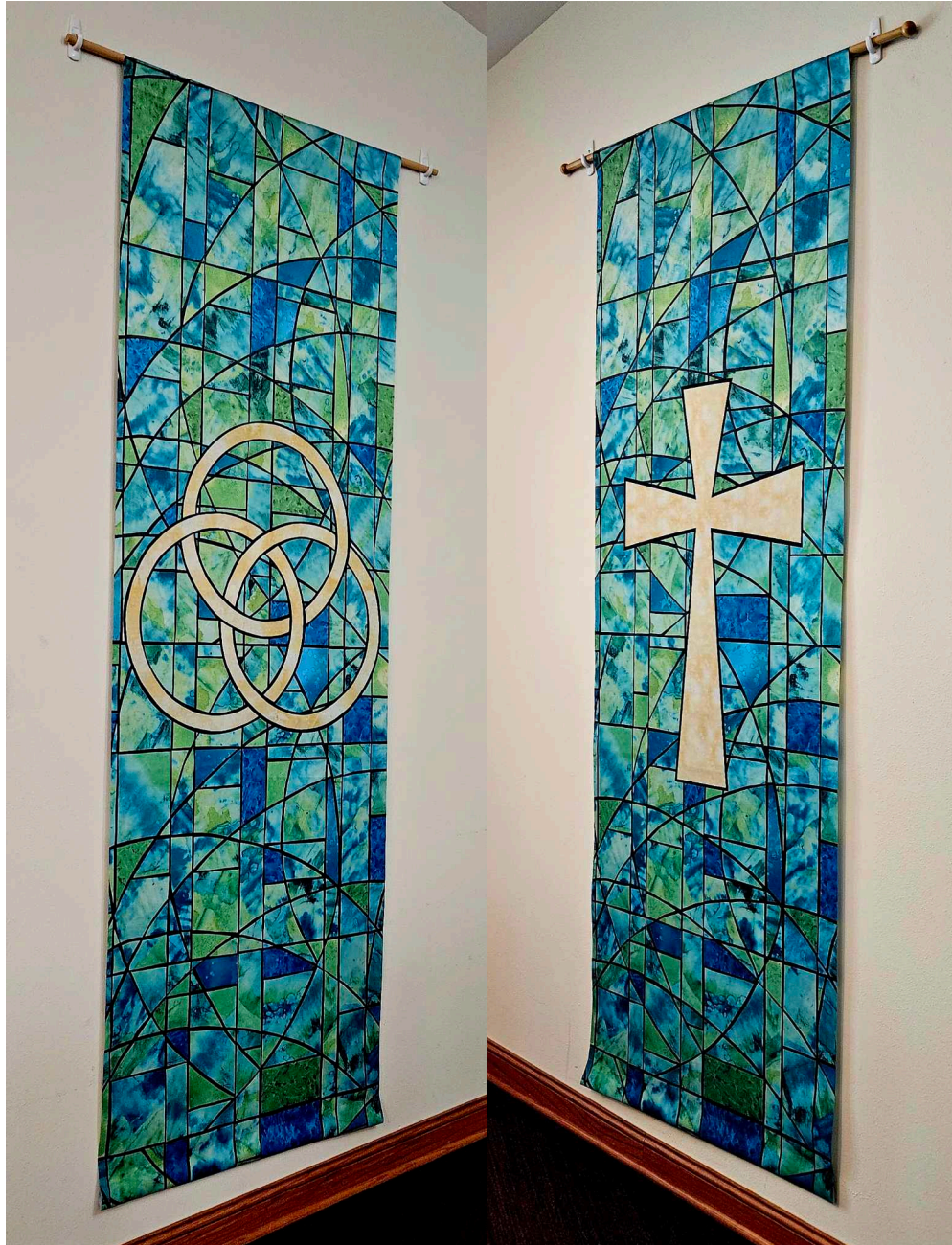
TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS SERVED	194	TOTAL INDIVIDUALS SERVED	566
TOTAL DAYS OPEN 7		TOTAL POUNDS GIVEN OUT	10,880

FOOD RESCUE 4,741 POUNDS RECEIVED FEED MY PEOPLE 6,694 POUNDS PURCHASED

NEW BANNERS ADORN THE SANCTUARY

After many years of waiting, FPC has finally located and purchased two new banners for the sanctuary. These banners replace the green banners which have been in use for decades and are now “retired”.

Purchased from an on-line company called Praise Banners, a “banner committee” of Jan Koepke, Barb Shorrel and Anne Welke selected the banners shown here. Many thanks to Presbyterian Women for making this purchase on behalf of the church.



MARCH BRINGS ST. PATRICK'S DAY

We celebrate St. Patrick's Day on March 17. The patron saint of Ireland, St. Patrick, was born in Roman Britain in the late 4th century. He was kidnapped at the age of 16 and taken to Ireland as a slave. After more than six years as a prisoner, Patrick escaped. According to his writing, a voice—which he believed to be God's—spoke to him in a dream, telling him it was time to leave Ireland.

To do so, Patrick walked nearly 200 miles from County Mayo, where it is believed he was held, to the Irish coast. After escaping to Britain, Patrick reported that he experienced a second revelation—an angel in a dream told him to return to Ireland as a missionary. Soon after, Patrick began religious training, a course of study that lasted more than 15 years.

After his ordination as a priest, he was sent back to Ireland with a dual mission: to minister to Christians living in Ireland and to begin to convert the Irish. By the time of his death on March 17, 461, he had established monasteries, churches, and schools. Many legends grew up around him—for example, that he drove the snakes out of Ireland and used the shamrock to explain the Trinity. Ireland came to celebrate his day with religious services and feasts.

On St. Patrick's Day, which falls during the Christian season of Lent, Irish families would traditionally attend church in the morning and celebrate in the afternoon. Lenten prohibitions against the consumption of meat were waived and people would dance, drink and feast—on the traditional meal of Irish bacon and cabbage.

It was emigrants, particularly to the United States, who transformed St. Patrick's Day into a largely secular holiday of revelry and celebration of things Irish. Cities with large numbers of Irish immigrants staged the most extensive celebrations, which included elaborate parades. Boston held its first St. Patrick's Day parade in 1737, followed by New York City in 1762. Records show that a St. Patrick's Day parade was held on March 17, 1601 in a Spanish colony in what is now St. Augustine, Florida.

Homesick Irish soldiers serving in the English military marched in New York City on March 17, 1772 to honor the Irish patron saint. Enthusiasm for the St. Patrick's Day parades in New York City, Boston and other early American cities only grew from there.

Over the next 35 years, Irish patriotism among American immigrants flourished, prompting the rise of so-called “Irish Aid” societies like the Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick and the Hibernian Society. Each group would hold annual parades featuring bagpipes (which actually first became popular in the Scottish and British armies) and drums.

In 1848, several New York Irish Aid societies decided to unite their parades to form one official New York City St. Patrick's Day Parade. Today, that parade is the world's oldest civilian parade and the largest in the United States, with over 150,000 participants. Each year, nearly 3 million people line the 1.5-mile parade route to watch the procession, which takes more than five hours.