



The Bell

August, 2020

Monthly Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

RAIN, RAIN GO AWAY....

We won't have to say that much longer because we will soon have a safe, dry new roof over our heads.

The roofing project has begun.

The Session chose CS Construction of Eau Claire to do the roof. They submitted a final bid of \$75,023.25 which does not include addressing any damage they may find once they remove the singles.

The contract has been signed and the initial payment made so the clock is ticking. The shingle color has been selected to blend in with the existing shingles on the church spires which will not be replaced at this time.

CS said they feel the actual work will only take about a week but that is dependent on how much unseen damage they find. The sourcing and receipt of the roofing materials will take about three to four weeks so that brings us into September – certainly before the snow falls.

CS will negotiate with Family Fare to provide access to the parking lot and east driveway for the equipment they will need to complete the work.

The capital funding campaign to finance the roof replacement has also begun and so far we have received several generous donations toward the project. As we get further estimates from the roofing company and further donations from our members and friends, you will be advised.

But the important thing is that we are on our way to having a new roof.

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS CHANGE IN AUGUST

The church office will be open on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9 AM to 2 PM beginning August 11. These hours will remain in effect until further notice.

SYNOD EXTENDS A HELPING HAND IN TIME OF NEED

Several years ago our Treasurer renegotiated the church mortgage through the Synod of Lakes and Prairies. Since then we have worked with the Synod to lower our monthly mortgage payments down to what appeared to be a bare minimum.

Before leaving us, our former Interim Pastor, Ken Ribe, interceded with the Synod on our behalf to drastically change how our mortgage is handled. His discussions with the Director of Finance Committee, Jim Koon, resulted in the following proposal from Synod:

- Lower interest rate to 1.80% effective July 1, 2020
- Allow no payments for 12 months through June, 2021. Unpaid interest would simply defer to the end of the loan.
- Beginning July, 2021, set payments at interest-only (about \$500.00) for the next three years, through June, 2024
- Beginning July, 2024, resume payments at \$1,274.74 (but interest stays at 1.8% for at least another 24 months).

Our current mortgage balance is \$328,146.08 and our current mortgage payments including principle and interest are \$1,274.74.

If this proposal is approved by the Finance Committee at their September meeting, we would be relieved of this almost \$1,300 payment every month for the next year. These payments would not be forgiven but would be added on to the end of our current mortgage which then would be extended through September, 2053.

If our current capital funding campaign results in more money than is needed to replace the roof, any additional funds would be applied to the mortgage which could significantly reduce our overall expenditure and the time it would take to pay off the loan.

The proposal from Jim Koon is only tentative and must be approved by the entire Finance Committee which will meet in the early part of September but Koon felt the proposal was one the committee would endorse.

Watch the Bell for additional information following their meeting in September.

SERVICES TO CHANGE TO WINTER HOURS

Winter isn't upon us yet but September is fast approaching and with it our annual change to winter service hours.

Beginning September 6, the Sunday service will begin at 10:15. This will continue through May, 2021.

MY KEY DOESN'T OPEN THAT DOOR!

Yes, you may find that to be true. The outside doors of the church have been rekeyed and the old keys won't work any longer.

In the past, most of us only had one key to operate both the outside and inside doors. Now two keys will be necessary – one for the outside doors and one for the inside locks.

Do not dispose of your old keys because you will need them to operate the inside locks. The new keys only open the outside doors.

Many of you have already received keys but if you haven't and need one, please contact Gene Peissig or Tiffany Wogahn to obtain the new key.

Our key control was woefully out of date with keys shown in the hands of people who have moved away or even passed away. Now that we have new keys, we will be able to keep much better track of who has which key.

If you have an old key and no longer need it, please turn it in to Gene or Tiffany. We want the keys to be in the hands of people who need them and will use them.

BACK TO SCHOOL LOOMS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER

There may be some question about whether a student will go back to school this fall or learn from home but there is no doubt that for many students there is a dire need for school supplies.

Once again Valley Vineyard Church is sponsoring its annual backpack giveaway just in time for school to start.

The church plans to distribute backpacks on August 23 but to do that they need the backpacks themselves and school supplies to fill them. If you wish to participate in this program, the church needs backpacks, notebooks, folders, pens, pencils, crayons, markers, glue, glue sticks, colored pencils and rulers.

If you can't purchase any supplies, you can send your check to Valley Vineyard Church and they will buy the needed supplies.

COVID-19 BRINGS CHANGES TO FPC FOOD PANTRY

The FPC Food Pantry continues to provide food to the needy on Tuesday and Thursday mornings despite the problems caused by the Coronavirus. But there are a few changes to the program in the past few weeks.

All Food Pantry volunteers are required to wear masks inside the church. The clients who come for food are being asked to unload the carts themselves rather than have that done for them by the Food Pantry staff. We are attempting to remain flexible in the face of the ever-changing situation.

PNC LOSES TWO MEMBERS

Several months ago the congregation elected the Pastor Nominating Committee to begin the search for a new called pastor for our church. The work of the committee has begun but now has hit a major snag.

Two of our members have resigned from the committee forcing us to search for additional people to complete our work. Deacon Corine Boos has volunteered to join the committee bringing the total to four but we feel we should have at least five to make this important decision.

The committee meets every Monday night at 6:30 for approximately an hour to determine the type of person we need and eventually select the best candidate from those who apply. The work of this committee is crucial to the health and growth of this church and it is imperative that the committee be able to continue its mission on our behalf.

If you are a member of the church and feel you could lend your voice in helping to select the next pastor, please contact Gary Shorrel or Jan Koepke. Our deadline for completing this committee is August 14 so if you are interested, contact Gary or Jan before that date.

FAMILY FARE RETURNS RECEIPT REBATE PROGRAM

For many years Gordy's sponsored a rebate program for churches that revolved around the food receipts they collected from their members and friends.

When Gordy's went away so did this program which had been a nice source of revenue for us.

Now that Family Fare is up and running in Chippewa, they are reinstating this program.

If you do your grocery shopping at any of the Family Fair markets, you can turn the receipts in to the church where they will be tallied and turned in for money from Spartan Nash, which owns and operates the Family Fare stores. All you have to do is keep your receipt and either give it to Margi Kohl or leave it or mail it to the church.

Margi has volunteered to tally the receipts, subtracting liquor, tobacco, stamps, etc. and turn the tally in to the market on our behalf. We are also participating in the Family Fare scrip program which gives us a rebate for Family Fare credit cards that we purchase and you in turn purchase from the church to use to buy your groceries.

We are also the recipients of fresh produce and baked goods at no cost from the local market which we, in turn, can give to our Food Pantry clients.

This is just one way we can help our neighbor and they can help us.

AUGUST BRINGS CHANGES TO OUR SCHEDULE

We have been trying to keep our ministry and our church on an even keel with things going on as usual even without a called pastor but we didn't count on the Corvid-19 pandemic.

Because of the virus crisis, we will not have our annual picnic in August but we plan to resume our picnicking next year. Hold on to those special sidedish recipes which you can trot out next August.

The virus has also caused the cancellation of the annual Pure Water Days celebration and with it the ecumenical service in Irvine Park. This service, which has traditionally been the second Sunday in August, typically draws 200 to 300 people from the Christian churches in Chippewa to worship together. But not this year.

But never fear, we have a full slate of guest speakers lined up for August.

Sandee Kosmo will be back with us in the sanctuary on August 2 when we will celebrate communion. Rich Estrem-Fuller will join us on August 9 and Gene Peissig will speak to us on August 16.

Sandee will be back on August 23 and a new pastor, Gary Hedding, will join us on August 30. Gary is a retired Lutheran pastor and he and his family have recently moved to Chippewa to be near their children and grand-children in Eau Claire. Gary's new home is across the street from Elder Larry Annett who contacted him on our behalf.

Over the past six weeks since we have been back in the sanctuary on Sunday mornings, we have been about 18 people in the congregation and eight to ten more joining us on Zoom. Since many of the Christian churches in Chippewa are holding off reopening their doors until September at the earliest, we welcome anyone who would like to worship with us. Now might be the time to invite your friends who have been going to another church to visit us if even for a short time.

WORK BEGINS ON THE 2020 DIRECTORY

It's directory time again. While the directory won't be distributed until this fall, there is a lot of work to be done to get it ready to print.

It is important that you update your contact information for the next directory. Please take a look at what is in the current volume and if there are any changes or additions, notify Tiffany in writing so we can include them in the 2020 directory.

Most of the work to complete the directory is done by church volunteers and staff but only you can be sure the information is current and accurate.