



The Bell

January, 2022

Monthly Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

THOUGHTS FOR 2022

It seems just yesterday that I was young, just married and embarking on my new life with my mate. Yet in a way, it seems like eons ago, and I wonder where all the years went. I know that I lived them all. I have glimpses of how it was back then and of all my hopes and dreams. But, here it is... the winter of my life and it catches me by surprise...How did I get here so fast? Where did the years go and where did my youth go?

I remember well seeing older people through the years and thinking that those older people were years away from me and that winter was so far off that I could not fathom it or imagine fully what it would be like. But, here it is...my friends are retired and getting grey...they move slower and I see an older person now. Some are in better and some worse shape than I...but, I see the great change. Not like the ones that I remember who were young and vibrant...but, like me, their age is beginning to show and we are now those older folks that we used to see and never thought we'd be.

Each day now, I find that just getting a shower is a real target for the day! And taking a nap is not a treat anymore... it's mandatory! Cause if I don't on my own free will... I just fall asleep where I sit!

And so...now I enter into this new season of my life unprepared for all the aches and pains and the loss of strength and ability to go and do things that I wish I had done but never did! But, at least I know, that though the winter has come, and I'm not sure how long it will last...this I know, that when it's over on this earth...it's NOT over. A new adventure will begin!

Yes, I have regrets. There are things I wish I hadn't done...things I should have done, but indeed, there are many things I'm happy to have done. It's all in a lifetime.

So, if you're not in your winter yet...let me remind you, that it will be here faster than you think. So, whatever you would like to accomplish in your life please do it quickly! Don't put things off too long!

Life goes by quickly. So, do what you can today, as you can never be sure whether this is your winter or not! You have no promise that you will see all the seasons of your life...so, live for today and say all the things that you want your loved ones to remember...and hope that they appreciate and love you for all the things that you have done for them in all the years past!

"Life" is a gift to you. The way you live your life is your gift to those who come after. Make it a fantastic one. Live it well! Enjoy today! Do something fun! Be Happy! Have a great day!

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(Continued from previous page)

Remember "It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver. "Live happy in this new year and every year! Consider this – Today is the oldest you've ever been yet the youngest you'll ever be so enjoy this day while it lasts

- ~Your kids are becoming you.....
- ~Going out is good.. Coming home is better!
- ~You forget names.... But it's OK because other people forgot they even knew you!!!
- ~You realize you're never going to be really good at anything
- ~The things you used to care to do, you no longer care to do, but you really do care that you don't care to do them anymore.
- ~You sleep better on a lounge chair with the TV blaring than in bed. It's called "pre-sleep".
- ~You miss the days when everything worked with just an "ON" and "OFF" switch..
- ~You tend to use more 4 letter words ... "what?"..."when?"... "what?" . ???
- ~Now that you can afford expensive jewelry, it's not safe to wear it anywhere.
- ~You notice everything they sell in stores is "sleeveless"?!!!
- ~What used to be freckles are now liver spots.
- ~Everybody whispers.
- ~You have three sizes of clothes in your closet.... two of which you will never wear.
- ~But old is good in some things: old Songs, old movies, and best of all, old friends!!

It's Not What You Gather, But What You Scatter That Tells What Kind Of Life You Have Lived.

(Editor's Note: Someone sent this to me some time ago. I don't remember who it was. Could it be winter?)

2022 LEADERS NAMED

The congregation has chosen the following new leaders for the coming year.

Elders	Larry Annett and George Abendroth
Deacon	Mary Jo Reemstma

Installation and ordination will take place during the Sunday service on February 6.

SERVICE TIME FINALIZED

As promised early last year, the Session has reviewed the time Sunday service begins and decided to maintain the 10:15 time for the foreseeable future.

CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER!!!

Judy Brist, one of our wonderful musicians, and her longtime beau, Jerry Brost, tied the knot on December 15. Congratulations to a lovely lady and her handsome groom!

FPC SETS ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The Annual Congregation Meeting of the First Presbyterian Church of Chippewa Falls will take place on Sunday, February 6 immediately following Sunday service. Although this meeting has not been officially called by the Session, it is mandated by the Book of Order and by our own church by-laws to take place by the second Sunday in February.

The purpose of this meeting will be to present the 2021 Annual Report complete with reports from the church committees, approve the minutes of the December meeting, celebrate the leadership who have completed their terms of service, nominate and elect four members to serve on the 2022 Nominating Committee, present the 2022 budget and present and vote on the following change to the church by-laws:

Current by-laws

ARTICLE V The Board of Deacons

- A-5.001 21) There shall be a board of deacons. The board will be composed of six (6) deacons and the pastor, who serves as an advisory member. Deacons shall be elected by the congregation and ordained and installed to the office of deacon (see Book of Order, G 6.0400)
- A-5.003 23) The deacon board shall be divided into three rotating classes, consisting of two deacons each. One class shall be elected each year to fill three-year terms. The deacons shall be elected at the annual meeting of the congregation. A deacon may serve two consecutive terms (full or partial) but shall then be ineligible for election to a new term until one year shall have elapsed. A deacon may be elected to fill a partial term and then will be eligible for only one additional term.

Proposed change:

ARTICLE V The Board of Deacons

- A-5.001 21) There shall be a board of deacons. The board will be composed of **five (5) or more** deacons and the pastor, who serves as an advisory member. Deacons shall be elected by the congregation and ordained and installed to the office of deacon (see Book of Order, G 6.0400)
- A-5.003 23) **If there are five deacons**, the deacon board shall be divided into **two** rotating classes, consisting of two deacons **in one class and three in the second class**. One class shall be elected each year to fill three-year terms. The deacons shall be elected at the annual meeting of the congregation. A deacon may serve two consecutive terms (full or partial) but shall then be ineligible for election to a new term until one year shall have elapsed. A deacon may be elected to fill a partial term and then will be eligible for only one additional term.

The content and purpose of this meeting will be announced from the pulpit during January as required by the Book of Order.

FPC CELEBRATES EPIPHANY AND THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST

During January, we celebrate two special days in the church calendar – Epiphany and the Baptism of Christ. This year Epiphany will be celebrated on January 2 and the Baptism of the Lord follows on January 9.

On Epiphany we celebrate the revelation of God's promise and purpose to the nations of the world, as the magi came from the East to worship the Christ child, and God's covenant of grace was extended to all who believe the good news of Christ Jesus. On Epiphany we focus on light which is important: not only because of the star that guided the magi, but because it relates to the bright dawning of God's self-revelation in Christ.

The word "epiphany" means "appearance" or "manifestation" of God, and has roots in the word for sunrise or dawn. In ancient times, an epiphany meant either a visible manifestation of a god or the solemn visit of a ruler venerated as a god. Today we often say someone has had an "Epiphany" meaning he has had an important idea or thought.

For Christians, Christmas marks the coming of God to us; Epiphany celebrates the appearance of the Lord in the midst of humanity. The Christmas stories of the birth of Immanuel declare the divine entry; Epiphany extols the revelation of God to the world in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

In our celebrations of Christmas and Epiphany we rejoice in the dawning and the arising of light in darkness.

That brings us to the Baptism of Christ. At the beginning of his public ministry, Jesus presented himself to John, the baptizer, to be baptized in the Jordan. The heavens open, the Holy Spirit descended as a dove and the voice of God proclaimed "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased"

At this festival of the Christian year, we not only remember Jesus' baptism, but we celebrate our own: the baptism we share with Christ. Accordingly, Sunday, January 9 is an appropriate time to celebrate the sacrament of baptism or the reaffirmation of the baptismal covenant. As we have done in the past, members of the congregation will reaffirm their baptismal vows on that day. They will come to the baptismal font, receive a blessing and a token of their renewal of the baptismal vows spoken by their parents at the time of their infant baptism.

The Baptism of the Lord is closely related to Epiphany and should be considered in relation to that feast. Jesus' ministry to bring in God's rule was inaugurated in his baptism. As he came out of the water, the Spirit rested on Jesus and a sign of God's approval was heard.

On this day, we celebrate not only Jesus' baptism but our own as well, for our baptism is rooted in Christ. Baptism joins us to Christ and His church, and with all of the baptized we are called to share in Jesus' ministry. In the waters of baptism we are buried with Christ, cleansed of our sins, and raised to share in his resurrection. The Spirit is given to us and we are declared the children of God.

ELECTRONIC SIGN BITES THE DUST

Our electronic sign has finally succumbed to old age. Located on the west side of the building it has served our church and the community for many years but it finally came to the end of its useful life.

The Communications Committee is currently exploring the possibility of upgrading the software, replacing the sign altogether or discontinuing it permanently. If the last decision is made, it still remains to be determined if the sign will remain as it is or be removed.

Because winter has set in, nothing will probably be done until Spring.

GUEST SPEAKERS SET FOR JANUARY, FEBRUARY

Our guest speakers for January and February have been finalized. They will be:

January 2	Rev. James Mohr
January 9	Rev. Ken Ribe
January 16	Rev. Rich Estrem-Fuller
January 23	Ed Williams
January 30	Rev. Terri Koca

February 6	Rev. Ken Ribe
February 13	Ed Williams
February 20	Rev. Terri Koca
February 27	Rev. Rich Estrem-Fuller

FROM THE MISSION TEAM...

By Barb Shorrel

On Tuesday, December 14, we delivered the gifts for our adopted Spirit of Christmas family to the Spirit of Christmas volunteers who will deliver them to the family. Thank you to Jan Koepke and Chris Norseng for doing the shopping for our family of four. We spent \$395.46 for the children's gifts, \$100 in gift cards for the parents, and sent an additional \$168.78 to the Spirit of Christmas as a donation. Thanks to Char Pagenkopf, a former Food Pantry volunteer, for her donation of hand-made items of hats and mittens. Those were designated for our adopted family as well. And thanks to all who contributed to make this a brighter Christmas for a Chippewa Falls family.

Noisy Sunday coming in January—Start saving those coins! On January 30, we will use this offering to help those who were hit by the December tornadoes. We will give the funds to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance unless there is a local need in Stanley and Neillsville.

We welcome Sara Abendroth to the Mission Team.

Wishing you a blessed Christmas and a joyful new year.

2022 CHURCH DIRECTORIES IN THE MAIL

The 2022 directories have been mailed. If you need an additional copy, they are available from the church office during regular hours.

Included in the directory are the 2022 leaders and staff, name, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses of members and friends of the church, Hospitality and Usher schedule and Shepherds' list.

This information is also included in the Members Only section of the church website. In addition to this information, a list of birthdays and anniversaries will be found in this section.

2021 ANNUAL REPORTS TO BE SENT

As we did last year, the 2021 Annual Report complete with the tentative 2022 budget will be sent out electronically. Those of you who don't have access to the Internet will receive the annual report by regular mail.

In addition to the budget, the annual report includes reports on the activities of the various groups and committees in the church.

WE HAVE THE HUNGRY DINERS

now all we need are the able cooks.

With the help and impetus of our Deacons, we have begun at least a partial return to Wednesday night suppers.

We haven't been able to return this staple on a weekly basis but you can expect dinner to be served on the first Wednesday of the month at FPC beginning around 5 PM.

We have already had pizza and chili and Corine Boos, Margi Kohl and Lynda Butek will be serving baked potatoes with all the trimmings – cheese, green onions, chili, broccoli, sour cream, lots of butter, yum. This feast will appear on Wednesday, January 5 and Margi is even working on a special game to liven up the evening.

The annual Presbyterian Men's Club Fish Fry is scheduled for Ash Wednesday, March 2 just before our traditional Ash Wednesday service.

That leaves February 2, April 6 and May 4. Any takers? Please notify Chuck Norseng, Margi Kohl or Lynda Butek who will pass along the news

NEW YEARS TRADITIONS ABOUND

Weather folklore often looks to the wind. Try this. Step outside as the sun sets on New Year's Eve. Feel the wind and recite:

If New Year's Eve the wind blows south
It betokens warmth and growth.
If west, much milk and fish in the sea.
If north, cold and storms there will be.
If east, the trees will bear much fruit.
If northeast, then flee it, man and brute.

Then you can go out and party!

Other adages suggest that the time to check the wind was at sunrise on New Year's Day but if you partied the night before, it may be hard to wake up at dawn. But if you forgot to check the wind, don't worry. Other folklore says that the first 12 days of the year are just as useful. The weather on the first, good or bad, will reflect how January will feel. The second day forecasts February, etc. Not sure about what happens when you get to summer.

And don't forget about the onions. You don't know that one, well here it is.

Get 12 onions. Between 11 PM and midnight on New Year's Eve (assuming you aren't at that party mentioned above) cut off the tops and scoop out a depression in the centers. Get out your compass and line up the onions east to west. Assign each a month – the first January, the second February, etc. Place an equal amount of salt in each depression. Then go back to your party and explain to everyone why you smell like an onion!

Don't look at the onions until the next morning (that shouldn't be hard since you have been partying all night). The salt will have dissolved to some degree in each onion. The more water in each onion, the wetter the corresponding month will be in the coming year. After this, bring the onions back into the house, carefully add potatoes and other root vegetables, rub with olive oil and spices and bake.

Regardless of whether the onions were right or wrong, you will have a nice New Year's Day meal.

Speaking of food – gifts of gilded nuts or coins marked the start of the new year in ancient Rome. Eggs, the symbol of fertility, were exchanged by the Persians. Early Egyptians traded earthenware flasks. In Scotland, coal, shortbread and silverware were traditionally exchanged for good luck.

Regardless of how you celebrate it – have a Happy New Year!