



The Bell

July, 2022

Monthly Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

FPC TO HOST A RENEWAL OF MARRIAGE VOWS 50 YEARS LATER

July 10 will be a very special day for First Presbyterian Church and for a very special family. On that day we will welcome Cliff and Donita O'Donnell to our church again. That's the day they will celebrate their 50 wedding anniversary by renewing their marriage vows where they were married.

That day will be extra special because one of their sons, Rev. Joseph O'Donnell, will officiate at the ceremony and be our guest pastor for the day. Rev. O'Donnell is the pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Dixon, Illinois.

On July 8, 1972, Cliff O'Donnell and Donita Robinson were joined in marriage by Rev. Merle Harberts. Although Merle isn't with us to celebrate, many of the O'Donnell family and friends will be there as will Jerry Way who sang at the first ceremony and will sing again on Sunday.

The O'Donnells are no strangers to Chippewa Falls and to our church. In fact Cliff was born here at the old St. Joseph's Hospital. He and Donita met in 1968 when she was looking for a place to volunteer and meet new people. She went to the Chamber of Commerce asking if there was somewhere she could help during the national election that year. Little did she know that search for new friends in a strange town would lead her to Cliff.

The couple were active in our church and sang in the choir. Cliff served on Session and several other committees in the church.

Following their time here in Chippewa Falls, the couple lived in the Madison area and joined the Covenant Presbyterian Church there where they worship regularly.

Cliff was in the insurance business all his adult life after attending the University of Wisconsin Eau Claire among other colleges.

The O'Donnells have eight adult children between them, some of whom still live here in Chippewa.

The July 10 weekend will begin with a "gathering of the clan" with family and friends meeting on Flag Hill in Irvine Park on Saturday for a picnic and an afternoon of fellowship. Then on Sunday, many of the group will join us in celebrating the 50 years the couple have enjoyed together.

It's not often we have the opportunity to welcome back old friends and neighbors let alone help them celebrate their wedding anniversary by a renewal of their vows.

FOOD PANTRY HOURS TO CHANGE

The Food Pantry Board will change the hours of operation beginning Monday, August 1. The new hours will be as follows.

Feed My People delivery	11:30 on Monday
Food Pantry hours	1:00-3:00 Monday afternoon 10:00-Noon Tuesday mornings

We will not be open on Thursdays at all.

We will be closed on Monday holidays, but will be open on Tuesdays after the holiday from 10:00 to noon. Feed My People will make their weekly delivery early on Tuesday morning following a Monday holiday.

This change will allow us to give out food the same day that we receive it. We will no longer be open on Thursdays thus freeing up that day for other activities in our church building.

This change is in response to the change in food delivery hours from Feed My People. Since the beginning of the year when Feed My People changed their delivery schedule, we have tried to adapt to their new schedule and maintain our Tuesday/Thursday food pantry days. Try as we might, we have just not been able to make this new schedule work, hence, we are changing our Food Pantry days to Monday and Tuesday.

The change in Food Pantry hours necessitates changing the hours the church office is open too. See the article on the new office hours in this edition of the Bell.

If you are interested in learning more about the Food Pantry operation, would like to volunteer, or would like to give a financial or food contribution, call Tiffany at the church office.

FPC MOVES TO CUT OPERATING COSTS

Several months ago the Session undertook a project to determine if we could reduce the monthly operating costs of the church.

We focused on our energy usage since that's the largest bill we receive every month. Unfortunately because of the way electric charges are determined, there isn't a great deal we can do to cut them without turning off the electricity completely, which obviously isn't going to happen. But we did find that we could make a small dent in the electric bill by changing our old incandescent bulbs for more efficient LED lamps. In addition, we found that a change from fluorescent bulbs which require ballasts to LED bulbs can also cut electricity costs.

Over the past several weeks Rick Koepke has been changing our old, less efficient electric bulbs for the newer LED lamps. He started in the basement where there are many bulbs and where the lights are used for many hours. Once the basement has been "relamped" Rick will move to the office and public areas of the church.

OPEN DOOR CLINIC RECEIVES STATE GRANT

Wisconsin Lieutenant Governor, Mandela Barnes, presented a grant for \$120,000 to the Open Door Clinic on June 14.

The grant from the Wisconsin Equitable Recovery Grant Program will go toward the health care services of the clinic, focusing on mental health care according to Clinic Coordinator, Kim Renaud.

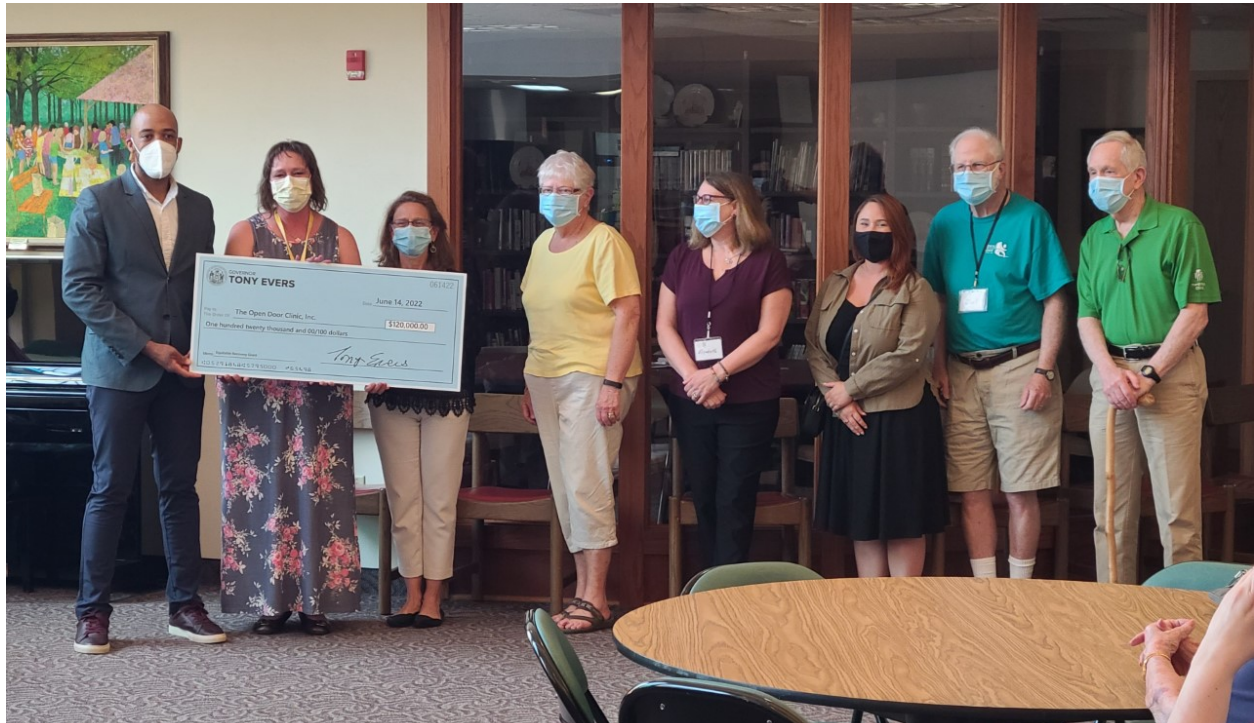
Present at the grant ceremony were members of the Clinic staff which includes 120 volunteers in the medical field, members of our congregation and the media.

Since it opened in 2006, the Clinic has ministered to 3,500 different patients totaling 19,000 visits.

The Open Door Clinic is a non-profit organization serving the estimated 5,600 Chippewa County residents who don't have health insurance or are under-insured. The Clinic provides basic health care services, lab testing and assists patients with prescription program applications. It is open every Tuesday from 5:00 to 7:30.

In addition to medical doctors and related personnel, the Clinic volunteers include psychiatrists, dieticians and physical therapists.

Kim expressed her thanks to the church saying, "As soon as we found out that the Lt. Governor, Mandela Barnes, was coming to the Open Door Clinic to present the Equitable Recovery Grant from the State of Wisconsin, many church members reached out to me offering assistance to prepare for the presentation. The church looked beautiful inside and out! It was really nice to see so many church members join us to celebrate during the presentation this past Tuesday. I can't thank everyone enough!"



NO REST FOR THE BLESSED

There seems to be something about Summer that brings out the clean-up, paint-up fix-up in many of us. And this year it has extended to the church as well.

Last Winter the Property team swapped out some of our aging and crumbling bricks along the stairs to the ramp for others in better shape along the top of the retaining wall between the church and the parking lot. We would have liked to replace the bricks with new ones but nothing would have matched so we had to resort to "robbing Peter to pay Paul". Now that the plants along the top of the retaining wall are growing in, you'd never know the bricks were moved. But that was just the start of our beautification project.

You may remember that the Property team replaced the lower level doors opening onto Central Street with new ones. Fortunately those doors stood by themselves so new doors didn't have to match any old doors. Unfortunately that wasn't the case with the doors to the back of the sanctuary. Those four doors were badly weathered but replacing them would cost upwards of \$1,000 per door. That wasn't in our budget.

Instead, the Session appropriated funds to repair the doors. That work began last Fall when Gene Peissig added brass "kick plates" to the lower outside portion of the doors where the majority of the damage seemed to be. The plan was, however, that come Summer, the doors would be sanded and restained. Since Gene's accident and subsequent surgery made it impossible for him to tackle the door project, he contacted Joe Teske who has agreed to do the necessary repairs.

In the meantime, Jackie and Gary Reich took it upon themselves to weed the outside of the church. While Joe Teske sprayed the weeds with Roundup, Jackie and Gary began the laborious task of pulling out the remaining weeds one by one. The result is the beautiful landscape you can see today. Our thanks to the Reichs for taking on this project unasked but not unnoticed and unthanked.

These are only part of the work that needs to be done on our building but these projects are ones we can do ourselves without hiring professional help. With Gene partially disabled, Joe Teske has assumed some of the harder tasks around the church that Gene used to do. This includes snow removal in the winter and helping Winston Baker with the mowing when there is no snow to contend with.

NEW CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Effective August 1, the church office hours will change to Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00 to 2:00. These new hours will coincide with the hours of the Food Pantry on Monday and Tuesday. The office will be closed on Wednesday.

SHE'S OUR FLAG AND WE LOVE HER

The history of Old Glory dates back to 1776 when the first version of the flag we know today was flown but the Continental Congress didn't actually signify it as our U. S. flag until the next year when the Flag Act of 1777 unified our country under the banner.

That first flag consisted of thirteen alternating red and white stripes (one for each of the original colonies) and white stars on a blue background signifying one for each state.

Each color of the flag – red, white and blue- represents an American ideal. Red is for valor; white is for liberty and blue stands for justice.

It is said that when President George Washington saw the flag for the first time he said “May it ever stand for rights and truth and love.”

Over the years Old Glory has taken some memorable trips. In 1787 she flew above the *Columbia Rediviva*, the first ship to circumnavigate the globe. Explorer Robert Peary planted the flag at the North pole in 1909 and a group of American scientists raised a sister flag on the South Pole in 1956. Buzz Aldrin and six other astronauts placed six flags on the moon.

Although Old Glory has become a fixture in many households throughout the country, there are rules governing its use and disposal. The flag should never touch the ground. The stars should always be in the top left corner. No other flag should fly higher on a flagpole than Old Glory. It should only fly at half-staff when ordered by the President or Governor.

When a flag becomes worn and tattered, the American Legion can dispose of it in the proscribed manner during an “Unserviceable Flag Ceremony.”

Perhaps George M. Cohan expressed our love for Old Glory best when he sang:

You're a grand old flag
You're a high-flying flag
And forever in peace may you wave
You're the emblem of
The land I love
The home of the free and the brave
Ev'ry heart beats true
Under red, white and blue
Where there's never a boast or brag
But should old acquaintance be forgot
Keep your eye on the grand old flag

