



# The Bell

May, 2021

Monthly Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

## WE CELEBRATE PENTECOST MAY 23

With May comes the Day of Pentecost or the birthday of the Christian church. On that day we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit descending in a mighty rush of wind and flame to inspire the church's proclamation of Christ's rising and to empower its mission and ministry to the world.

Pentecost marks the end of Eastertide and is second only to Easter Sunday in its importance in Christian life. The notion of Easter as a season of 50 days ending at Pentecost is patterned after the ancient Jewish festival of seven weeks extending from the beginning of the barley harvest to the end of the wheat harvest.

According to the Day of Pentecost story in Acts, God gave the gift of the Holy Spirit to empower witnesses to the resurrection. Sounds from heaven, cosmic language, the rush of a mighty wind invaded the house in which the apostles gathered, and appeared to them as a burning fire. Tongues of fire touched them. A power - the unseen power of God - moved among them and gripped them.

The Holy Spirit is unseen, like the wind, which is why the Old Testament calls it "the wind, or breath, of God" The Spirit is the "unseenness of God" working among us as it did with the disciples. According to Joel the wind is to open everybody to God's future. New creation is what Joel is talking about. Pentecost is new creation.

Acts tells of the outcome of Pentecost's new creation: people witness in word and in deed to the risen Christ. At the outset, the newborn church immediately tumbled out into the streets to witness to God's mighty works in the languages of people all over the world. Eventually, a tiny, Spirit-filled community of faith spread across the continents with incredible power to bring new things into being. With the gift of the Spirit, all things are possible. ...

Therefore, on the Day of Pentecost, we celebrate God's gift of Holy Spirit which draws us together as one people, helps us to comprehend what God is doing in the world, and empowers us to proclaim, in word and in deed, God's plan of reconciling all people in the name of Christ.

Without the gift of the Spirit, Christ's church dries up and withers away, and we are left with only our broken selves. With the gift of the Spirit, all things are possible. A spirit-filled community of faith opens eyes to the needs in the world. The Day of Pentecost is the climax of the Great Fifty Days of Easter, celebrating as it does the gift of the Spirit to the body of Christ - the church.

## **SPRING IS HERE!**

Spring has finally sprung! With it comes the green grass, leaves on the trees, the forsythia in bloom, birds singing, blue sky, whitecaps on the lakes and the changing of colors in the church.

With the coming of Spring comes the Sunday of Pentecost, May 23, signaling the end of Eastertide when the color in the church changes from white to red. But the color changes back immediately to white for Trinity Sunday, May 30. Then it's green - it seems forever.

Green in the church signifies growth and our church is growing now that we are able to meet in the sanctuary and open the church to worshippers and meetings again.

The Deacons, Communications, Mission Teams, Endowment Fund and Food Pantry Boards have met. The Optimists are back. We have scheduled the Red Cross blood drive for June and again in August.

As promised, things are beginning to return to normal. But this must be a time of renewed vigil if we are to beat this virus. Masks will probably be part of our lives for many months to come. But they are a small price to pay to be safe from infection.

Even though we have returned to in-person worship, it will be quite some time before the services return to what we have become used to. Little by little we will work the old familiar things back into the services like Passing the Peace, passing the collection plates, real bread for communion, hymns and our choir singing. And we can expect the return of Fellowship following service and Wednesday night suppers and all the other things that make us the church we have come to love.

But we have to be patient. The virus struck with no warning but if we are patient, we can and will beat it. Never fear!

## **NO SERVICE TIME CHANGE**

The first Sunday in June is typically when the service time changes from winter hours (10:15) to summer (9:30).

**Not this year.**

As you read in the Bell last Fall, Session has decided to maintain the 10:15 service time throughout the year. We will revisit this in the fall this year and advise you if there is a further change.

## **MEET TO EAT POSTPONED**

May is typically the month the Open Door Clinic holds its Meet to Eat event where various restaurants in the Chippewa Falls area donate 25% of each food bill to help support the clinic. Because of the pandemic, the event was cancelled last year and has been postponed this year until sometime in the Fall. Watch the Bell for more information on this event and which restaurants will participate

## AN INVITATION FROM THE MISSION TEAM...

You are cordially invited to attend a birthday party on May 23. We will be celebrating the birthday of the Christian church on Pentecost Sunday right here at First Pres. Wear red and be joyful!

On this day, we will also formally dedicate our offerings to the Pentecost Offering. This is the second special offering that we take for the Presbyterian Mission. The contributions from this offering focuses on programs for youth and young adults. The goal of these programs is to “nurture the faith of those who are the church to come—children, youth, and young adults.” Your contribution supports these efforts in communities by:

- assisting the families of children at risk;
- supporting education for at-risk youth;
- growing mission work with youth and young adults;
- ministering to at-risk children and teens;
- and providing for health and safety of children.

To learn more about some of these programs, visit <http://www.pcusa.org/pentecost>.

A portion (40%) of this offering will stay in our community. The mission team decided that we will give this local share to the Family Support Center for the good work that they do to help families of domestic abuse and to educate youth on issues of sexual abuse. The remaining 60% will be sent on to the PC(USA) Mission.

To give, please mail your contribution to the church or drop it in the offering plate (located by the inner doors) at Sunday worship. Envelopes for this offering will be available in the pews beginning the first Sunday in May. Remember to write “Pentecost Offering” on the memo line.

## THIS YEAR

Mend a quarrel. Seek out a forgotten friend. Dismiss suspicion and replace it with trust.

Write a love letter. Share some treasure. Give a soft answer. Encourage youth.

Manifest your loyalty in word and deed. Keep a promise. Find the time.

Forgo a grudge. Forgive an enemy. Listen. Apologize if you were wrong.

Try to understand. Flout envy. Examine your demands on others. Think first of someone else.

Appreciate. Be kind; be gentle. Laugh a little. Laugh a little more. Deserve confidence.

Take up arms against malice. Decry complacency. Express your gratitude. Have faith.

Welcome a stranger. Gladden the heart of a child.

Take pleasure in the beauty and wonder of the earth.

Speak your love. Speak it again. Speak it still once again.

Author Unknown

## **SUSPECT IN FALL BREAK-IN CONVICTED**

Many of you will recall when the church was broken into last Fall. The man apparently responsible, Tyler Moe, was apprehended and has been convicted. He pleaded no contest to four counts of burglary having broken into Bargain City, the Legacy Center, and FPC in Chippewa Falls as well as the Albertville Bar in Howard and the Wander Inn in Wheaton. Moe will be sentenced on June 14.

We were fortunate that the only items he stole from the church were some obsolete keys but he did damage several doors to the sanctuary and office areas.

Since the break-in, Gene Peissig has installed cameras and lights which would illuminate the areas where Moe gained entrance in the event of another incident.

## **WEATHER IN WISCONSIN – ALWAYS CHANGING**

One thing you can always count on in Wisconsin is that the weather will change. One minute the sun will be out – the next it will be raining. But there are signs we may not see that could help us know what to expect from Mother Nature.

According to folklore, when birds fly high in the sky, this usually predicts fair weather. Air pressure affects birds as it does many of us. Migrating birds can fly more easily in dense, high pressure conditions therefore geese may fly high when we have high pressure. Generally low-flying birds are signs of rain while high flyers indicate fair weather. Birds tend to get very quiet before a big storm but first you can expect them to stock up on food just in case. They will also sing when the weather is improving.

According to folklore, cats too can forecast and even influence the weather. In Britain it was believed that rain was likely if a cat busily washed its ears. In Holland, it was believed that cats could predict the wind by clawing at carpets and curtains.

Many sailors who were notoriously superstitious felt if a cat licked its fur against the grain, a hailstorm was coming. If it sneezed, rain was on the way. If it was frisky, the wind would soon blow. Others believed that if a cat stared out the window, it would rain.

Birds and cats aren't the only animals to be affected by changing weather. Sheep and cows fall into that category too. Their bodies are affected by changes in the air pressure. When rain is on the way, old sheep turn their backs to the wind while cows lie down.

But lacking animals in our households, we can too can make a few predictions about the weather. Pay attention to winds and clouds which are big predictors of changes in barometric pressure and changing weather. For instance, the old adage “No weather is ill, if the wind be still” indicates a high pressure system, a broad area of descending air characterized by calm winds and little cloud formation, is on its way bringing fair weather.

## **NEWSLETTER OUTLINES PRESBYTERY BUSINESS**

Our Presbytery of Northern Waters meets regularly, most recently by Zoom. During those meetings, business is conducted and matters before the General Assembly discussed.

It has been our custom recently to print a summary of the meeting highlights in the Bell following the meetings but now that we have a new General Presbyter in Rev. Rich Blood, things will be a bit different.

Following each Presbytery meeting, newsletter Rev. Blood will send out a newsletter recapping the most recent meeting issues as well as items of interest to our church.

Because the newsletter is lengthy, it will be posted on the Tower for everyone to read.

### **HUMBLED**

Editor's note: the church received the following email recently.

Whew,

Hi my name is James Heber (aye bear)

I am a Veteran here in Chippewa Falls.

I am writing to you because I have been so Blessed by a couple in your church.

I was at Klein Hall for 2 years working and Volunteering, saving my money to find a place to call home. I have done 3 murals and made a T-shirt to give back to the amazing program that helps people get back to life from many stages of hard living. You may have seen me on TV or in the paper. I believe in Veterans and this community.

So the day finally came. I found a beautiful apartment to call home. Sofa for services gives free furniture to Veterans. They are amazing. Well... They contacted me that a couple had exercise equipment for free. This amazing wonderful couple from your church donated, delivered, and put together this amazing gift.

If this isn't what God asks of us, whew I get so choked up. I have come a long way to be finally out of sleeping in the woods to people caring.

Thank you Lord God for this couple and this church. I still need things, but truly I have blessed by love.

Thank You

Love,

James

James Heber

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