



The Bell

May, 2020

Monthly Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

The light has appeared at the end of a very dark tunnel. If all goes as planned, the church will be open for worship again on Sunday, May 31, which is Pentecost. Pastor Ken will be back with us from his extended stay in Minnesota.

On that day we hope to see a sea of red in the pews commemorating the birth of the church. We will celebrate communion and our return to the church with music, flowers, prayers, Passing the Peace, fellowship and all the other parts of Sunday worship we have missed during the shutdown.

As many of you know, we may have had to suspend regular worship services in the church but thanks to Pastor Ken and a group of dedicated volunteers, we have been able to offer daily devotions on Facebook and abbreviated Sunday services via Zoom.

While this hasn't been ideal, Zoom has given us the opportunity to bring worship complete with music, prayers and weekly sermons into your homes. This may well be something we want to continue in the future.

We have members of the congregation who go to warm places for the Winter. They could still enjoy the Sunday services using Zoom or some other similar service. This could also allow shut-ins or those who are unable to join us in the church to participate. We are looking into what we can provide and will keep you posted on our plans.

We will still be "Zooming" into your homes the first four Sundays of May. Pastor Ken will preach the first three Sundays and Rich Estrem-Fuller will be with us on May 24. If you are interested in participating the Zoom services either now or in the future, please contact Tiffany in the office or Rick Koepke for information. It's not difficult but very rewarding.

It won't be long now until our lives resume a more normal tone. It's about time!

FPC BENEFITS FROM GOVERNMENT FUNDING

We were able to apply for and have received a government-backed loan of \$6,556.40 from the Payroll Protection Program rolled out last month. This money is intended to keep small businesses and churches running and from having to lay off employees through the COVID-19 shutdown.

The application we submitted was for 2.5 times the salary costs paid in 2019. But we can use the funds for eight weeks of salaries, mortgage interest and utilities. The eight weeks begins the day we received the money, which in our case was April 21.

Any money from the loan that is not used must be paid back as a loan, however, according to Carla Ingalls, our financial clerk, we will use the entire amount in the next eight weeks.

While this is not a large windfall, it will cover the majority of our day-to-day expenses for the next two months. We may be closed but salaries, mortgage interest, utilities and insurance bills keep rolling in and must be covered. This money plus the contributions you continue to send in will enable us to open the doors at the end of May and keep the church going. It is important that you keep sending in your tithes and pledges. Either drop them off at the church office or mail them attention Finance Clerk. They will be put to good use!

SERVICE TIME CHANGES IN JUNE

Mark your calendars for Sunday, June 7. That's the day we go to summer service time of 9:30.

MEET TO EAT MOVED TO FALL

May is typically the time for the Open Door Clinic Meet to Eat fund raiser. This is the activity when select restaurants in the Chippewa area donate 25% of their profits on one day to the clinic.

Because of the COVID-19 lockdown, Meet to Eat has been postponed until Fall but it will be happening.

Watch the Bell and the tower in the Narthex for the date and names of participating restaurants.

COLORS CHANGED AND WE MISSED IT

Even though the church was closed for the COVID-19 lockdown, the liturgical calendar and the changing of the colors continued as usual.

Through Lent the color was purple. Then we changed to white for Eastertide which will continue to May 31, Pentecost. The color of Pentecost is red then it's white again on June 7, Trinity Sunday, before going green all the way to the first of November when it's back to white for All Saints Day.

Enjoy the red and white Sundays because green will prevail for most of the remainder of the year.

A NOTE FROM THE MISSION TEAM...

Submitted by Barb Shorrel

The Mission Team did not meet in April, and we are unsure when we will meet in May. I do want to make you aware of our next special offering. This is the Pentecost Offering to be collected from April 13 to May 31. This offering is a "church-wide effort to support young people in Christ and inspire them to share their faith, idea, and unique gifts with the church and the world."

How are your gifts used?

- 40% of what we collect will remain in our congregation to support ministries with children and youth in our congregation and local community. If you have a suggestion for how to use this portion locally, please notify Barb at bshorrel@charter.net.
- 25% goes to Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) experience.
- 25% supports ministries with youth, ages 12-18, and those called to accompany them. This includes mission trips for youth.
- 10% supports the "Educate a Child, Transform the World" national initiative, which was affirmed at the 221st General Assembly (2014).

Pentecost is May 31. Hopefully we will be back worshipping together on that day. During this time of staying-safe-at-home, please remember to pray for our church friends, our worship leaders, our Food Pantry volunteers and the people they serve, and for the children of our community.

If you wish to contribute to the Pentecost offering, please make your checks payable to First Presbyterian Church with Pentecost Offering in the memo line. If you wish to read more about the Pentecost Offering, please visit pcusa.org/Pentecost.

LOOK FOR THOSE HEARTS!

When you see hearts in windows around Chippewa, don't think you have missed Valentine's Day, it's part of "The Happy Heart Hunt".

This is a movement for people to put hearts in their windows for their neighbors to see to signify unity, the fact that we are all in this together. Its purpose in this time of isolation is to share reminders that no one is alone. A Facebook group has formed where people post photos of their heart-filled windows. Look for the "Happy Heart Hunt" group on Facebook. You might just see our church in it!

To participate all you have to do is create items around the theme of hearts to decorate your house, car, sidewalks, place of work, the possibilities are endless. Post pictures on Facebook of what you have created or what others have created that you spot when out walking or driving. This is a perfect activity while social distancing! Every post must be appropriate and relevant to the group. Kindness and positivity are a must.

THE FOOD PANTRY SOLDIERS ON DESPITE EVERYTHING

By Tiffany Wogahn

As most of you know the food pantry has remained open serving our community despite the pandemic. As many things are being shut down by the government we are deemed essential and remain open. We are taking every precaution to ensure the safety of our volunteers and patrons.

No one is allowed in the church other than volunteers. They are constantly wiping down carts and surfaces. Gloves and masks are worn while handling food and distributing it. There is very little contact between volunteers and patrons.

We will be eternally grateful to our volunteers. Many of them are from the congregation, but many others are not connected to our church in any way but the Food Pantry. We couldn't do what we do without all of them. Behind the scenes, the pre-packing of food makes Tuesdays very busy before pantry even opens. Our order from Feed My People arrives between 8:30 and 9am. Jeff Buckli, Gene Peissig, and Chuck Norseng unload the truck and bring items to the Narthex. Marlys Daniels, Gina Audorss, Sue Kern, Joyce Greye, and Barb Shorrel begin packing bags while the truck is being unloaded.

The prepacked bags are filled with produce, baked goods, and meat. We include a bag of three rolls of toilet paper and sometimes include hygiene products. There are no choices given in who gets what food. People have to take everything we give them. If they have larger families, we'll add some extra items if we have them.

Our patrons simply come to the ramp door and Gene Peissig and Gary Shorrel get their personal information. One writes it down and one grabs a cart of food. Then they take it to the person's car, unload it and return the empty cart. That's it!

We're very happy that Feed My People have a lot of wonderful produce for us to order. Unfortunately, probably for many reasons not the least of which is fear of leaving the safety of home, our numbers are down. If we have left over items such as produce and breads/baked goods that won't last until the following week, we donate them to Barnabas' Table and Klein Hall.

Barnabas' Table is used to serving 15-30 people a couple times a week. They are now delivering 100 meals, three times a week. We want to help support this ministry which completely relies on donations from the community. Klein Hall houses homeless veterans. They have 40 beds and all are full. They're extremely grateful when we bring food to them.

We are known for taking care of each other in this community and we continue to do so especially during these uncertain and sometimes scary times.

We usually get two large checks a year from the Rutledge Charities. We got one last month which was our spring check and we usually receive one in the fall. We were shocked to open the mail last week to find a check for \$6,000! The letter attached says the board, which has always supported Chippewa County food pantries, has decided to help us to keep helping our community. While we get food donated and are able to purchase food at a discount from Feed My People, that costs money, often money we don't have.

Donations are welcome and much needed. They help us deliver on our promise to be "In the City for Good".

TINY HOUSE PROJECT GETS A MUCH NEEDED FINANCIAL BOOST

A group called 100 Women Who Care in Eau Claire recently awarded Hope Village a grant of \$11,000. Every quarter three organizations make a presentation to the group vying for the grant. Hope Village was chosen last quarter. There is also the possibility of a matching grant up to \$5,000. This is the latest development in the Tiny House project here in Chippewa Falls.

To date, there are seven Tiny Houses – five for individual residents and two family-sized homes. The family-sized versions are located one at Notre Dame and one behind Chippewa Valley Bible Church in Hallie. The smaller houses are located at Trinity United Methodist Church, which has two houses, Our Saviours Lutheran Church, Landmark Christian Church and Chippewa Valley Bible Church.

There are three more houses in the process of being built. One of the volunteer builders is basically tackling a house in Rock Falls on his own. The Rotary club has a house that was being built at the school in Fall Creek. With school being let out early and the house still unfinished, this house has been moved back up to Chippewa Falls. There is one more that was started by a Boy Scout and needs to be finished. These are the last builds the group needs but building is obviously on hold during the Coronavirus pandemic. Now, the real search for land is on!

The churches hosting the homes have been great but the dream for the future is still to have a community for all the homes. This would provide a safe place for the residents to live and socialize. The Tiny House board has been keeping an eye on different properties that come up for sale. Thanks to donations and grants, they are much closer to making that step.

While First Presbyterian doesn't have the room outside to host a tiny house, we have opened our basement storage rooms to take care of the materials needed to build and furnish the houses. Many of our men have also helped build houses at other churches.

The project isn't finished yet with help needed to finish the building and money needed to purchase the land to eventually house the village. Anne Welke is our representative on this project. If you have any questions or wish to contribute in any way, please contact her.

NO MORE PRINTER CARTRIDGES, PLEASE

Please keep in mind that the Presbyterian Men are no longer collecting printer cartridges. Please dispose of them yourself rather than bringing them to the church as you have done in the past.

WE STILL HAVE SCRIP CARDS

Just a reminder, we do still have \$100 Scrip cards for sale. Other denominations can be ordered if you wish. Corine Boos is in the office on Monday from 9A.M. till at least 10:30. Tiffany can also help with purchase during regular office hours

CHECK IN CHIPPEWA COUNTY

You are not alone. We are in this together.

As we all adapt to the temporary changes in the way we work, live, and spend time together, it's natural to feel stress, worry, and even anger. Finding healthy ways to cope and stay connected is more important than ever. Chippewa County is a caring community, and we want to help everyone feel supported.

Want a check in call?

Feeling lonely? Looking to talk with someone about how your day is going? Check In Chippewa Chippewa County is offering support for community members looking for ways to connect with others. A friendly voice will connect with you daily to check in.

Want to volunteer?

Love socializing with others? Looking for a way to give back to your local community? We are seeking volunteers to offer a caring ear and have friendly conversations with community members.

We ask volunteers to commit to one check in call per day and have access to a phone.

For more information on volunteering or receiving a check in call, contact:

Pauline
715-726-7816
pspiegel@co.chippewa.wi.us

Important: This is not a mental health crisis line. If you or someone you know is in crisis, please call Northwest Connection's 24/7 crisis line at 888-552-6642.



CHIPPEWA COUNTY
Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

CHECK IN CHIPPEWA COUNTY

Volunteer Guide

Thank you for volunteering with Check In Chippewa County! Volunteers make calls to individuals who are in need of a compassionate voice and listening ear.

We ask that volunteers commit to one call per day (or alternative schedule worked out with individual you are paired with). If you no longer can commit to making calls, notify Pauline. Please do not just stop calling the individual.

Check In Chippewa County is **not** meant to be a crisis intervention or resource navigation line. However, volunteers may be connectors to other resources. See back side for resources that can be provided to individuals that request more help.

For questions, comments, or concerns, contact Pauline at 715-726-7816 or pspiegel@co.chippewa.wi.us.

Conversation Starters

- What your favorite and least favorite thing about living in Wisconsin?
- What do you do to manage stress?
- What's the best piece of advice you've ever been given?
- What is something you can't get enough of or really enjoying doing?
- What is your favorite item you've bought this year?
- What would your dream house be like?
- What fictional family would you be a member of?
- What is your favorite television network?
- What was the worst haircut you ever had?
- What incredibly common thing have you never done?
- What has taken you the longest to get good or decent at?
- What food do you love that a lot of people might find a little odd?
- Do you have any hidden talents?



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