



# The Bell

April, 2025

Monthly Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

## MORE ON RECENT MISSION TRIP

God's blessings upon you. We are now in the month of Easter and I know in this month's Bell is our entire Holy Week schedule. Please consider joining us for our services as we celebrate the most important week in history and what its meaning has had for our entire world.

Last month I didn't tell you about our mission trip to North Carolina other than what Rick and I shared in church. Please, if you can, go back and watch the services on our website to see some pictures and our impressions of how our trip went.

I wanted to talk a little bit about the organization that we worked with and will continue to work with over these next few years - Fuller Center Disaster ReBuilders. I had asked for a paper that I can share with everyone and this is how they talk about their mission, "Our mission is to provide long-term rebuilding efforts and essential support to homeowners who have suffered damage to their homes due to natural disasters. However, our work goes far beyond just rebuilding homes—we are committed to restoring hope, strengthening communities, and creating lasting impact wherever we serve."

The impact that this organization is having on the Black Mountain, Asheville, Swannanoa area is enormous. We only witnessed a very small portion of what they did. We were able to visit with all the homeowners and hear some of their stories about how they survived the hurricane. Some of them were heart breaking. One son of a homeowner described to us how they found themselves part of the river after three bridges east of them washed away and how he and his brother got their 92 year old father out of harm's way. Or one young couple who had to climb into their attic for five hours with their dogs before they could come down and go out the back window of their family home. I was very moved and would be happy to sit down and share pictures with you or anyone who would like to see what happened. It was a very eye-opening and life-changing experience for me.

God bless you all and your family as we get ready to celebrate our Lord and Savior's act of unselfish love for us with the feelings of great things to come the rest of the year. God bless you all.

Ed

## **AREA CHURCHES PREPARE FOR HOLY WEEK**

Chippewa Falls area churches are getting ready for Holy Week by scheduling a series of events.

They begin on April 13 with a dramatic re-enactment of the last words of Christ. The service will be held at St. Charles Borromeo Church, 810 Pearl St., Chippewa Falls at 2:00 PM on Palm Sunday.

The focus of Holy Week then moves to Trinity United Methodist Church on Maundy Thursday for the first of several ecumenical services. As they have done in past years, Trinity will host a re-enactment of the Last Supper beginning at 7:00 on Thursday, April 17. In a break from tradition, women are invited to take part in the re-enactment and more thespians are needed. For more information or to take part in the service, contact Pastor Eddie Crise at Trinity.

On Good Friday, April 18, there will be two ecumenical services which will include pastors and worshippers from Trinity United Methodist Church, FPC, Zion Methodist Church, Christ Episcopal, Our Saviour's Lutheran churches in Chippewa Falls as well as St James Trinity Lutheran Church of Fall Creek and the Methodist church in Lake Hallie.

The first of the Good Friday services will take place at noon the English Lutheran Church of Bateman located at 20588 County Highway X in Chippewa Falls and the second at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church located at 1300 Mansfield St. also in Chippewa Falls. That service will begin at 5:00 PM. Pastor Paolo Vasquez of Zion Methodist will deliver the sermon at both services.

After regular services on Easter Sunday at churches throughout the area, there will be a special ecumenical dinner at St. Charles from 2:00 to 4:00.

There is no charge for any of the services nor for the dinner and worshippers from all churches are welcome.

## **EASTER LILIES TO DECORATE THE CHURCH**

It may seem early, but Easter is rapidly approaching.

As we have in the past, this year FPC has ordered Easter lilies to decorate the sanctuary on Easter morning, April 20. These flowers can be purchased by the congregation and taken home following the service. Any plants that are not removed on Easter Sunday will be replanted by one of our Food Pantry volunteers or given to shut-ins.

Lily order forms are available in this edition of the Bell, in the church office during regular business hours or at the Welcome Desk on Sunday mornings.

**EASTER LILIES**

We are now taking orders for Easter lilies that will grace the chancel on Easter morning, April 20. The cost is \$10.00 per plant. Please fill out the order form. Return to the church office as soon as possible. Submit your order:

- 1) during office hours (9:00 to 2:00 Monday, Tuesday or Thursday)
- 2) by mailing to the church

The plants may be picked up after the Easter service. The plants not picked up at that time will be distributed in the community.

-----

I want to purchase (how many) \_\_\_\_\_ Easter Lilies for display in our church during Easter at \$10.00 each. Write Easter Lily in the memo section of your check.

I would like designation(s) in the church bulletin to read:

In Memory of:

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

In Appreciation for:

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

In Celebration of:

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

(other title) \_\_\_\_\_:

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

From:

\_\_\_\_\_

Return to:      First Presbyterian Church      Phone: 723-5717  
130 West Central Street  
Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin 54729-2345

## **WEDNESDAY NIGHT SUPPERS CONTINUE**

We have two more months of Wednesday night suppers to look forward to before the summer hiatus which begins in June.

On April 2 supper will be pizza or lasagna. Either way, it will be something “Italian-ish”. May will bring us Cinco de Mayo and Barb Shorrel’s tacos to commemorate the occasion. As usual, dinner will be served beginning at 5:30.

If the weather cooperates (as it didn’t last year), we will move outside to Erickson Park for at least one picnic during the summer before resuming church dinners in September.

## **MISSION PROGRAMS CONTINUE TO GROW**

April is typically the month we contribute to the One Great Hour of Sharing churchwide program. This event, which will culminate on East Sunday, focuses on Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Presbyterian Hunger Program, and the Self-Development of People.

In addition to this international event, the Chippewa Falls Mission Coalition is hard at work on local projects.

The first one is the school backpack program beginning in July. Sponsored by Valley Vineyard Church, the event solicits school supplies and primarily monetary donations which allows the church to purchase school supplies in bulk, costing less than individual purchases.

Our Food Pantry continues to need our help, especially with the influx of new clients every week. With the changes in our economy, it is expected the need for food will only increase and we need to be ready.

Still on the topic of food, our church will be serving at Agnes’ Table in May. There is always a need for volunteers. If you are interested in participating, contact Anne Welke.

## **SYNOD OFFERS SUMMER SCHOOL IN IOWA**

Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, Iowa will be the site of the 2025 Synod of Lakes and Prairies school from July 20-25.

The school, which will offer a full schedule of courses for all ages focuses on training for Commissioned Elders, continuing education for pastors, church educators and other church professionals, particularly new Clerks of Session.

There are also programs for children and youth on mission, study and fellowship. Childcare for infants and toddlers is available. Classes range from folk dancing to international relationships, from Bible study to pickleball. There’s something for everyone. A complete list of classes is available in the church office.

## **CONGREGATION ELECTS NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

The 2025 Nominating Committee was elected at the Annual Congregational Meeting on February 2.

Elder Bonnie Gullickson will chair the committee which includes Anne Welke, Chuck Norseng, Lynda Butek and Bill Martin.

The actual work of the committee to come up with a slate of leaders for 2026 won't begin until Fall but they are in place as required by the Book of Order.

## **CALLING FOLGERS COFFEE DRINKERS!**

You have probably noticed that twice a year, we purchase flowers to adorn the sanctuary. As you might guess, those flowers have to be watered to keep them alive.

Water is great for plants but not so great on our wood floor. In order to keep the water where it belongs, we put plastic trays under the pots. We have acquired a variety of these trays over the years and, frankly, they look mis-matched, which they are. That's where Folgers Coffee comes in.

Jan Keopke has noticed in another church that they use the black lids from Folgers Coffee cans as trays under their plants. The trays are all the same color and style and they are FREE.

If you buy Folgers (the large size cans), bring the lids to the church and leave them in the Ushers' Closet off the Narthex. We need at least 12 and have at least three already so we need 9 coffee-drinking families to help out.

## **THOUGHTS ON LENTEN AUSTERITY**

Lent brought a time of penitence and austerity to our church.

Some Christian denominations choose to give up something for Lent like chocolate or candy in general or even butter. That's not something we practice but that doesn't mean we don't observe Lent in our own way.

Typically the color of Lent is purple denoting a season of penitence and preparation for Easter. This year, as we have done in some past years, we have chosen to observe Lent as a period of general austerity. We gave up the velvet paraments on the communion table and pulpit. We didn't use the typical silver communion service during Lent. Instead we looked for simplicity.

We used plain muslin banners on the walls, a simple parament with a shock of wheat on the pulpit, a bare communion table and during the actual communion service, used pottery service pieces instead of silver.

Once Easter Sunday arrives, we will resume using our more elaborate fixtures in the church but for now, simplicity and austerity is our guide.