



# The Bell

May, 2026

Monthly Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

## MAY BRINGS SPRING AND CHANGES TO FPC

Happy May!! We're almost half way through the year already. Time flies when you're having fun. I know in the past May 1 used to be a day when students would put plants or flowers in little baskets and deliver them to the older people in the community as a boost and the announcement of Spring. They used to do it in 5th Grade in Thorp when I worked there and the ritual is practiced around the world to herald the coming of spring.

This year, May is a little different than most years as we have Pentecost and Trinity Sunday as the last two Sundays of May rather than in June.

This May will also be a little different for me as well. As most of you know, we have three Presbyterian churches in the Chippewa Valley. We have ours, the oldest Protestant church in the valley. We have North Presbyterian Church on Birch St., and we have First Presbyterian Church of Eau Claire on Rudolph Rd.

I am the moderator of both Sessions for our church and North Presbyterian Church. As of May 10 of this year, I will be the moderator of First Presbyterian Church of Eau Claire as well. Earlier this month, the Committee on Ministry was informed by Pastor Kathy Reid-Walker of Eau Claire that she was retiring effective May 31. Her last service will be on May 10.

She has been a great colleague to work with these last three years and we wish her all of God's blessings in this new chapter of her life.

Due to her departure, they need a moderator to run their session meetings and COM asked if I could help. I agreed as I belong to the Presbytery since I am the Commissioned Ruling Elder here. This will hopefully only last for a month, but you never know how things will go. I am letting you know this as this will take me away at certain times to help them with other things as well, such as visiting and officiating at funerals.

Please pray for me as I step into some of Pastor Reid-Walker's positions and for the Session in Eau Claire as they look for a new "Shepherd" to lead them into the future.

God bless you and your family. Have a great rest of your Spring, getting ready for summer vacations and events. Watch the Bell for a complete list of what's coming up. God's blessings upon you.

Ed

## **WELCOME CINCO de MAYO**

This year our traditional Cinco de Mayo taco dinner will actually take place on May 6 or Seis de Mayo if you want to be accurate.

Barb Shorrel is busy preparing for that evening which will signal the last of our in-church First-Wednesday-Night suppers. Beginning in June and continuing through August, our monthly suppers will move to Erickson Park where we will have potluck picnics.

As we have done in the past, we will use the church as a backup in case of rainy weather. And if good weather holds out, we could even schedule another picnic in September. One can only hope.

## **DINNER CHURCH MOVES BACK TO FPC IN MAY**

Our church will host the monthly ecumenical dinner church on May 11.

This potluck event will include other churches from Chippewa Falls and will feature Tim Owen, a speaker from Edward Jones, who will discuss Investing by your biblical Values.

This dinner will be the last of the season but will return in September.

## **STAMP OUT HUNGER**

The annual Stamp Out Hunger food drive sponsored by the US Postal Service will be on Saturday, May 9. All you have to do is leave your donation of non-perishable food in a bag near your mailbox on the second Saturday in May, and your letter carrier will do the rest.

All the food donations are collected and distributed to the local food pantries. Every year our own Food Pantry receives many pounds of food this way which we add to our own resources.

## **YOU CAN STOP DRINKING**

Coffee that is.

Last year the call went out for the black lids from Folgers Coffee cans. We put these lids under the Easter lilies and Christmas poinsettias to catch overflow water which we certainly don't want on our wooden floor.

We have now collected more than enough coffee can lids to use. Many thanks to those coffee drinkers who contributed to our stash and to Jan Koepke who gave us the idea in the first place.

## **THE CHIPPEWA FALLS YEARS**

By Irene Robertson

Editor's note: Following is the ninth installment of Irene Robertson's letter about the years she and her husband, Rev. Wallace Robertson, spent in Chippewa Falls between 1938 and 1941. Mrs. Robertson's letter goes into detail about life in Chippewa Falls and at the church.

Due to the length of the letter, portions of it will appear in subsequent issues of the Bell.

The following summer we took the car on a sad journey. We had spent six weeks in Milwaukee with my folks while Wally took post-graduate courses at the University of Chicago. During that time Wally's Dad returned from a trip and went into the hospital for hernia surgery. The surgery was successful but he developed a clot in his leg and he had to have IV therapy to try to dissolve the clot.

My mother took care of David (he was one year old) and I spent a lot of time with Dod and held his hand when they had difficulty finding a vein for the IV. Despite being so ill, he gave us money to buy David a tricycle. (We have many pictures of David riding that tricycle.)

Dod seemed to be doing well when we had to leave to go back to Chippewa to fulfill our commitment to supervise a Presbyterian youth camp for a week. We took David with us and he loved it. The kids loved him, too. We brought a bushel of peaches home with us, for me to can.

When we came into the house, the telephone was ringing and it was a call saying that Dod was critically ill. We called Ruth Gunderson to tell her what happened. She said she would take care of our house and can the peaches for us. What a wonderful friend she was!

Before we left, Wally called his family and asked if Dod was dead. They said "yes". They didn't want us driving to Milwaukee and trying to get there before he died.

He had been home for a week and was leaving to get a check-up at the doctor's office. He and Wally's mother had just gotten into the taxi (they never owned an automobile) when the clot moved to his lungs and killed him immediately.

It was a sad journey to Milwaukee in the car he had given us. And he never got to spend more than a week in the beautiful home in Wauwatosa that he had bought for Wally's mother.