



# The Epistle

April 2015

Volume 2015-04



## Upcoming Events

- 4/3—Good Friday, Tenebrae Service
- 4/5—Easter
- 4/12—Healing Touch Circle
- 4/13—Knitting Group
- 4/13—BUNKO
- 4/14— Cancer Support Group
- 4/11—TLC at Hallmark Care Center Mt Vernon, 1:30 PM
- 4/20—Session
- 4/23—TLC Movie Night

## *Easter Isn't Over*

It's the week after Easter as I write this and our house still contains the Easter "leftovers." The bunny Teddy made when he was four is still up. The miniature garden tomb we make every year still has the linen cloth inside. Plastic eggs are here and there. Our refrigerator contains hard boiled eggs whose dye jobs are becoming decidedly less beautiful by the day.

And the candy. Oh, the candy.

Easter is still lingering. As well it should because for Christians, Easter is not a single day, it is a *season*. The Great Fifty Days. And it makes sense, doesn't it? Because who can possibly make sense of the resurrection in just one morning?

The early church called this season *mystagogia*, a Greek word that means "lead into the mystery." Sounds just about right to me!

The Season of Easter begins with Easter Sunday (April 5) and the story of the empty tomb and the angel's message to "go and tell!" and then continue to Pentecost (May 24), the day the Holy Spirit transformed the disciples and gave them what they needed to share the good news.

On the Sundays in between these two High Holy Days, our scripture readings from Acts and Romans show the evolution of the disciples, moving from fear and doubt to hope and confidence. They also show some of the ways in which the earliest followers lived into—and struggled with!—this new and changed reality.

Following Jesus isn't easy. Trusting in God's promise that "Love Wins" takes time and effort as we unlearn the world's ways of jealousy, fear, expediency, "might makes right" and safety in numbers.

And so we find courage and hope in the stories of those earliest followers and the companionship of one another. I hope you'll join us for worship this Easter Season as we grow ever deeper in faith, hope, understanding and love.

Love, I thought, is stronger than death or the fear of death.  
Only by it, by love, life holds together and advances.

~from "The Sparrow" by Ivan Turgenev

*Pastor Lori*

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# NEWS & Notes



TLC—Wednesday, April 8th, at Hallmark Care Center, Mt. Vernon, 1:30 pm



Healing Touch Circle, Sunday, April 12th, Community Room, 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm (by appointment only)



Knitting Group, Monday, April, 13th, at the home of Angie Paulson, 2:00 pm



Bunko— Monday, April 13th, Fellowship Hall, 6:00 pm



Cancer Support Group — Tuesday, April 14th, Fellowship Hall, 6:30 pm



Session Meeting— April 20th, Community Room, 6:30 pm



TLC—MOVIE NIGHT, Thursday—April 23rd, 5:30 pm, Movie Night, featuring PHILOMENA starring Judi Dench and Steve Coogan, “two unlikely companions on a journey to find Philomena’s lost son after 50 years”. **RATED PG-13** and 98 min. long. All are welcome! Children’s Wing



### Watch Us on YouTube!

Did you miss a service or want to watch one again?

Carl Riechers continues to record our Sunday services and now uploads them to our very own channel (FirstPresMV) on YouTube! Find it any of these three ways:

- Click on the link on our Facebook page (First Presbyterian Church of Mount Vernon)
- Search “FirstPresMV” at youtube.com
- Go to [www.youtube.com/user/FirstPresMV](http://www.youtube.com/user/FirstPresMV)



### Hey, Facebook Users!

Want another way to find out what’s going on at church? Be sure to ‘Like’ *First Presbyterian Church of Mount Vernon* on Facebook!

We use this page to promote events, post photos, and the occasional encouragement or interesting link.



### Highlights from March 23, 2015 Session Meeting

Present: Don Burch, Carol Dillard, Beth Simon, Amy Weber, Stephanie West, Nate Willems. Guest Larry Petrick (financial committee).

Excused: James Cannon, David Taylor, Becky Ahrens, Sue Deibner, Paul Jerabek, Shelly Woodley.

Meeting began with a conversation about “The Brief Statement of Faith” from our denomination’s *Book of Confessions*.

Pastor Lori and Larry Petrick reported on the March 7 Presbytery meeting held at Newcomb PC in Davenport. Session voted to approve Larry Petrick to serve as our commissioner delegate to Presbytery meetings in 2015.

Finance Report: Income in February was \$9,702.91 while expenses for the month were \$11,193.28. Larry also presented information about the different financial accounts we hold and answered questions from the Session.

### DISCUSSIONS

Pipe Organ: Larry Krusie of Freeport Pipe Organ tuned the organ on Feb. 19, 2015. He reported that an 8-foot trumpet cannot be repaired and needs to be replaced, as does a 4-foot flute; he also said a new console is needed. The cost for the console alone will likely be upwards of \$130,000. Don Burch will ask his brother-in-law (a pipe organ builder in Des Moines) for a second opinion.

March 21-22 Re-creation Weekend Review: Attendance this time was lower, and we heard from several members expressing concern about not having worship on Sunday. We also discussed the lack of rationale for doing it this way. No future Re-Creation Weekends are planned but we will look for more opportunities for fellowship.

Children Serving Communion: On March 1, two children were invited to partner with Ruling Elders to serve communion. Session approved this at our February meeting because 1) the new Book of Order allows for Session to approve anyone to be a server and 2) it fit in with the children’s study of communion that week. Unfortunately, with Pastor Lori’s absence that Sunday, nothing was explained to the congregation and a few were surprised and concerned.

Matthew 25 Ministry Hub in Cedar Rapids: This group has contacted Pastor Lori about our congregation doing some service projects with them this summer. Since regular community service projects were one of the most popular ideas generated at our all-congregation conversation on Oct. 26, 2014, this seems like a good option. Projects include landscaping, urban vegetable gardening, and home repair.

Minutes by Rozanne Petrick, Clerk of Session, edited by Pastor Lori for the newsletter.



Dear Members and Friends of First Pres Mount Vernon,

Well, you certainly surprised me! I was completely caught off-guard by the card and monetary gift you gave me on Easter Sunday. Thank you so very much for your kind and generous gift, and for your support. I feel so very, very blessed to be your pastor and to be in ministry together with you!

Gratefully, Lori

### Volunteer Thanks

March again brought our congregation's turn to deliver **Meals on Wheels** to neighbors in Mount Vernon. Thanks to everyone who offered their time and a friendly smile!

Al & Becky Ahrens, Susan Alexander, Susan Brust, Carol & Denver Dillard, Jay Gunn, Charles Halsey, Pam Mott, Angie & Bernie Paulson, and Beth Simon

**Our next month to deliver meals is August.**

And, **on Easter Sunday, April 5th we provided volunteers for the Sunday Evening Meals Program (SEMP) at First Pres in Cedar Rapids.** The crew arrived at 4:00 to help set up and finish preparing the meal, served the meal from 4:30-5:30, and then cleaned up from 5:30-6:00. Thank you so much!

Carol Daly, Hugh Lifson, Connie Proffitt, Beth & Tom Simon, Arnie Willems, Maggie, Ava & Emery Willems

**We will provide volunteers next on June 7 and August 2!**

### Healing Touch Circle

**Sunday, April 12th - First Pres MV's Community Room**

Healing Touch is a form of complementary medicine that supports the body's natural healing processes. Christianity has a long tradition of laying on of hands for healing; similar practices have spanned many other cultures and religions all over the world.

Since December, our church has been hosting a monthly Healing Circle. A group of women and men in the Mount Vernon, Lisbon and surrounding areas trained in Healing Touch or Energy Work gather together to volunteer our time to extend a time of prayer and energy work to our local community.



Healing Touch can be beneficial for illness, chronic pain, depression or simply to receive a "boost." People wanting to receive a Healing Touch treatment are invited to register for a 30 minute session that involves a laying on of hands and a 15 minute prayer or meditation including an offering of gratitude and petition. This 30 minute energy treatment and 15 minute prayer time takes place in a group setting with each practitioner working one-on-one with a recipient. All are welcome!

Recipient spaces are limited to the amount of volunteer practitioners that commit their time and skill every month.

To register for a spot, go to this website and follow the links: <http://mtvchc.wix.com/mount-vernion-chc>

In addition to hosting the Healing Circle, our congregation has also provided prayer shawls for recipients to use during their session and take home with them if they desire.

## April—Worship Assistants

### *Sunday, April 5th - 9:30 am – Easter Worship & Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*

Liturgist: Sue Deibner  
 Greeters: Lynn & Shelly Woodley  
 Ushers: Connie Boettcher & Becky Scheetz      Bell ringer: Usher Selects  
 Nursery: Hannah Garvey  
 Communion: Fran Bray, Ann Cannon, Linda Nost, & Larry Petrick

### *Sunday, April 12th - 9:30 am – Worship & Birthday Blessing*

Liturgist: Larry Petrick  
 Greeters: Kim Erlandson & Liz Erlandson  
 Ushers: Phyllis & Bill Hodina      Candle lighter: Uwen Boettcher  
 Bell ringer: Usher Selects  
 Nursery: Hannah Garvey

### *Sunday, April 19th - 9:30 am – Worship*

Liturgist: Marianne Taylor  
 Greeters: Larry & Rozanne Petrick  
 Ushers: Al & Becky Ahrens      Bell ringer: Usher Selects  
 Candle lighter: Emmy Willems  
 Nursery: Hannah Garvey

### *Sunday, April 26th - 9:30 am – Worship*

Liturgist: Ed Bjork  
 Greeters: Stephanie & Greg West  
 Ushers: Barb & Ed Bjork      Bell ringer: Usher Selects  
 Candle lighter: Teddy Bonewald  
 Nursery: Hannah Garvey

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*Each Sunday, "Weekly Announcements" containing the most current information of dates,*

## Christian Education for Children and Youth

Recognizing that weekends and Sundays are often busy for families, we have shifted our Christian Education model to a combination of Sunday mornings (11:00am-Noon) and Wednesday evenings (6:30pm-7:30pm).

All children (PreK-Grade 6) are welcome to participate! Amy Weber is always looking for parents and other adults to help out. This is what the remainder of the spring schedule looks like.

Here's our schedule for April:

Going forward I will be needing help with teachers for Sunday school as my schedule gets very hectic. I have listed below the dates that I am gone and will need someone to cover the class. Please let me know as soon as possible if you are willing to lead the lessons. I have the lesson and craft projects ready to go!

April 5 - Easter Sunday: After the children's service I would like any students in grades 4 - 7 to join me in the basement. Weather permitting we will head to Memorial Park to hide the Easter eggs. After the service (around 10:45) we will all head to the park for kiddos up to 3rd grade to hunt for eggs.

April 8: Wacky Wednesday Worship @ 6:30 pm - We will work on serving the church by doing "spring cleaning" around the grounds.

AMY GONE: Sunday, April 12: The Great Commission lesson

AMY GONE: Sunday, April 19: Saul to Paul lesson

AMY GONE: Sunday, April 26: Many Members, One Body lesson

May 6: Wacky Wednesday Worship @ 6:30 pm - Love in Action wrap up

Sunday, May 17: End of the year party - I will try and set up bowling at Don Mar on this day. I will let you know a time as we get closer.

Thanks for sharing your kids with me this year and I look forward to finishing strong this spring!

### Keedick/Dolezal Memorial Scholarships and Camperships

Applications are now available from the church office for Keedick/Dolezal scholarships and camperships. The application deadline is May 31, 2015 and completed forms can be either dropped off at the church office or in the Finance box outside of the church office.

### Camp Wyoming: A Summer Opportunity to GROW in Faith!



Church Camp is an important part of your child's faith development. Because of that (and thanks to the Keedick-Dolezal Scholarship fund) our church covers the entire cost of registration for every camper from our church.

Mark the registration as **"My church will pay \$ all."**  
Camps for those entering 1st grade through 12th grade

Check it out at [www.campwyoming.net](http://www.campwyoming.net) Or find a brochure outside the Sunday School rooms

**Mark your calendars!** Mt. Vernon/Lisbon Community VBS is

Sunday, July 12 through Thursday, July 16.

Watch for your chance to register (PreK through Grade 5) or volunteer SOON!

## Making a Difference!

Back in February, after learning the story about Jesus healing the blind man (Mark 8:22-25), the kids decided to take a Noisy Offering collection to raise money to support two organizations that work to correct or prevent blindness around the world. Thanks to an enthusiastic response from all of you, the Noisy Offering on February 15 raised \$202.59!



CBM (Christian Blind Mission) is an international Christian development organization working to improve quality of life for persons with disabilities in the world's poorest countries. Cataracts are the leading cause of blindness in the world and for people already on the edge of survival, they are economically devastating. For just \$35 and in only 15 minutes, cataract surgery restores a person's sight and quality of life. Thanks to your gift, three adults will have their lives changed for the better!

Among its many programs, the Carter Center has been working to eliminate river blindness, one of the leading causes of preventable blindness worldwide. Spread by the bites of small black flies, river blindness (onchocerciasis) is a parasitic infection that causes itching, rashes and eye disease. Working with ministries of health in eight developing countries, the Carter Center encourages public education and the regular distribution of the medicine Mectizan®, which kills the parasitic larvae, preventing both infection and transmission. Having *eliminated* river blindness in Colombia and Ecuador, their sights are now set on Brazil, Guatemala, Mexico, Venezuela, Ethiopia, Nigeria, the Republic of Sudan and Uganda. Your donation helps make that goal possible!



Small moves like sharing pocket change can make a huge difference for others around the world. What a joy to be part of that!

Read more about these organizations and the work you are helping them do at [www.cbmus.org](http://www.cbmus.org) or [www.cartercenter.org](http://www.cartercenter.org)



# April 2015

Worship Every Sunday 9:30



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 MAUNDY THURSDAY	3 GOOD FRIDAY 7:00 PM Service of Tenebrae	4
5 <i>9:30 am Worship &amp; Communion</i> <b>EASTER</b> Feed the Hungry First Pres	6 <i>Office Closed</i>	7 7:00-9:00 pm Art Class, Community Room	8 1:30 TLC, Hallmark Care Center, Mt Vernon  6:30 Wacky Wednesday Worship, Fellowship Hall	9	10	11
12 <i>9:30 am Worship Birthday Blessing</i>  2:00 pm—4:00 pm Healing Touch Circle, Community Room (appointment needed)	13 <i>Office Closed</i>  2:00 PM Knitting Group  6:00 BUNKO Fellowship Hall	14 7:00-9:00 pm Art Class, Community Room  6:30 Cancer Support Group Fellowship Hall	15 10:00-4:00 Quilting Group, Fellowship Hall (Connie Boettcher)	16	17	18
19 <i>9:30 am Worship</i>	20 <i>Office Closed</i>  6:30 pm Session, Community Room	21 7:00-9:00 pm Art Class, Community Room	22	23  TLC— Movie Night, 5:30 PM	24	25
26 <i>9:30 am Worship</i>	27 <i>Office Closed</i>	28 7:00-9:00 pm Art Class, Community Room	29	30		

## *Worship in April*

This is it, friends! After 21 weeks, we complete our time with Matthew's Gospel on April 12. One of the things I have seen more clearly during our time with Matthew is the gospel writer's concern that the Good News of Jesus Christ is for all people, not just for the insiders.

With Easter Sunday begins the *season* of Easter, the Great Fifty Days. From April 16 through May 24 (Pentecost Sunday) we will turn our attention to Acts (The Acts of the Apostles) and Romans (Paul's letter to the church in Rome).

Acts is written by the same person who wrote Luke's Gospel. It continues the story of what happens after Jesus ascends into heaven. After receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, they move from being disciples (followers of a certain teacher) to apostles (those who are sent out on a mission).

### *April 5 – The Empty Tomb*

#### **Easter Sunday**

##### *Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*

Matthew 28:1-10 Early in the morning after the Sabbath, the two Marys go to the tomb where their beloved Jesus had been laid. They are met with an earthquake, an angel, an empty tomb, terrified guards, and, after they leave to tell the disciples as they were instructed, they meet Jesus, risen from the dead.

### *April 12 – The Great Commandment*

#### **Second Sunday of the Easter Season**

##### *April Birthday Blessing*

Matthew 28:16-20 When the remaining disciples gather at the mountain in Galilee where Jesus told them to go, Jesus appears to them and tells them what their task is.

### *April 19 – God Gives Peter a Vision and an Encounter with a Gentile*

#### **Third Sunday of the Easter Season**

Acts 10:1-47 (selected verses) While praying, Peter receives a vision in which God declares "clean" things that are unclean (according to Jewish law). He is then directed to a Roman centurion, a Gentile, named Cornelius who together with his household receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

### *April 26 – Paul Begins His Mission*

#### **Fourth Sunday of the Easter Season**

Acts 13:1-3, 14:8-18 After Peter's experience with Cornelius and his household, Paul and Barnabas are sent to proclaim the gospel to the Gentiles. In Lystra, they heal a man crippled since birth.





**Save  
the  
Rhubarb!**



Don't worry, rhubarb isn't in any danger...except of being baked into dozens of pies and desserts to serve on Friday, July 24 when passes through Mount Vernon!

When RAGBRAI was here in 2012, our congregation's "Got Rhubarb?" theme (including rhubarb brats!) made such an impression we were mentioned by the Des Moines Register. In fact, when that same reporter was preparing an article about RAGBRAI 2015 pass-through towns, he called our church to learn what is happening around Mount Vernon (and asked if we would have rhubarb everything again!).

With that kind of encouragement, the answer is yes, but we need your help.

1. Please harvest as much rhubarb as you can (from your own garden, or any friend or neighbor willing to share), chop it up and freeze it.
2. Mark Thursday, July 23 and/or Friday, July 24 on your calendar to help set up and/or serve
3. Watch for details on how you can help bake pies, etc.

This really is a terrific FUNraiser for our congregation. Many hands don't only make light work, they make it more enjoyable for everyone.

Thanks for anything you can do for this event!



- 1 – Dave Bennett
- 5 – Brad Bechold
- 6 – Sue Deibner
- 6 – Daniel Riechers
- 7 – Vonni Bennett
- 9 – Denver Dillard
- 14 – Elizabeth Crawford
- 14 – Nelson Jerabek
- 15 – Susan Brust
- 15 – David Taylor
- 16 – Rachel Quehl-Engel
- 17 – Rod Davies
- 18 – Mia Whitman
- 20 – Becky Scheetz
- 23 – Hugh Miller
- 24 – Charlie Weldon
- 25 – Maggie Willems
- 26 – Carol Daly
- 26 – Mary Wolrab

*Please contact the church office if we missed your birthday.*

