



The Epistle

March 2015
Volume 2015-03



SUNDAY, MARCH 8th
at 2:00 AM

Upcoming Events

- 3/4—SERI
- 3/8—Healing Touch Circle
- 3/9—BUNKO
- 3/10— Cancer Support Group
- 3/11—TLC at Hallmark Care Center Mt Vernon, 1:30 PM
- Wacky Wednesday Worship
- 3/14—PI(e) Fund Raiser
- 3/21—ReCreation Weekend
- **NO SUNDAY SERVICES**
- 3/23—Session
- 3/29—Palm Sunday

The Heart of Lent

The season of Lent began on Ash Wednesday (February 18 this year) and ends on the Saturday before Easter (April 4). This means that this year, the month of March is what we might consider the heart of Lent.

Lent is forty days long (Sundays don't count!) and is intended to be a season of intentional "taking stock" of our relationship with God. This can include Lenten disciplines and practices such as giving something up, fasting from particular foods (or behaviors), prayer, study and giving.

For some of you, Lent and Lenten practices may not be something you grew up with. I grew up in the Presbyterian Church and didn't attend my first Ash Wednesday service until high school and had never heard of giving something up until college.

The truth is, observing Lent beyond my preparation for worship services is not something I do well, and I suspect that is true for many of you, too. But I am also a firm believer that any effort, no matter how small or slight, toward deepening our relationship with God is important, and does more than we know.

This year, my small effort is to keep the dining room table at home free of clutter, with a centerpiece of objects that invite me to reflection—a candle, a cross, a plant, seashells, seeds, sand, a compass, and a prayer, which I offer to you here:

A Prayer for Lent

*Loving God,
During the sacred season of Lent,
bring me closer to you.
Prepare a place in my home and heart
for solitude and reflection,
so that I may rediscover the grace of a prayer-full life.
Help me to fast from those things that threaten
the well-being of body and soul and remind me of the grace of simplicity.
Enlarge my heart so that I may give to those in need
and, in so doing, rediscover the grace of gratitude and generosity.
May this season be a grace-filled time to rekindle my love for and faith in you.
Amen.*

May this season of Lent bless and strengthen you, and deepen you in God's grace.

Pastor Lori

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www.firstpresmv.com

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Damon Cole



NEWS & Notes



Bell Choir—We need more ringers! No experience is necessary; some ability to read music is helpful. Anyone aged 12 years and up is welcome to give it a try. Contact Joey Crowley (joanne.k.crowley@gmail.com) or the church office if you are interested in learning more!



Healing Touch Circle, Sunday, March 8th, Community Room, 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm (by appointment only)



Bunko— Monday, March 9th, Fellowship Hall, 6:00 pm



Cancer Support Group — Tuesday, March 10th, Fellowship Hall, 6:30 pm



TLC—Wednesday, March 11th, at Hallmark Care Center, Mt. Vernon, 1:30 pm



Session Meeting— March 23rd, Community Room, 6:30 pm



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



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.

Session News

On Sunday, March 8, we will ordain and/or install our newly elected officer:

Class of 2017 (serving through Jan 2017)

Donald Burch	Becky Ahrens (2nd term)
Carol Dillard	Beth Simon (2nd term)
Shelly Woodley	Nate Willems (2nd term)

Youth Elders (Feb 2015 through Jan 2016)

James Cannon
David Taylor

The following people are continuing their service:

Class of 2016 (serving through Jan 2016)

Sue Deibner
Paul Jerabek
Amy Weber
Stephanie West (2nd term)

Rozanne was elected by the Session to serve an additional year (through January 2015) as Clerk of Session, as allowed by the Book of Order G-3.0104.

One of the tasks before the Session in the coming year is to reconsider our committees and how the work of the church gets done. (Because of that, new officers were not elected to particular committees or roles.) We welcome your prayers for that process!

WHAT IS "PER CAPITA"?



Many church members are aware of the explanation of "Per Capita," but there are also many who are not sure what "Per Capita" means. It is our dues to the Presbyterian Church USA and a way of sharing administrative costs that belong to the whole Presbyterian Church community.

This year (2015) the cost is \$34.27 per active member bringing our total share to \$5,072.00. This amount is shared with the General Assembly, the Lakes and Prairies Synod and our Presbytery of East Iowa.

Each year we ask members to consider contributing an additional gift to help with the payment of our Per Capita.

As always, we greatly appreciate your continued support of your church both financially and with sharing of your time and talents.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT!

Coming Saturday, March 21st ... Come and Participate!!!

R₁ E₁ - C₃ R₁ E₁ A₁ T₁ I₁ O₁ N₁

W₄ E₁ E₁ K₅ E₁ N₁ D₂

3:00 pm — RECREATION

Come when you can, bring a game or enjoy what's here (board games, card games, jigsaws, creativity). Popcorn provided!



5:30 pm (or so) — WORSHIP

An interactive, informal, intergenerational worship at tables in Fellowship Hall

6:30 pm (or so) GO HOME

Or wherever else you want to go!

Sunday, March 22nd — No Sunday Service

Relax, sleep in, give thanks, enjoy!

Healing Touch Circle

Second Sundays (March 8, April 12) - 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.

March—Worship Assistants

Sunday, March 1st—9:30 am – Worship & Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Liturgist: Ann Cannon
 Greeters: Beth Simon & Nate Willems
 Ushers: Stephanie & Greg West Bell ringer: Usher Select
 Candle lighter: Jaidyn Burge
 Nursery: Hannah Garvey
 Communion: 2 Adults and 2 Children, to be announced

Sunday, March 8th - 9:30 am – Worship & Birthday Blessing

Liturgist: Rita Swales
 Greeters: Mary Clare Coulter & Rita Swales
 Ushers: Scott & Amy Weber Bell ringer: Usher Select
 Candle lighter: Joey Recalde
 Nursery: Hannah Garvey

Sunday, March 15th - 9:30 am – Worship

Liturgist: Joe Mulinix
 Greeters: Doug Hanson & Sue Deibner
 Ushers: Ann, James & Chris Cannon Bell ringer: Usher Select
 Candle lighter: Trevor Weber
 Nursery: Hannah Garvey

Sunday, March 22nd - NO SUNDAY WORSHIP

Sunday, March 29nd - 9:30 am – Worship (Palm Sunday)

Liturgist: Charles Halsey
 Greeters: Carol & Denver Dillard
 Ushers: Linda Nost & Pam Mott Bell ringer: Usher Selects
 Candle lighter: Ava Willems
 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.

Here's our schedule for March:

Sunday, March 1

Discussion about Communion and The Last Supper

Wacky Wednesday, March 11

Game Night!

Re-Creation Weekend, Saturday, March 21

3:00 pm Bring your favorite board games to play

5:00 pm Potluck

5:30 pm Interactive Worship in Fellowship Hall

No Worship or Other Sunday Activities on March 22

Sunday, March 29—Palm Sunday!

All children and youth are invited to lead the procession of palms in worship at 9:30am
At 11:00, learn about that first Palm Sunday and help get the Easter Goodie Bags ready!

Sunday, April 5—Easter!

An Easter Egg Hunt for kids in Grade 1 or younger will take place after worship
Kids Grade 2 and older get to hide the eggs at the park (weather permitting) during the last part of the worship service



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.

Take advantage of early registration through March 31, 2015. After that date, camp prices increase by \$25.

*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 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!**

Concerned about the Environment and Sustainability?

Be part of **SERI (Sustainable Energy and Resource Initiative)!**

Wednesday, March 4 at 7pm in the Community Room

Back in the fall, Steve Maurice approached Pastor Lori Wunder about the importance of pastors preaching about care of creation issues. During that conversation they agreed this is an issue that needs the attention of not only our churches, but the entire community. With that, Steve and Lori invited several people from the community to brainstorm what we might do to be good stewards of the natural resources entrusted to us. From the beginning, our Session has been supportive of this endeavor.

Those in the first group are Patty Ankrum (Monarchs in Eastern Iowa), Brian Novak-Thompson (Assoc. Professor of Biology and Chemistry, Cornell), Laura Krouse (Abbe Hills Farm), Steve Maurice (Catalyst for Change), Andy McCollum (Professor of Biology, Cornell College), Marianne Taylor (Mount Vernon City Council Member), and Pastor Lori Wunder.

This group came up with a name and the following mission statement:



Source: TERI The Energy Resources Institute

“Because our natural resources are finite, precious and irreplaceable, the mission of S.E.R.I. (Sustainable Energy and Resource Initiative) is to encourage the stewardship of energy, water, land, air and biological diversity in order to enhance the quality of life for all of us.

To accomplish this we will advocate for the responsible and thoughtful use of the natural resources through educational outreach and demonstration projects and advocacy aimed at facilitating creative and meaningful action by all members of our community.”

And now we need others to join us! If you or anyone you know in the Mt. Vernon/Lisbon area have ideas about what we can do as a community, neighborhoods or individuals, or you simply want to learn more about any of these issues, *please come to our next meeting on Wednesday, March 4 at 7 pm in the Community Room.* Attendees will divide into small groups to brainstorm what we might do for advocacy, action or education in the areas of energy, water, land, air and biological diversity.

Why SERI? Because God created the world and everything in it and called it good (Genesis 1), and created humankind to serve as caretakers of both the animals and the land (Genesis 1:28). For generations, human beings have experienced God's presence and mystery in the incredible beauty of the natural world, from the smallest seed to the tallest mountain. But human “progress” has damaged the health of our air, water, and soil and threatened the very existence of many species. The energy sources we depend on to fuel our vehicles and homes and devices are finite, and the extraction of them comes at an ever greater cost. As people of faith, we are called to listen, learn, take action and change the way we live in order to be good stewards of our natural resources and responsible global citizens.





March 2015

Worship Every Sunday 9:30



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 <i>9:30 am Worship Communion</i>	2 <i>Office Closed</i>	3 <i>7:00-9:00 pm Art Class, Community Room</i>	4 <i>7:00-S.E.R.I. Meeting Community Room</i>	5	6	7
8 <i>9:30 am Worship Birthday Blessing</i> <i>2:00 pm—4:00 pm Healing Touch Circle, Community Room (appointment needed)</i>	9 <i>Office Closed</i> <i>6:00 BUNKO Fellowship Hall</i>	10 <i>6:30 Cancer Support Group Fellowship Hall</i> <i>7:00-9:00 pm Art Class, Community Room</i>	11 <i>1:30 TLC, Hallmark Care Center, Mt Vernon</i> <i>6:30 Wacky Wednesday Worship, Fellowship Hall</i>	12	13	14
15 <i>9:30 am Worship</i>	16 <i>Office Closed</i>	17 <i>7:00-9:00 pm Art Class, Community Room</i>	18 <i>10:00-4:00 Quilting Group, Fellowship Hall (Connie Boet- tcher)</i>	19	20	21 RE-CREATION WEEKEND <i>3:00 pm RECREATION 5:00 pm POTLUCK MEAL 5:30 pm or so WORSHIP</i>
22 <u>NO SUNDAY SERVICES!</u> PASTOR LORI VACATION	23 <i>Office Closed</i> <i>6:30 pm Session, Community Room</i>	24 <i>7:00-9:00 pm Art Class, Community Room</i>	25	26	27	28
29 <i>9:30 am Worship Palm Sunday</i>	30 <i>Office Closed</i>	31 <i>7:00-9:00 pm Art Class, Community Room</i>	April 1	April 2	April 3 <i>7:00 pm Good Friday Service of Tenebrae</i>	April 4

PASTOR LORI— CONTINUING EDUCATION STUDY
LEAVE

PASTOR LORI—VACATION

Worship in March

The month of March is in the heart of Lent, and during Lent our Narrative Lectionary readings focus on parables in Matthew's gospel that tell us what the Kingdom of Heaven is like:

March 1 – Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard

Second Sunday in Lent

Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Rev. Nancy Redman, Preaching

Matthew 20:1-16 A landowner hires workers for his vineyard throughout the day, then at the end of the day pays everyone the same. What is fair about that?

March 8 – Parable of the Wedding Banquet

Third Sunday in Lent

March Birthday Blessing

Matthew 22:1-14 A king prepares a royal wedding banquet, but his guests show no interest in coming...and things go downhill from there. This is a difficult parable, directed at the Pharisees and chief priests. What is the good news for us here?

March 15 – Parable of the Bridesmaids

Fourth Sunday in Lent

Matthew 25:1-13 Ten bridesmaids await the arrival of the groom so that the celebration can begin. Some are prepared and brought enough oil to keep their lamps burning, some have not.

March 21-22 – Re-Creation Weekend

Saturday the 21st—Game Afternoon, Potluck and Informal Worship

Sunday the 22nd—Sleep in and enjoy some Sabbath time

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Matthew 25:31-46 At the last judgment, the king separates those who cared for the “least of these” from those who did nothing.

March 29 – Jesus Arrives in Jerusalem for the Passover

Palm Sunday

Matthew 21:1-13 Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, followed by overturning the tables in the temple

Friday, April 3 – Good Friday
7:00 pm Worship
Featuring the Chancel Choir
A Service of Tenebrae (Darkness)
Reading Through the Passion According to Matthew



March Birthdays

- 1—Marlie Jo Willems
- 2—Tish Healy
- 5—Rozanne Petrick
- 6—Wayne Biderman
- 7—Bob Madson
- 14—Dorothy Gaines
- 15—Donna Hotz
- 16—Amanda Dragon
- 18—Adalynn Whitman
- 19—Larry Petrick
- 21—Gary West
- 22—Charlie Helgeson
- 26—Lynda Benesh
- 27—Vern Pitcher
- 28—Alyson West
- 29—Otto Boettcher
- 31—Matt Heck

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



Pearl Martin is now at the Hallmark Care Center in Mount Vernon. Pearl would love to hear from her church family through either visits or cards. Her address is:

Pearl Martin
Hallmark Care Center Room #22
215 Hwy. 30W
Mount Vernon, IA 52314
895-8891

Colleges Against Cancer—Relay for Life

Saturday, March 28th, 2015 3:00 pm—3:00 am in the Small Sports Center
(you don't need to be present the whole time!)
Be a part of Cornell College's Relay for Life Event

Walking, fun activities, entertainment, and camaraderie building in a family-friendly environment... Join a team and raise awareness and funds for cancer research and patient care.

How About a Team from First Pres?