



# The Epistle

February 2015  
Volume 2015-02



## Upcoming Events

- 2/8—Healing Touch Circle
- 2/9—BUNKO
- 2/10— Cancer Support Group
- 2/11—S.E.R.I. Conversation
- 2/16—Session
- 2/18—Ash Wednesday, Potluck & Worship
- 2/23—Knitting Group



## 2015: Trying New Things

Last month, I talked about one of the new things our congregation was willing to try. This month, I want to report back on them!

### January 31-February 1 Re-Creation (Eat In, Sleep In) Weekend

This event had long been on the calendar, but when the forecast started showing a big snowstorm for Saturday night into Sunday, we looked REALLY smart!



Around 50 people (including a few visitors) enjoyed playing non-electronic games and jigsaw puzzles. For the delicious potluck dinner, we asked that multiple generations sit together at tables and invited them to talk about where the food they were enjoying came from—plant, root, vine, tree, animal. With an awareness of God’s generosity and providence, for worship each table talked about passages of scripture and made prayer flags, and all of us sang together. Then we cleaned up and went home. (I know I was able to more fully enjoy the Sunday snow day having played and worshiped with our congregation on Saturday!)

The feedback on this experiment was very positive. We even heard from people who had conflicts that day who hoped we will plan another. Let me or any member of Session know what you think!

### S.E.R.I. (Sustainable Energy and Resources Initiative)

In the fall, Steve Maurice and I had a conversation about the importance of churches getting the word out about God’s desire for us to be good stewards of all of creation. We quickly realized this needed to be a community-wide effort. So, with the Session’s approval, Steve and I invited a group of interested persons (Cornell professors Andy McCollum and Brian Nowak-Thompson, sustainable farmer Laura Krouse, city council person Marianne Taylor, “butterfly lady” Patty Ankrum) to an initial meeting last January and S.E.R.I. was born!

During that first meeting, *I was asked if the Presbyterians have ever considered 1) becoming an Earth Care Congregation (i.e. deliberately evaluating our energy usage and stewardship of resources) or 2) installing solar panels on our roof to provide the bulk of our electricity.* I asked the Session these same questions and they agreed—if we have people in the congregation interested in exploring these options, we should see about it.

So, if either (or both!) of those issues is a passion or interest for you, let me or any member of Session know and we will be grateful to put you to work on behalf of God’s beautiful creation!

*Pastor Lori*

**First Presbyterian Church**

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**We're on the web:**  
[www.firstpresmv.com](http://www.firstpresmv.com)

Follow us on

Facebook:  
First Presbyterian Church of Mount Vernon



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FirstPresMV

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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](mailto:joanne.k.crowley@gmail.com)) or the church office if you are interested in learning more!



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



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



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



**TLC**—No meeting until further notice.



**Session Meeting**— February 16th, Community Room, 6:30 pm



**Knitting Group**—February 23rd at the home of Fran Bray, 2:00 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](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.

## Session News

At the Annual Meeting of the Congregation on Sunday, January 25, we elected new officers to serve on Session. Thanks and congratulations to the following people:

### **Class of 2017 (serving through Jan 2017)**

Donald Burch  
 Carol Dillard  
 Shelly Woodley  
 Becky Ahrens (2nd term)  
 Beth Simon (2nd term)  
 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 Petrick and Pam Mott completed their second terms on Session in January. Thank you, Pam, for your faithful service to the congregation these past four years!

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!**





**SAVE THE TAPES**  
**The SECOND Frank Benesh Memorial Telethon A-Go-Go!**  
**8 pm Friday, Feb 20<sup>th</sup> through 8 pm Saturday, Feb 21**  
**First Street Uptown Theatre**

More 2000 VHS tapes of Mount Vernon and Lisbon history (lectures, concerts, festivals, parades, ball games, etc.) recorded by Dean Traver are disintegrating. This “Save the Tapes” telethon fundraiser is intended to do what it says—raise the money necessary to digitize, store and index the most important tapes.

Our congregation is participating by receiving the donations in Frank Benesh’s memory. Thanks to Becky Ahrens and Barb Bjork for keeping track of the funds and helping us to be part of this important community effort!



### Healing Touch Circle

Second Sundays (February 8, 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-vernon-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.



## February—Worship Assistants

*Sunday, February 1st—NO WORSHIP SERVICE*

*Sunday, February 8th - 9:30 am – Worship & Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*

Liturgist: Barb Bjork

Greeters: Paul & Nancy Jerabek

Ushers: Scott & Amy Weber

Bell ringer: Usher Select

Candle lighter: Uwen Boettcher

Nursery: Hannah Garvey

Communion: Rita Swales, Stephanie West, Paul Jerabek, and Lynn Woodley

*Sunday, February 15th - 9:30 am – Worship & Birthday Blessing*

Liturgist: Nannette Gunn

Greeters: Kevin & Becky Whitman

Ushers: Ann, James & Chris Cannon

Bell ringer: Usher Select

Candle lighter: Jaidyn Burge

Nursery: Hannah Garvey

*Sunday, February 22nd - 9:30 am – Worship*

Liturgist: Gretchen Lindentbolt

Greeters: Barb & Ed Bjork

Ushers: Paul & Nancy Jerabek

Bell ringer: Usher Selects

Candle lighter: Ava Willems

### 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?**

**Talk to Pastor Lori if Interested!**

#### First Presbyterian Church

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

## Christian Education for Children and Youth

It seems like the **Sunday/Wednesday** rotation seemed to work pretty well for us last fall so we are moving forward with it again this spring. Below is the schedule for the dates and the lessons for February through March.

As always, if you are able and willing to teach/lead a lesson I am always grateful to have a **Sunday/Wednesday** off! Please let Amy Weber know if you are able and willing to lead or help with one of the lessons or events.

**Sunday, February 1: No Church Services or Christian Ed**

**Wacky Wednesday Worship, February 4:** Make Valentine's Day Cards for church family shut ins and elderly. \* 6:30 pm \*\*Need parent volunteers to help with the various stations

**Sunday, February 8:** Jesus Feeds the 5,000 & Finish working on Valentine's cards

**Sunday, February 15:** Blind man Sees \*\*Doing a Blindness collection drive during service and would like the Christian Ed kiddos to help with the collection

**Wednesday, February 18: Ash Wednesday**

**Wacky Wednesday Worship, February 25:** Lent discussion, make bread & grape juice for upcoming Communion, Movie/Popcorn night \* 6:30 pm \*\*Need parent volunteers to help with the various stations

**Sunday, March 1:** Communion discussion & The Last Supper

**Wacky Wednesday Worship, March 11: Game Night**

**Sunday, March 22:** Lesson TBA (Amy is out of town this weekend we need someone to teach)

**Sunday, March 29: Palm Sunday & Make Easter Goodie Bags**

**Sunday, April 5: Easter Egg Hunt** for those kiddos 1st Grade or younger. During last part of the service go to the park next door and hide eggs/goodie bags.

Thank you in advance for being willing to volunteer and help make this a great spring for Christian Ed!

**Amy Weber**

**Confirmation Class** continues each week for Grades 7-9 with Shelly Woodley and Lori Wunder.





*A Summer Opportunity to GROW in Faith!*

## Camp Wyoming

Our Presbyterian Church Camp  
“Sacred Space. Growing Faith”



*It is not too early to begin signing your kids up to attend a summer session at Camp Wyoming. We, at First Presbyterian Church of Mount Vernon, are, so convinced of the value of Camp Wyoming, we will cover the entire cost of registration for every camper from our church, thanks to the Keedick-Dolezal Scholarship Fund.*

*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*

### Weekly Themes matched for appropriate age groups include:

- Discovery
- Explorer Sports
- Explorer Pirates
- Explorer Pirates II
- Sports
- Music, Arts & Drama (MAD)
- Pioneer,
- Middlers
- Extreme Getaway
- Water Adventures
- Night Owls,
- Thrill Seekers (includes overnight canoe or backpacking trip)

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

### Have you ever thought about going to Synod School?

2015 Synod School July 26-31, 2015  
Buena Vista University  
Storm Lake, IA

Synod School is where you gather as a multigenerational community to worship, learn, and give thanks to God for one another and the mission to which we are called. There are a variety of worship, learning and simply FUN opportunities for children, youth and adults.

You'll find a wide variety of courses ranging from “The Civil War, Slavery and the Bible,” to Silk Effect,” to “Fling, Flora and Faith.” to “The Christian Life ,” to Improvisation and Ethics, to “Worshipful Work,” and many, many more! In early March the complete catalog will be available but its not too early to start thinking about the possibility of attending!



## February 2015

*Worship Every Sunday 9:30*



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1  <b><u>NO SUNDAY SERVICES!</u></b>	2	3  7:00-9:00 pm Art Class, Community Room	4	5	6	7
8  9:30 am Worship Communion	9  Office Closed  6:00 BUNKO Fellowship Hall	10  6:30 Cancer Support Group Fellowship Hall  7:00-9:00 pm Art Class, Community Room	11  7:00 pm S.E.R.I. Conversation - Community Room	12	13	14
15  9:30 am Worship Birthday Blessing  2:00 pm—4:00 pm Healing Touch Circle, Community Room (appointment needed)	16  Office Closed  6:30 pm Session, Community Room	17  7:00-9:00 pm Art Class, Community Room	18  10:00-4:00 Quilting Group, Community Room (Connie Boettcher)    6:00 Potluck 6:45 Worship	19	20	21
22  9:30 am Worship	23  Office Closed	24  7:00-9:00 pm Art Class, Community Room	25	26	27  Office Closed	28
March 1  9:30 am Worship	March 2  Office Closed	March 3  7:00-9:00 pm Art Class, Community Room	March 4	March 5	March 6	March 7



## Worship in February

From now until the Sunday after Easter (April 12), we are reading from the Gospel According to Matthew. Jesus, as described by Matthew, proclaims the kingdom of heaven, performs miracles and teaches his followers what it means to be righteous and how to enter God's kingdom.

“Righteous” for us today can be a negative term, usually associated with “self-righteous.” But righteousness for Jesus was about life lived in restored relationship with God by showing allegiance to God and God's desire for justice in word and action.

Our readings in February continue to reveal who Jesus is and what living in God's way with righteousness looks like.

### February 8 – Feeding the 5000

Matthew 14:13-33 Jesus feeds the 5000 then walks on the water  
*Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*

### February 15 – Take Up Your Cross and the Transfiguration

Matthew 16:24-17:8 Jesus tells the disciples that all who want to come after him must take up their cross and follow him. Six days later, Peter, James, and John see Jesus transfigured on a mountain top.

### The Season of Lent begins...

#### Ash Wednesday, February 18 – Who is the Greatest?

6:00 Potluck Meal in Fellowship Hall (please bring a dish to share)

6:45 A Short, Interactive Ash Wednesday Service for All Ages at table (includes the imposition of ashes)

Focus Passage: Matthew 18:1-9 Debate between disciples about who among them is the greatest.

### February 22 – Forgiveness

#### First Sunday in Lent

Matthew 18:15-35 Forgiving seventy times seven, parable of the unforgiving servant

### March 1 – Laborers in the Vineyard

#### Second Sunday in Lent

Matthew 20:1-16 Parable of the laborers in the vineyard



# February Birthdays

- 1—Marsha Siggins
- 3—Al Ahrens
- 5—Becky Purvis
- 5—Laura Werkman
- 6—Dee Ann Rexroat
- 6—Beth Simon
- 7—Mary Clare Coulter
- 10—Gina Bechold
- 14—Matthew Erlandson
- 22—Connie Boettcher
- 23—Greg West
- 24—Kevin Whitman
- 25—Paul Jerabek
- 27—Allan Recalde
- 28—Austin Armstrong
- 28—James Taylor

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

*Right 'Tude Since 1915*

# Austin Armstrong Turns 100!



**Let's Celebrate!**  
**Saturday, February 28th**  
**1 - 3 pm**  
**Live, Laugh, Learn Center**  
**at The Manor**

Meth-wick Retirement Community  
1224 13th St. NW, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

# RE-CREATION

