



The Epistle

May 2015

Volume 2015-05



Upcoming Events

- 5/6—Wacky Wednesday Worship
- 5/10—Healing Touch Circle
- 5/11—BUNKO
- 5/12—Cancer Support Group
- 5/13—TLC at Hallmark Care Center Mt Vernon, 1:30 PM
- 5/18—Knitting Group
- 5/18—Session
- 5/31—Cook Out at Wunder-Bonewald's

The Imagination of God

Living with young children means a life full of imagination.

I love listening to Teddy imagine adventures for his pirates, superheroes, bad guys and construction workers (sometimes all at once) or watch as a ski mask transforms him into a ninja or wrist guards make him Iron Man.

Teddy is at the age where ordinary stuff is full of possibility and wonder. I envy him that.

Too often, we adults buy into the idea that the realm of imagination belongs to children while grownups deal with “the real world.”

Any imagination adults allow ourselves is handed over to a particular group of people, the creative types, artists and poets of every kind who entertain us, add beauty, make us see ourselves and our world in a different way.

But what a mistake it is to let go of imagination. Imagination is one of God's greatest gifts to us and when I really think about it, *imagination (and the creativity that goes with it) is at the heart of faith.*

God, after all, is the original creator, setting a world of creative possibility in motion and calling all of it good, and making human beings stewards and caretakers of the earth's gifts to us. But things didn't go the way God hoped; instead of living in peace and love, human beings turned on one another and put their own needs and desires above everything else. So, God imagined something new, a new way for people to live.

- God imagined childless, elderly Abraham and Sarah could be the parents of a new nation of people.
- God imagined laws that honored people over possessions, and sought to establish a society that was fair and just and merciful.
- When that plan didn't quite work, God imagined coming to live among us, “moving into the neighborhood” as Jesus of Nazareth.
- Jesus showed what God's love looks and sounds like and stirred imaginations as he told stories about what the kingdom of God is like.

And after Jesus was no longer with us, what next? Through the gift of the Holy Spirit, God fills us with imagination to see what God is up to in the world already, and the courage, hope, energy and love to join in the creativity of it.

Friends, it can be so easy to look around and be discouraged by what is and is not happening in the world around us. But the eyes of faith see this world, imagine this world, differently.

May we, as individuals and as a congregation, be blessed with a vivid, and faith-full, imagination.

Pastor Lori

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We're on the web:
www.firstpresmv.com

Follow us on

Facebook:
First Presbyterian Church of Mount Vernon



Twitter:
FirstPresMV

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NEWS & Notes



Healing Touch Circle, Sunday, May 10th, Community Room, 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm (by appointment only). To register for a spot, go to this website and follow the links:

<http://mtvchc.wix.com/mount-vernon-chc>



Bunko— Monday, May 11th, Fellowship Hall, 6:00 pm



Cancer Support Group — Tuesday, May 12th, Fellowship Hall, 6:30 pm



TLC—Wednesday, May 13th, at Hallmark Care Center, Mt. Vernon, 1:30 pm



Knitting Group, Monday, May 18th, at the home of Diane Clay, 2:00 pm



Session Meeting— May 20th, 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.



Highlights from April 20, 2015 Session Meeting

Highlights from April 20, 2015 Session Meeting

Present: Don Burch, Shelly Woodley, Carol Dillard, Becky Ahrens, David Taylor, James Cannon, Stephanie West, Jim Bonewald (Teaching Elder, guest presenter)

Absent: Rozanne Petrick, Nate Willems, Amy Weber, Paul Jerabek, Sue Deibner, Beth Simon

The meeting began with a prayer, followed by a presentation by Jim Bonewald. Jim thanked the Session for funding part of the tuition for the two year Academy for Missional Wisdom program he will complete at the end of the summer. “Missional” means to go out into the world to join God in what God is already doing. As a part of the study, Jim will lead a project within the congregation or community. Possibilities include a book study group within the congregation and/or community, building connections with the community through Southeast Linn, CDG, or something else, and to establish a pilot program made up of community members to discern a possible “missional engagement” project in the community.

Finance Committee – March expenses were \$15,603.23 and March income was \$17,073.91. Motion approved to cease an additional monthly payment of \$765 toward principle on the new building mortgage. Monthly payments of \$1,983 will continue through final payment June 25, 2017. Current balance is \$74,197.54

Confirmation: Class members are Cooper Bechtold, Chris Cannon, Amanda Dragon, Elijah Recalde, Jayden Weber, and Cameron Woodley, taught by Lori Wunder and Shelly Woodley. Class is suspended after April 26, service projects and “homework” over the summer, then pick up classes again in September and aim for October 25 as a confirmation ceremony date.

Summer events:

- New Member Class in early summer
- Work Days at Matthew 25 in Cedar Rapids on Tuesday, June 2, Thursday, June 11 and Saturday, August 22.
- Sunday Evening Cook Outs at the Wunder-Bonewalds on May 31 and August 16
Lori’s Vacation dates: July 6-13 (off July 12), July 24-26 (Family Weekend), August 3-10 (off August 9).

Minutes by Stephanie West, Clerk Pro Tem, edited by Moderator Lori Wunder for newsletter





Volunteer Thanks

Laura Werkman sends out a big thank you to those who provided meals for Rod and Marge Davies. Those who provided delicious meals included: Becky Ahrens, Barb Bjork, Connie Boettcher, Susan Brust, Bob & Jeanette Madson, Linda Nost, Rozanne Petrick, Beth Simon, and Stephanie West. Your culinary skills were greatly appreciated.

And thank you to Laura for coordinating the schedule of volunteers to provide meals for the Davies!

Volunteer Thanks

Thank you to the Saturday, April 25th, Church Work Day Crew who stopped by to beautify our church. Though the weather provided much needed rain outside it allowed work efforts to focus on projects inside the church.

Those who were able to help included: Al & Becky Ahrens, Don Burch, Mary Clare Coulter, Pam Mott, Rozanne Petrick, and Laura Werkman. It takes people like you to keep our church in good repair and a welcoming and inviting place to worship.

Many hands made light work.
Bless each of you!



Come as You Can Cook Outs Sunday, May 31 and August 16

5:00-7:00pm at the Wunder-Bonewald's
(230 Scobey Road NW)

- Grilled entrée, beverage and table service provided
- Please bring a dish to share if you can (if not, just bring yourself!)
- Lawn chairs and games are welcome additions

Everyone is welcome!
Come as you can for a time of food
and fellowship!

New Members' Class Sundays May 31, June 7, June 14 11:00-Noon in the Community Room

If you are interested in joining more formally in the life of First Pres Mount Vernon, or just want to learn about what a Presbyterian is, please join us for this series of classes.

May 31 – Sharing Our Stories
(How did you get to this church and what keeps you coming back?)

June 7 – Presbyterian 101

**June 14 – What First Pres Mount Vernon
is All About**

**To sign up or for more information, talk with
Pastor Lori!**

Children and Youth News

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. Watch for details!

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

Amy Weber

This Year's VBS is
Sunday, July 12 through Thursday, July 16
6:00 - 8:35 pm at
the United Methodist Church



Children 4 years old (by 7/1/15) through those entering 5th grade are encouraged to join our climbing team by registering to be a part of Everest VBS! (Preschoolers must be potty trained) Older kids are encouraged to

Cost is \$15.00 per youth (which includes a Everest VBS t-shirt and 5 Bible Buddies).

Register online at <https://www.groupvbspro.com/vbs/ez/MtVernonLisbonVBS/gpgs/Home.aspx> OR find the link on the First Presbyterian Church of Mount Vernon Facebook Page.

For more information or to RSVP, visit campwyoming.net or call (563) 488-3893.

2015 MAY MADNESS

Saturday, May 30th 9am-3pm 9106 42nd Ave., Wyoming, IA

A day for work and play at Camp Wyoming! Come tour the site, participate in camp activities, and meet the summer staff. Volunteers are also needed to help with work projects and preparing the camp for the summer. Snacks and lunch provided. The event is totally **FREE!**

campwyoming.net | (563) 488-3893 | office@campwyoming.net



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
Or find a brochure outside the Sunday School rooms

Coming in June... Mark Your Calendar Mount Vernon Community Blood Drive

Fellowship Hall at First Presbyterian Church of Mount Vernon will again be the site of this year's community blood drive. The date is Tuesday, June 23rd from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm. The Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center is the provider of blood products and serviced to patients at Mercy Medial Center and Unity Point - St. Luke's Hospital.



**MISSISSIPPI VALLEY
REGIONAL BLOOD CENTER**

How life flows through our community.®

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.



**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!



- 2—Christopher Johnson
- 2—Alex Moore
- 4—Ann Koppenhaver
- 4—Elizabeth Minor
- 4—Mary Palmer
- 9—Jeanette Madson
- 11—Logan Ericson
- 13—Linda Burge
- 14—Pat Barrett
- 16—Diane Clay
- 24—Pam Jerabek
- 25—Traci Rezabek
- 25—Ryan Whitman
- 28—Kari Pendergrass

Please contact the church office if we missed your birthday.



Deb Klopp will be out of the office on May 5th and 6th. Beginning May 13th through June 12th she will be working in the church office Tuesday through Friday afternoons 12:45 pm-3:45 pm. She will resume her normal morning office hours 9:30 am to 12:30 pm on June 16th.

During this time Pastor Lori will be in the office most mornings but it would be best to call first to make sure she is available.



May 2015
Worship Every Sunday 9:30 am



| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|--|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 <i>9:30 am Worship Communion</i> | 4 <i>Office Closed</i> | 5 <i>7:00-9:00 pm Art Class, Community Room</i> Deb Klopp—Out of Office | 6 <i>6:30 Wacky Wednesday Worship, Fellowship Hall</i> | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 <i>9:30 am Worship Birthday Blessing</i> <i>2:00 pm—4:00 pm Healing Touch Circle, Community Room (appointment needed)</i> | 11 <i>Office Closed</i> <i>6:00 BUNKO Fellowship Hall</i> | 12 <i>7:00-9:00 pm Art Class, Community Room</i> <i>6:30 Cancer Support Group Fellowship Hall</i> | 13 <i>1:30 TLC, Hallmark Care Center, Mt Vernon</i> | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 <i>9:30 am Worship</i> | 18 <i>Office Closed</i> <i>2:00 PM Knitting Group @ Diane Clay's</i> <i>6:30 pm Session, Community Room</i> | 19 <i>7:00-9:00 pm Art Class, Community Room</i> | 20 <i>10:00-4:00 Quilting Group, Fellowship Hall (Connie Boet- tcher)</i> | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 <i>9:30 am Worship</i> | 25 <i>Office Closed</i> | 26 <i>7:00-9:00 pm Art Class, Community Room</i> | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 <i>9:30 am Worship</i> <i>5-7 Cook Out @ Wunder-Bonewald's</i> | | | | | | |

Worship in May

We are nearing the end of our year with the Narrative Lectionary. During the month of May—and the last four Sundays of the Easter Season—we will finish up the stories of the early church with readings from Romans.

True confessions time: I do not enjoy reading the letters (also known as the epistles). While there are some passages I really love (Romans 8 and Philippians 4, for example), they are heavy on theology and short on narrative, which make them more difficult to preach. However, I almost always find something of value when I wrestle with the more difficult texts.

A bit of background:

Romans is a letter written by the apostle Paul sometime between 56 and 58 CE to the early Christian believers (both Jews and Gentiles) in Rome. One of Paul's main themes and favorite words is God's "righteousness." It can mean holiness, faithfulness, integrity, life-saving power, justice but one thing is for certain—for Paul, humans were created to share in God's righteousness, and through it we are given new life so that we might practice God's righteousness in our daily lives.

May 3 – Intro to Romans

Fifth Sunday of the Easter Season

Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Romans 1:1-17 Including the customary greeting and thanksgiving portions of letters of this day, Paul writes that, "God's righteousness is being revealed in the gospel, from faithfulness for faith, as it is written, 'The righteous person will live by faith. (v 17)'"

May 10 – God's Love Poured Out

Sixth Sunday of the Easter Season

May Birthday Blessing

Ordination/Installation of Teaching Elders

Romans 5:1-11 ...the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us (v 5)

May 17 – New Life in Christ

Seventh Sunday of the Easter Season

Roman 6:1-14 We were buried with Christ by baptism into death so that we might walk in newness of life. And therein we find hope.

May 24 – Nothing Can Separate Us

Pentecost Sunday – Wear RED!

Acts 2:1-4 The story of the first Pentecost & Romans 8:18-39 The groaning of creation, the Spirit helps us in our weakness, nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

May 31 – TBA

