



Hilltop Highlights

Worshipping, learning, and serving together in the name of Jesus

From The Pastor



Lenten Supper and Bible Study
“The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” (Mark 1:1)

This Lent we will again be doing our five week Lenten Supper and Bible Study beginning on Thursday, March 9th at 6:00 PM and running until Thursday, April 6th.

I will be teaching out of Rowan Williams’ (former Archbishop of Canterbury) book entitled “Meeting God in Mark.” You do not need the book, but I would be glad to order you a copy if you are interested. It is a short read, not overly “churchy” and very accessible. Mark just happens to be my favorite Gospel. It is also the shortest! Mark tells the story of “The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God” in a very straightforward and terse way. Sort of a “just the facts” kind of style. I like that!

Archbishop Williams has this to say about his study of Mark...
“Mark has often been rather ignored in the Church because it has comparatively little about Jesus’ early life, teaching ministry and resurrection appearances; and conversely, by some, it has been seen as the simple and unadorned version of a story that Matthew, Luke and (especially) John then surround with complexities. It is true that Mark’s brevity and intensity set it apart; but it is a mistake to think that this means it is naïve and “primitive”. Mark is shot through with deeply theological perspectives, but Mark manages to embody these insights in a whole range of skillful storytelling techniques and turns of phrase. Putting great depth into apparently simple stories is something requiring enormous skill, and Mark is a great artist in this respect.

Continued on page 3

Holy Week 2017

April 13th- Our Maundy Thursday Worship Service will start at 7:00pm. Child care will be provided. (No dinner will be served this evening.)

April 16th Easter Sunday:

- ◆ Worship Services will be at 8:30 am and 10:30 am.
- ◆ Everyone is invited to the Easter breakfast served by the Deacons at 9:30 am.
- ◆ Children’s Treasure Hunt 9:45 am.
- ◆ Nursery Care provided during both services.
- ◆ No Sunday School classes will be held.

Church Office will be closed on Friday, April 14th and Monday, April 17th

March 2017



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We Keep In Prayer



- ◆ Prayers for Jay Beasley and his family. Jay is on home hospice as his cancer has spread to his liver and bone marrow and other places. Jay would appreciate phone calls and/or visits.
- ◆ Prayers of healing for Kim Grenon who is having heart problems.
- ◆ Prayers for Mona Klingler, sister of Sue Tabler, she undergoes treatment for her cancer.
- ◆ Prayers of thanksgiving for successful surgery to reposition Gary Marks' dialysis tube. Gary is at home and being treated with antibiotics. Prayers for a new kidney to become available soon.

Directory Update:

Marylou Hegarty:
6021 Grand Lodge Ave. #302a
Papillion, NE 68133

Grace Hartranft:
101 North Mill St #402
Ridgway, PA 15853

We are looking for 2 or 3 - 18 quart roasters for the kitchen. If you have one that you are no longer using and would like to donate to the church please set on the kitchen counter.



We have registered for a promotion with The Egg and I in Bellevue. If you take the latest Sunday bulletin (**each person must have a bulletin**) any time during the month and give it to the server they will attach it to the dining receipt and donate 10% of that total to the church. We will receive a check each month for the total amount donated. If we are the top church that month we will receive an additional \$100.00.

Bakersplus.com

Baker's is offering the community rewards program again in 2017. You **will not** need to re-enroll. The church receives on average **\$350.00** each quarter from this program



Each quarter, the AmazonSmile Foundation will make a donation to First Presbyterian Church. When first visiting AmazonSmile, customers are prompted to select a charitable organization where .5% of their eligible purchases will be donated to our church.



If you are not an AmazonSmile customer please log in to Amazon.com and go to help and type in Amazon Smile . Click on the Amazon Smile logo and you will be prompted get started and to select an organization. You must be logged in to Amazon Smile (<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/47-0379376>) to shop in order for your purchases to qualify.

If you are already an AmazonSmile customer and have selected an organization and you wish to change to First Presbyterian Church you can do so by going to Amazon.com and repeating the steps above.

From The Pastor

Mark is challenging us not simply to read but to expose ourselves to a new and transforming relationship with the figure at the heart of the story. The point of the Gospel is that we should encounter there a reality alarmingly beyond human expectation and human capacity; and that through this encounter we should be changed bit by bit into the sort of person who can actually understand what is asked from us and what has been made possible for us in the life and death and rising of Jesus.”

Now, I don't know about you, but that sounds like a tall order from a short book and from the shortest Gospel! Join with me as we look at Mark with fresh eyes and find out how he uniquely tells the Good News of Jesus Christ.

A reading list that allows you to read Mark's Gospel in seven weeks is available in the church office. If you are interested in having your own copy of Williams' book, I would be glad to order it for you.

Yours in Christ, *Pastor Mike*

“One Great Hour of Sharing”

Having access to water affects all aspects of community life and growth. Matee Kakoo tells the story of her community in eastern Kenya before and after a One Great Hour of Sharing-supported sand dam was built.

Ms. Kakoo had lived in Mbangulo for 40 years and says, “the situation before the sand dam/shallow well was pathetic.” She notes that the people could not bathe and people from other areas mocked them because of their appearance. People went hungry because they didn't have enough water to cook food. Their primary school had insufficient classrooms because there was no water to make bricks. The children often missed school because they needed to fetch water for their families from one of two water points, between four and seven miles away. Fetching water was a time consuming activity, walking the distance, waiting in line four to five hours and then carting it back home by foot or donkey. It took most of the day, leaving little time for other activities like school or work or farming. Women were also at risk for being sexually assaulted on their long journey to get water.

When the people of Mbangulo were first approached about constructing a sand dam, they were enthusiastic. They quickly gathered local materials that were combined with additional donated construction materials to build the dam. The people worked very hard, and within a month the dam was constructed.

Today, children are in school and there is even a shallow well on the school grounds to provide for the school's needs—including new bricks for new classrooms. Bricks are made locally with several kilns that have sprouted up in the community. Permanent houses are being built. Food is more plentiful as the water allows people to grow gardens and they have more time to tend to them.

Some, mostly women, have started table banking to boost small businesses. “We have converted time taken to go for water into other income generating activities,” explains Ms. Kakoo. She reports that one group has accumulated the equivalent of over \$800 USD in their account.

Ms. Kakoo expresses her gratitude for what this water project has done for her community, “It will be remembered by generations to come.”



The One Great Hour of Sharing offering will be received during the worship services on Easter Sunday. Please give generously.



Ash Wednesday– For many years now, Avery Presbyterian and First Presbyterian have shared a meal and worship service on Ash Wednesday. This year’s event will be held at Avery Presbyterian Church 1910 Avery Rd East on Wednesday, March 1st. Dinner will begin at 5:45pm. Our congregation is asked to provide bread and dessert. A short worship service follows at 6:45pm.

Butter Braids are back!

Welcome School will be selling Butter Braids all four Sunday’s in March. The first two Sunday’s March 5th and 12th, Tara Williams the Director of Welcome School will be giving out samples during Coffee Fellowship. Order forms will be available each Sunday and Butter Braids are available in 7 flavors and are only \$12.00 each. Please place your order on the order form and pay when ordered. Delivery will be Sunday, April 23rd.



Join us for “TROLLS”



- What:** FREE Movie, Kid-Friendly Dinner & Crafts
We’ll get acquainted, eat dinner, and watch the movie . A variety of craft projects will be available after the movie.
- When:** Sunday, March 5th at 5 pm
- Where:** Fellowship Hall, 1st Presbyterian Church Bring your own pillow and/or blanket to be comfy on the floor. Bring a troll, if you have one.
- Who:** First Presbyterian Church & Welcome School families. Friends, relatives and neighbors too!
- Questions?** Call Linda Reffert in the Children’s Ministry Office at 402-291-1104 or email at lkreffert@aol.com



Lenten Suppers- Dinner will be offered each Thursday night during Lent starting March 9th through April 6th. Each week, a ministry of the church provides the meal which starts at 6:00pm in Fellowship Hall and will go until 7:30pm. The entire meal will be provided and a freewill offering will be accepted to cover the cost of the meal. Join us for a time of fellowship and reflection as we embark on this period of repentance and preparation for Christ’s passion.



Sunday, March 12th

Easter Lilies-Once again this year you have the opportunity to purchase an Easter Lily in memory or honor of your loved ones. The flowers will beautify our sanctuary on Easter morning and may be taken home after the 10:30 am service that day. They are \$10.00 each and can be ordered from the Worship Committee on Sunday mornings March 19th, 26th, April 2nd, and April 9th.





Spaghetti Dinner

Our Annual Spaghetti Dinner will be held Saturday, March 11th,
from 4:30pm– 7:30pm here at First Presbyterian Church.

Tickets are \$10.00 per person. There is no charge for children 5 and under. The menu includes all you can eat salad, spaghetti and meat or meatless sauce, bread, beverage and pie. “TAKEOUT” will be available.

Special Guest: Johnny Rodgers

There will also be Silent Auction and Raffle Items.

If you would like to donate to the Raffle or Silent Auction please have your items at the church no later than Wednesday, March 8th. Please indicate an approximate value and your name, phone number and address.

This event is a cooperative effort and all proceeds will be divided equally between Bellevue Public Schools TeamMates and First Presbyterian Church missions.

We hope you will participate in this fun evening and all-church fundraising effort!

How can you help?

- ☺ Buy tickets and sell tickets. (All volunteers will need a ticket)
- ☺ Bring your family, invite prospective members, friends, co-workers and neighbors.
- ☺ Sign-up at church to work a 2 – 2 ½ hour shift at the event.
- ☺ Please donate Raffle or Silent Auction items (bring them to church by Wednesday, March 8th).
- ☺ Unable to attend? Donate the price of a couple of tickets or more to help us defray expenses.

Tickets may be purchased in the church office between 8:30 am - 3:00 pm Monday through Thursday, or in the narthex on Sundays before or after church through March 5th.

If you are selling tickets please turn in your money and unsold tickets as soon as possible
no later than March 5th.

Please join us in working together to make this fundraiser a huge success?

THANKS IN ADVANCE for your help in making a difference in our community!

Join us for Ladies’ We are meeting on the **Fourth Thursday** of each month at noon. March 23rd we’ll meet at Summer Kitchen Café in Bellevue. Make your reservation by calling the church office at 402-291-1104 or e-mailing admin@bellevuefpc.org



Financial Information

	<u>January</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Income	\$45,993.24	\$45,993.24
Expenses	\$44,016.72	\$44,016.72
Difference	\$1,976.52	\$1,976.52

Hands on Mission Opportunity

The mission committee of First Presbyterian Church is sponsoring a mission outreach activity for **Tuesday, March 28, 2017 from 1:00-4:00 pm** in the afternoon. We would like a minimum of 12 interested individuals to help pack supplies for the FoodBank for the Heartland Backpack program at the Foodbank Omaha location at 10525 J St, Omaha. The minimum age for participants is 16. One in five kids in Nebraska and western Iowa under the age of 18 is at-risk for hunger. Staff members at local elementary schools identify chronically hungry students then Food Bank for the Heartland supplies packs filled with nutritious food for those children to take home on Friday afternoons. Each pack provides two breakfast meals and two lunch or dinner meals. The Backpack Program distributes 8300 packs to children in need each week in 228 schools across Nebraska and western Iowa. Please consider participating with us on March 28th to help feed the hungry. Sign-up sheet is available in the narthex.



Crossroads Connections Dinner



Crossroads Connection ministers to current inmates at Omaha Work Release Center and provides social services to former inmates who are transitioning to outside life. They conduct a weekly Sunday evening worship service attended by inmates, former inmates, sponsors and volunteers. Providing the meal and worship service is an outreach that our congregation has participated in for many years. Our next event is on Sunday, April 9th. This is an excellent outreach to volunteer for because you decide what level of participation interests you.

- We need salads and desserts for the meal. These can be prepared ahead of time and delivered to the church on the day of the event.
- We also need help preparing the meal. The time commitment varies based upon the meal.
- You can also go with us to serve the meal. We meet here at the church at 5:00 pm and carpool to the location of the dinner. We usually return by 9:00 pm.

Thank you for your support of this ministry over the years and in the future!

Annual Garage Sale



Annual Church Garage Sale Saturday, April 29th 8:00 AM-1:00 PM

Clean out your basement, closets and garage, of all those unwanted things and bring them to the church the week of April 24th – 28th, from 9:00 AM to 7:00 PM. Please, no tires, chemicals, computers, computer monitors, mattresses, adult clothing, rear projection, console or CRT TVs or items that are dirty, don't work or are broken.

**ABSOLUTELY NO DONATIONS AFTER
4:30 PM FRIDAY the 28th.**

All proceeds from the sale will go to local mission. If you can volunteer your time that week as well as work the day of the sale we need folks to sort and price items. There will be signup sheets in the foyer. Even if you can only work a few hours that will help greatly.

Thank you, your Fellowship Committee.

The annual church garage sale, scheduled for April 29th is in need of someone with a pickup truck and several strong folks to assist to pick up large donated items during the week of April 24th – 28th.

If you have a truck and /or willing to assist please contact Ed Hink, 402-291-3304 or hink4@cox.net.

BOYS TOWN GUIDED TOUR AND SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Sunday, April 30th at 2PM

Father Flanagan's "BOYS TOWN" is celebrating its 100th Anniversary this year. A special tour and presentation have been scheduled for FPC families and friends. We will meet at the Visitors center (Main Entrance) at 1:45PM. There will be a guided tour of the dozens of sights and attractions starting at 2PM, and then we will all gather for a special power-point presentation at the award winning interactive Hall of History Museum at 3PM. The formal part of the visit will end around 4PM. Prior to our visit, log on to the Boys Town website for a virtual tour at www.boystown.org.

Since 1917, the village of Boys Town has been a beacon of healing and hope for millions of children and families. Each year, Boys Town provides compassionate treatment through services that touch the lives of two million people nationwide.

The main entrance to Boys Town is located on the south side of West Dodge Road between 132nd and 144th Streets. The exact address is 14057 Flanagan Boulevard. Let's carpool---and be sure to bring your smart phones/cameras for the numerous photo opportunities available.

There will be a sign-up sheet located in the Church Foyer. Please join us on April 30th for an education filled afternoon of fun and fellowship at Boys Town. Please contact Bob Jeffus with any questions or if you need additional information.

OUR CHURCH FOUNDATION INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

Did you know? We all can extend our Christian influence by making financial gifts to our Church Foundation. For example, over 30 years ago, two endowments were created to recognize the donor's passion for children/youth and mission. Over time, income from investments has grown to add significant support each year to those two operating budgets.

Legacy Planned Giving

A gift as part of a will or estate plan can help ensure that the ministries that mean the most to you will continue into the future. With planned giving, you decide what and how to give.

Giving in the Near Term

An asset (cash or securities preferred) allows you to see your gifts work during your lifetime. Near term gifts may offer a financial planning advantage to you. Consider designating gifts as memorials or special occasion gifts (birthday, anniversary, graduation).

Gifts to the Foundation can be unrestricted or restricted. The Session determines the purpose for unrestricted gifts. You designate what ministry area to support with your restricted gift.

Gifts to the Foundation are invested with a professional investment advisory firm. The Church Foundation Board oversees Foundation investments. To discuss how to make financial contributions to the Foundation, contact one of the current Board members: Landy Jacobson (President), Tom Miller (Treasurer), Curt Hart, Walt Griffiths (Secretary), John Dawson, Mary Bond and Dick Brown.

You can also pick up a *Foundation Building Church, Ministry, and Legacy* brochure by the table with name tags.

DEBT PAY-OFF CAMPAIGN UPDATE

As of February 23, 2017

GOOD NEWS: Our church debt was refinanced in early October 2016 with American National Bank. The terms are 5 year fixed at 3.7% with monthly payments of \$6,372.98. The REFI SAVED the church over \$16,000 in interest expense. There is the potential to save another \$12,000 to \$18,000 if we pay off the loan EARLY--in 2-3 years---instead of 5 years. Therefore, the Debt Pay Off Campaign has been extended until the loan is fully paid off. It has also been redefined so the contributions can be used to make the monthly loan payments as well as to accelerate the debt pay-off. Session unanimously approved these changes at the Nov 17, 2016 meeting.

In light of the extended and redefined Debt Pay-Off Campaign, please prayerfully consider continuing/increasing your generous giving to paying off the remaining debt. If you have already pledged, we encourage you to amend and increase your pledge to cover the two-year period 2017 and 2018. If you have not yet pledged, we encourage you to do so. Please use the RED pledge card located on the name tag table. Please use the PINK envelopes for your contributions.

MORE GOOD NEWS. The outstanding loan balance is now down to \$311,512---from \$750,000 in July 2013. So far we have received 36 pledges to the Debt Pay-Off Campaign totaling \$75,480. Contributions received are at \$56,451 including 14,041 in unpledged donations.

Wouldn't it be marvelous if we could have the loan fully paid off in 2-3 years instead of 5 years? Along with the refinancing package this would save the church about \$30,000 in interest expense, plus free up money every year for future church growth and mission work.

Thank you again for your generous giving toward paying off our remaining church debt. As a church family we are truly Blessed. If you have any questions, please contact me or Eric Van Sky (Financial Secretary).

Bob Jeffus
(402) 733-2642
Chair, Stewardship Committee

UPDATE ON 2017 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

Current results---as of February 19, 2017---show 101 pledges totaling \$247,808. Our goal this year is to receive pledges totaling about \$264,000. This reflects an increase of about 5.3% over last year's pledged amount. So far we have received contributions of \$44,869 which includes \$12,150 of pre-paid pledges from December 2016.

To those of you who have turned in your 2017 pledge---we sincerely thank you. If you haven't yet turned in your 2017 pledge, please do so using the white pledge card. Additional cards are located in the pews or on the Name Tag table in the Foyer. Please use the white envelopes for your contributions, and be sure to include your envelope number if you are using a generic envelope. For any questions regarding the 2017 Stewardship Campaign please contact me or our Financial Secretary, Eric Van Sky.

Bob Jeffus
Chair, Stewardship Committee



This picture does not do it justice!
Please stop by Fellowship Hall to see the real thing. The Disciples' Cross, consisting of twelve blocks in the cross, began with a random observation that men seldom wear neckties in church. The thought became an idea, then a tiny sketch which evolved into an original pattern. So many people were involved in this project. In addition to the men who gave up their beautiful ties, Linda Reffert found a new place for the cross that the children made. The quilt was perfectly installed by Jack, Ken, Carl and Landy. June photo copied and framed the quilt label and Pastor Mike gave us his enthusiastic interest and support throughout the project. It is presented in Loving Memory of Ann Trinkle, a beloved member of Piecemakers who helped in the early planning of this quilt.

(Can you find your necktie?)

Thank you all, The Piecemakers

Making a Joyful Noise!!

The choir knows, but probably not all of the congregation that Rebecca Taylor Horton, wonderful choir member, flutist, among other things is moving the day after Easter. I asked her to prepare a biography (see below), and she did a wonderful job, as always! We are going to miss her so much, and I think one of the greatest honors I had was that she called me her "Omaha Mom". If you would like to send her a card thanking her for her service, she will be at 3110 Pease Dr, Bellevue, NE 68123, until March 30th. After that, you can send her card to the church, 1220 Bellevue Blvd South, 68005, and I will make sure she gets them. Sure will miss you Rebecca! (But as you know, San Antonio is not far from Austin, where I go to spoil grandbabies!) The Renners will see you again!

I was born in Morganton, North Carolina and raised between Marion, North Carolina and Stoneville, North Carolina. I was a member of First Presbyterian Church in Marion. I enlisted in the Air Force in 2003 after two years of college and have been stationed here at Offutt since May of 2004. I am a Data Operator on the E-4B and I am the Wing Scheduler.

I drove to Bellevue from North Carolina with my dad and before he would leave me to go back home, he insisted that I find a church. We drove around Bellevue and found First Presbyterian. There happened to be a Session meeting that night and I was lucky enough to meet a few of the people in this church that I consider friends and mentors. I knew immediately I had found my church home. I joined the church in July of 2004.

I have been singing in the choir since September of 2004, I played handbells for a few years and have served on the Fellowship committee, as a Deacon, and currently on the Worship Committee and an Elder. I have also been the resident flutist for the choir and handbells.

In February 2010, I met Nathan at a birthday party for a co-worker. We became friends and started dating in April of 2010. He is from Dayton, Ohio and is also enlisted as Security Forces Defender. He deployed to Afghanistan in August of 2010 and to United Arab Emirates in October 2015. We were married in the church in November of 2013.

I graduated with my degree in Biology/Psychology/Military Studies in 2016 (finally) after working to finish my degree for 15 years.

We received orders to move to Lackland AFB in San Antonio, Texas in April. We are excited for our new adventure but the move is bittersweet. We will definitely miss our church family and I will miss all my friends and mentors who have been there for me since my dad dropped me off. There are too many to mention by name and some who are no longer with us, but I wouldn't be where I am without the support and love of each of them.

Welcome School



There's no such thing as the Winter Blues at Welcome School! Our mornings have been filled with winter wonders no matter the weather. The children have enjoyed our Post Office, Grocery Store, and Space centers these last few weeks. There were many fun activities in each class. All of the classes had "Hearts of Kindness". The children write down some nice things they've done for others onto a heart. They share them with the class and it is displayed on the wall.

Mrs. Bishop's class was knee deep in dinosaurs: arranging dinosaur shape art, creating dinosaur fossils, and digging for dinos in the sensory sand box. When it was too cold to play outside, the teachers brought the outside in by letting the children paint snow with watercolors.

Mrs. Souerdyke's class enjoyed their annual Hot Chocolate Party, which was a true success if the children are wearing a bit of hot chocolate on their noses for the day. The children had a grand time climbing high up in the sky on our wonderful "fear-conquering" climber. The children also played in the water with some fun Valentine objects.

Mrs. McCann's crew had such fun making and eating "Perfectly Pink Pancakes" in honor of "P" week. They had a great time learning about animals in winter. And they did some out of this world space exploration.

Registration for the 2017-2018 school year has begun for current Welcome School families. Open registration will begin on March 1st. Be sure to tell all of your friends and family about our wonderful school.



Children's Ministry



Linda Reffert

CHANGE IN DATES! I added a couple weeks to the Wednesday evening program (WOW) this year. It's so much fun and so worthwhile and so I added dates. I checked with a couple of different people about conflicts. But not the right people, apparently. Or not enough people. Anyway, the last evening for WOW is supposed to be April 26th but that conflicts with the church Garage Sale. People will be working all week to fill the Fellowship Hall full of goodies to be sold on Saturday the 29th. And we can't have a dinner, much less a graduation in Fellowship Hall that Wednesday. So, short story turned long – the last WOW, including 6th Grade Graduation will now be April 19th. And the 3rd – 6th grade Retreat from 6 to 10 PM will now be Friday, April 21st.

Our March Family Movie Night is coming up quickly! Please plan to join us for a FREE kid-friendly dinner on Sunday, March 5th at 5 PM. After dinner, we will watch the new-released movie TROLLS on the big screen in Fellowship Hall and then do some troll-related crafts. Bring your pillow and blanket if you'd like, and bring a troll if you've got one. As always, you are welcome to bring neighbors and relatives.

Another important date for Children's Ministry is July 24th. That's the first day of VBS this year. VBS will run the 24th through the 28th from 9 AM to 12 noon. I think when VBS signs start going up around town, you will notice that we aren't doing the same VBS as ANYONE else this year! We're going to revisit an especially good program from 2010 and do "High Seas Adventures". I have started recruiting my VBS team and I think it's worth extra jewels in your crown if you volunteer to help before I come begging! I know who my Science, Bible Story and Music teachers are, and a couple of crew leaders, but I don't have any other spots filled, so speak up quick and grab the position you want most! Just ask me if you'd like a list of what's available. I'd love, love, love to give it to you!

At the end of January I attended the national conference of Presbyterian Christian Educators in Denver, Colorado. It was an awesome conference with worship every day and nationally renowned pastors and speakers. I had a great mix of practical application workshops and "big-picture" theoretical workshops and I came back to First Presbyterian very inspired! I'm starting to work on writing WOW curriculum for next fall based on one of my workshops on World Religions. Helping our kids to strengthen their own Christian faith, while understanding and respecting more about other faiths around the globe, is my goal.

The other thing I came home pumped about is making more efforts toward furthering intergenerational relationships. Faith is so much more relational than we used to know. Not just with God, although that's tops of course, and not just with peers, although that's also important. But there is so much data out there that supports the idea that for kids to grow up to be active adult Christians, they have to go off to college or out in the world secure in at least 5 solid relationships with church members of other generations who are not related to them.

One of our efforts to promote intergenerational faith relationships is our Church Grandparent program. Thanks go out to: Mike & Sue Tabler, Nancy Shultz, George Sayles and Michelle Thompson for being the first to sign up. We need about 30 more to volunteer. Please sign up, if you are available to join us for 15 to 30 minutes in Sunday School on Sunday, May 21st and you are 50 or over. You will be assigned a child to "grandparent". You'll have a chance to bless them (I'm providing the blessing unless you want to write your own). Then you and your assigned child will promise to pray for each other over the summer and to check in when you see each other at worship. It's pretty easy and low key. But it could be awesome. I am praying it is awesome for both you and the kids!



March Youth Fellowship (YF) News

Gen 2:7 "Then the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being."
Gen 3:19 "By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."
John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

Ash Wednesday is the beginning of Lent, the time to prepare for Jesus death and resurrection with 40 days of devotions or reflection or fasting from a bad habit or favorite food. A new twist on the fasting idea is starting a new habit, daily exercise or meditation or reading to better yourself. How ever you observe Ash Wednesday it's interesting to put the three scriptures listed above into context. During the service ash is traditionally put on someone's forehead with the words from dust you came and to dust you will return. But the cool thing is the ash is actually from burning the palm fronds from Palm Sunday. So yes, Genesis is true we will go back to dust but the reminder is with Jesus' sacrifice that is not the end or our stories, we are blessed with the grace of eternal life. Thank you God!



I got some late pictures from a our last luncheon and just had to share them with you all. This is the craziness of doing a luncheon, never a dull moment, and lots of laughs and fun and of course hard work. Two of the many reasons I love these kiddos!

March 1st is Ash Wednesday. We are having our soup supper at Avery this year with dinner at 5:45 and a short worship service at 6:45. We will not have Illuminate or Confirmation that day but I hope you all will join us for a very special service. If you family is not going, please let me know and I will be sure to save you a seat at our table. Our church is asked to bring bread and dessert but don't worry if you can't just come join us!

We are working on Youth Sunday the entire month during Sunday School and Wednesdays at Illuminate but you all have homework too. Please make sure you are checking your study Bibles for scripture that will fit our theme, thinking of shirt ideas, and listening to Christian radio to get song ideas. This is a beautiful service and I am excited to get started.



Youth Sunday is April 2nd with a lock-in March 31st. Please make sure both dates are on your calendar and remember the lock-in is the only time we have to run the entire service so it's

critical you are all there. Thanks!

Thanks be to God that the end of our story is only the beginning of grace and blessing and eternal life in Jesus. Be mindful of that gift this month.

Be a Blessing!
Shelli

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- March Youth Events**
- 🌴 Mar 1 Ash Wednesday at Avery 5:45 dinner, 6:45 worship NO Illuminate or Confirmation
 - 🌴 Mar 5 Family Movie Night "Trolls" 5:00 pm
 - 🌴 Mar 22 No Illuminate - BPS Spring Break
 - 🌴 Mar 22 Confirmation 6:00 - 7:00 pm
 - 🌴 Mar 31 Youth Sunday Lock-in to practice and play 7:30 pm Friday to 8 am Saturday
 - 🌴 Apr 2 Youth Sunday 9 am practice 10:30 service
 - 🌴 Every Thursday in Lent join your church family for dinner and a brief worship service from 6 - 7 pm in Fellowship Hall.
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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Ash Wednesday 5:45p Ash Wednesday Service (Avery Pres.)	2 7p Fellowship Mtg (VVR) 7p Troop 467	3	4
5 Pantry Sunday 10:30a Worship Service 11:30a Congregational Meeting 11:30a Deacons Mtg (VVR) 5p Family Movie Night 7p Venture Crew 26	6 12p Bellevue Music Circle (FH) 1:15p Heritage Ridge 2p Harmony Court 2:45p Richmond Village 3:15p Richmond Terrace 6p Girl Scouts 7p Women's Bible Study (CR)	7 10:30a Staff Meeting (CR) 6p Mission Mtg (VVR) 7p Bells Rehearsal	8 8:45a PEO (VVR/FH) 5:30p Confirmation Class (CR) 5:30p W.O.W./Illuminate 6p Finance Mtg (Admin Ofc) 6:30p Building & Grounds Mtg (CR) 7p Choir Rehearsal	9 6p Lent Dinner (FH) 6:30p Membership (VVR) 7p Bible Study (Ritchey Home) 7p Troop 467 7:30p Worship Mtg (CR)	10	11 Spaghetti Dinner
12 10:30a Worship Service	13 6p Girl Scouts 7p Women's Bible Study (CR)	14 5:30p Christian Education Mtg (P/L) 7p Bells Rehearsal	15 5:30p Confirmation Class (CR) 5:30p W.O.W./Illuminate 7p Choir Rehearsal	16 6p Lent Dinner (FH) 7p Troop 467	17 St. Patrick's Day 1p PieceMakers Quilt Group	18
19 10:30a Worship Service 11:30a Foundation Meeting (VVR)	20 7p Venture Crew 26 7p Women's Bible Study (CR)	21 7p Bells Rehearsal	22 9a Bellevue Women's Club Ticket Return (VVR) 6p Confirmation Class (CR)	23 12p Ladies Lunch (Summer Kitchen) 6p Lent Dinner (FH) 7p Session (VVR) 7p Troop 467	24	25
26 Next Sunday Pantry Sunday 10:30a Worship Service	27 7p Women's Bible Study (CR)	28 7p Bells Rehearsal	29 5:30p Confirmation Class (CR) 5:30p W.O.W./Illuminate 7p Choir Rehearsal	30 6p Lent Dinner (FH) 7p Troop 467	31 7p Youth Lock-In	Notes:

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Mai l i n g A d d r e s s L i n e 1
M a i l i n g A d d r e s s L i n e 2
M a i l i n g A d d r e s s L i n e 3
M a i l i n g A d d r e s s L i n e 4
M a i l i n g A d d r e s s L i n e 5

March Birthdays:



2 Ken Trinkle	13 Grace Hartranft	21 Nadine Buckley
3 Jean Martin	13 Sarah Shewchuk	22 Wendy Renter
3 Ryan Wagner	13 Melissa Young	23 John Lytle
3 Joyce Wells	15 Patricia Buck	23 Colin Stilen
4 Mada Briggs	15 John Dart	26 Harlan Lewis
4 Wendy Fenster	16 Dirk Lindner	28 Mandi Crick
4 Abby Ellison	17 Joy Hartranft	28 Sylvia Thompson
4 Christopher Reilly	17 Rick Johnson	30 AnaBelle Betz
9 Alice Grenon	17 Christine Lytle	30 Genie Fox
10 Brian Wells	18 Amber Renter	31 Elaine Smith
13 Alfred Grenon	20 Jay Beasley	31 Kelsi Smith