FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BERTHOUD

Parish Sounds

March 2018

A Newsletter for Members and Friends of First Presbyterian Church of Berthoud

"A TRADITION OF SERVING GOD AND COMMUNITY"

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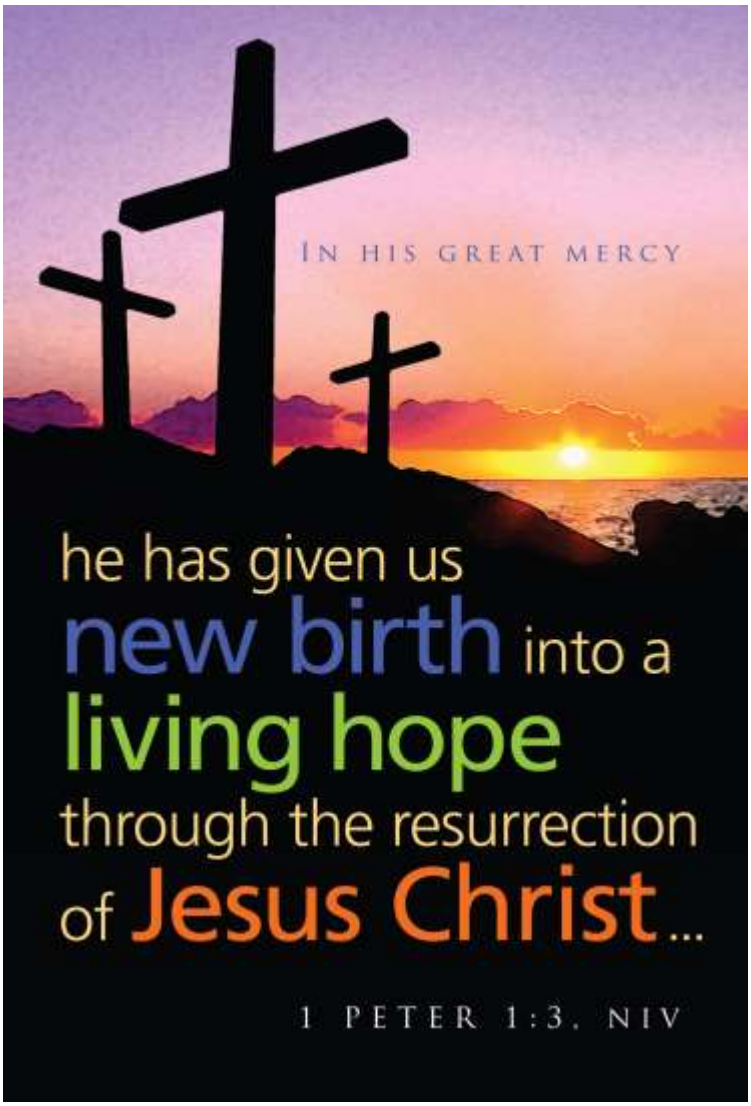

Adult Bible Study–8:30am
Worship Service–10:00am

Nursery Available
During Worship

Office Hours:
Monday–Thursday
9:00am–1:00pm

531 8th Street
PO Box 1290
Berthoud, CO 80513
(970) 532-2192

office@firstpresberthoud.org
www.firstpresberthoud.org

Emergency Numbers: (412) 302-8612 — Pastoral
(970) 631-3374 — Property

PASTOR'S PEN

"As the Father sent me, so I send you."
~ John 20:21

In case you didn't notice, only Christians came to our Ash Wednesday service. Aside from people who regularly worship here and already profess faith in Christ, no one else came. That may not strike you as odd. After all, many less traditional Christians in our community don't even celebrate Ash Wednesday. *Why would someone who's unchurched pick that day to walk through our doors?* Maybe it's not surprising, but it reveals a much deeper challenge confronting the Church today.

Perhaps we should start by asking, *Why would anyone who's unchurched walk through our doors on* any *Sunday?* For centuries the Church has assumed a cultural privilege in Western culture. Even people who weren't regular attenders in worship services decades ago still had an inkling of what Church was about. But times have changed. During the twentieth century, Sunday School attendance in Britain dropped from 55 percent of children in the country to a mere 4 percent. The United States has followed a similar trajectory. In 2001, the unchurched population in the United States was high enough that, if it were its own country, it would be the fifth most populated nation on earth. Those statistics and trends mean that the number of people without any church background is increasing around us. If they don't have any church background, attendance at a Sunday worship service or Bible study *is not* the first place they will go when they are spiritually hungry.

In the words of Dubuque Theological Seminary professor Chris James, "As the population of those willing to attend a worship service as a first step in their spiritual journey shrinks and the number of those who are unchurched, unaffiliated, and uninterested rises, it is time to recognize that worship services, no matter how we redesign them, will not suffice as the assumed entry point into the life of the church." *So, if spiritual seekers aren't going to automatically walk through the doors of our church, how do we reach out to them?* James says we need to "experiment with ways in which the core ecclesial practices of worship, fellowship, and mission might open out into environments in which outsiders can experience real community, serve the common good, and engage in spiritual exploration" (*New Worshiping Communities: A Theological Exploration,* p. 33). What James is suggesting here is that we have to find ways to express our faith *outside the walls of our church building*. Those ways may include working for the good of our community alongside non-Christians, building real relationships with people outside the Church, and even engaging in our spiritual disciplines or practices of worship *in public*.

For an example of the latter, consider the "Ashes to Go" movement. In recent years, growing numbers of churches have started offering Ash Wednesday meditations and imposition of ashes *in public spaces*. Ministers and congregants may stand outside the church building or in a public park or on a busy sidewalk and offer ashes to strangers passing by. Others claim a table in a coffee shop or other public space and offer ashes to other patrons there. (See the image on the right, which two of my former students from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary used on social media to promote their Ashes to Go service at a hot dog shop in their neighborhood.) It sounds strange at first, but actions like this are surprisingly effective at generating new relationships and opening conversations about repentance. *When was the last time you had an unchurched friend ask you what repentance means?*

Our calling here at First Presbyterian Church may not be to imitate others in offering a public Ash Wednesday service, but we certainly are called to develop more relationships outside our walls. Jesus said, "As the Father sent me, so I send you." We are sent into the world to bear witness to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. So how will we do that?

When Shane Bennett spoke to us in January about mission among Muslims, he gave us all bookmarks with a helpful acronym: **AMORE**. While Shane applied each principle in the acronym to mission among Muslims, the principles apply equally well to our relationships with anyone who doesn't yet follow Jesus. Those letters, again, stand for:

- **A**ssume the best. A missionary can't reach people whom they fear. Give people the benefit of the doubt and assume the best about them. This will help you lower your guard and build the trust that's necessary to speak about spiritual matters.
- **M**ove toward opportunities. Take intentional steps toward relationships with people outside the Church. Consider where your social circles already extend beyond the Church. Join a club where people share your hobbies. Try to build authentic and trusting relationships where you can speak about faith with sensitivity to others' lives.
- **O**pen your heart. Especially with younger generations, vulnerability is essential to building trust. Are you willing to be changed by the relationships you make as well? Can you genuinely love those to whom God is sending you?
- **R**ead good stuff. Shane gave us book recommendations about world mission. I want to offer you book recommendations about evangelism and mission in our own backyard. This education is important because the methods of evangelism that worked decades ago are no longer helpful in our current cultural context. Feel free to ask to borrow any of these books from my office:
  - *I Once Was Lost* by Don Everts and Doug Schaupp. The authors listened to the stories of two thousand (!) people who have come to follow Jesus in today's culture. Based on these stories, Everts and Schaupp describe common patterns and thresholds through which postmodern people move on their journey toward Christ.
  - *The Mystic Way of Evangelism* by Elaine Heath. Though this is a more academic book, its approach resonates with our Lenten explorations of contemplative prayer. Deepening our spiritual lives makes us more plausible witnesses to Christ.
  - *Reimagining Evangelism* by Rick Richardson. In contrast to models of evangelism that turn Christians into pushy salespeople, Richardson paints a picture of evangelism as inviting friends to share a spiritual journey.
- **E**xpect God to move. God wants to draw new people into relationship with himself through Jesus Christ. Pray with the expectation that God will answer. Strike up conversations with the expectation that God will move through them.

No one who's not yet a Christian came to our Ash Wednesday service. Do you think anything different will happen when Holy Week and Easter arrive at the end of this month? In the words of the Apostle Paul, "How are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent?" (Romans 10:14–15). To whom might God send you as a witness to the crucified and risen Christ?

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Chris

CHURCH HAPPENINGS

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

The Women's Fellowship gathering will be held on Thursday, March 8, at 11:30 a.m. at Grace Place, 375 Meadowlark Dr. Information regarding proposed events at our last gathering will be shared. All ladies, even those with little ones, are welcome. A sign-up sheet will be at the back of the sanctuary. If you have any questions, please call Marian Thrush at 970-532-5989 (home) or 720-272-8213 (cell) or Ann Hughes at 970-576-8687.

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

The March Men's Fellowship Breakfast for everyone will be on Monday, March 5 at 8:00 a.m. All are welcome to the breakfast. All men are welcome to join in the coffee fellowship on Monday mornings at 8:00 a.m. during the rest of the month.

PRAYER CONCERNS

Please keep these folks in your prayers:

Our Homebound Members:

Barbara Schaal
Flossie Barrowman
Lorraine Thompson
Lorena Lebsack
Jean Hardin

Pray also for: Mike Salomonson; Mark Heim; the Lenz Family (Mission Family in Peru); Dale and Mary Ann Louis; our military serving around the world, veterans, government leaders; and local and national peacemakers and reconcilers.

DATES TO CELEBRATE

March 2	Julie Schnell
March 4	Sally Groves
March 7	Stan Edmisten
March 12	Megan Schnell
March 18	Dale Louis
March 18	Dee Metrock
March 22	Mike Salomonson
March 26	John Sommers
March 28	Ellen Etheridge
March 30	Greg Thrush
March 30	Marty Hyde

March 6	Chris & Dianne Pollock
March 22	Jack & Beth Sommers

If we have missed any birthdays or anniversaries, please call Marty Hyde *at (970) 532-2192.*

SESSION MEETING ~ January 27, 2018

- Lenten Devotionals will be available to distribute on Sunday, February 11.
- Our 2018 Easter Holy Week schedule will include the following:
  - A Maundy Thursday Service at 7:00 p.m.
  - A Good Friday Service and Prayer Vigil from 12:00 until 3:00 p.m.
  - An Easter Sunrise Service at 6:30 a.m. and a second service at 10:00 a.m.
    - We propose having a breakfast on Sunday morning following the sunrise service in lieu of the first Monday morning Men's Breakfast.
    - An Easter egg hunt will also be considered.
- There will be no Children's Church on Easter Sunday. Children will remain with their families.

Respectfully submitted,
Ruth Fletcher-Carter, Clerk Pro Tem

DEACONS MEETING ~ January 27, 2018

The Deacons met on Saturday, January 27, 2018, at 11:40 a.m. Deacons and Elders met for a joint training session at 9:00 a.m. Deacons met afterwards for their monthly meeting.

Congregational visits made during the month of January and all cards sent during the month were discussed. As always, birthday, anniversary, get well, thinking of you, and sympathy cards needed to be sent to members and friends of the church, as well as visitations needed for February were discussed. Thank you notes were read.

Donations were given to Warriors Path, Blessed Beginnings, and BHS Give Next Civics Philanthropy group.

We discussed the current needs in our congregation and how to best meet them and how to serve the community.

Please remember to stop and take time to visit or call a friend or homebound members. If you have a need or know of someone in our church or in our community who has a need, contact a deacon. We count on ALL of you to help keep us informed.

Deacons' next meeting will be March 6 at 7:00 p.m.

We thank you for your support. Good things are being done in our congregation and our community with your help!

Respectfully submitted,
Vivian Downing, Deacon

SESSION MEETINGS
7:00pm
2nd Monday of the month

DEACON MEETINGS
6:00pm
1st Tuesday of the month

Meeting times and dates may change to accommodate holidays and other schedules.

If you have a question, call the church office at 532-2192.

LENT AND HOLY WEEK — February 14 through April 1

LENT AND HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE AT FIRST PRES

Thursday, March 1 — Contemplative Prayer • 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 4 — Worship with Communion • 10:00 a.m.
Preparer Mark and Rebecca Johnson
Servers Karin Sommers, Jeremy Doan, Carey or Donna Salomonson

Thursday, March 8 — Contemplative Prayer • 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 11 — Worship with Communion • 10:00 a.m.
Preparer Mark and Rebecca Johnson
Servers Linda Olson, Sally Groves, Karin Sommers

Thursday, March 15 — Contemplative Prayer • 7:00 p.m.
with Special Guests, Ric and Betsy Haskins

Sunday, March 18 — Worship with Communion • 10:00 a.m.
Preparer Carolyn Kube
Servers Carolyn Kube, Ann Hughes, Barbara Losche

Thursday, March 22 — Contemplative Prayer • 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 25—Palm Sunday — Worship with Communion • 10:00 a.m.
Preparer Jeremy Doan
Servers Virgil Downing, Vivian Downing, Linda Olson

Thursday, March 29—Maundy Thursday — Service with FUMC at FPCB • 7:00 p.m.
Preparer Chris Brown
Servers Jeremy Doan, Ruth Fletcher-Carter, Marian Thrush

Friday, March 30–Good Friday — Prayer Vigil • 12:00–3:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 1—Easter Sunday — Sunrise Service • 6:30 a.m.
Breakfast • following Sunrise Service
Easter Egg Hunt • TBD
Worship with Communion • 10:00 a.m.
Preparer Joy Woodruff
Servers Karin Sommers,
Marian Thrush
Joy Woodruff

VERSE BY VERSE by Jerry Groves

Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb continued to spread the word. And many people, when they heard that he had performed this sign, went out to meet him.
~ John 12:17–18

Lazarus was a personal friend of Jesus, so naturally Jesus was interested when Lazarus took sick and died as a result of his illness. Jesus had been called about Lazarus' illness, but he died before Jesus could get there to see him. When Jesus finally did arrive, Lazarus was already in the tomb, and the opportunities to help him seemed slim, if not impossible.

It was in such a setting that the raising of Lazarus from the dead took place. Naturally this event received much press in that day. It is not every day that a person is brought back from the grave, and everyone was talking about it.

Our text tells us that the people continued to spread the word about Jesus, and those who heard about this even went out to meet him. If anybody has the keys to life and death . . . and Jesus does . . . they would want to meet him and get acquainted with him. The Scriptures teach . . . "In him was life" (John 1:4). To have this life that Jesus gives through the Holy Spirit is to have the promise of being raised from the dead ourselves, when that time comes for us. (See Romans 8:11.) Another Scripture found in John says the same thing in different words. "Because he lives, we will live also" (John 14:19).

THE SYMBOLISM OF THE EASTER EGG

For Christians, the Easter egg is symbolic of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The hard shell of the egg represents the sealed Tomb of Christ and cracking the shell represents Jesus' resurrection from the dead. Moreover, historically Christians would abstain from eating eggs and meat during Lent, and Easter was the first chance to eat eggs after a long period of abstinence (http://goo.gl/Lef9DG).

You can find more interesting information about Easter traditions online.

THANK YOU

To our church family,

Our family sends many thanks for all of the kind thoughts and prayers, text messages, and cards during this sad time of my mom's passing. We truly appreciate your love and support during the years of her illness and hard times and most recently when she struggled with pain and strokes. We are drawing strength from your love and friendship.

Love in Christ,

The Pollock Family

March 2018 ~ Activity Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 – 9am Wisdom Seekers Study – 7pm Contemplative Prayer	2 ***World Day of Prayer*** 	3
4 ***3rd Sunday of Lent*** – 8:30am Adult Sunday School – 10am Worship, Communion 	5 – 8am Men's Breakfast 	6 – 6pm Deacons – 6:30pm Al-Anon	7 – 9am Wisdom Seekers Leaders – 7pm Choir Practice	8 – 9am Wisdom Seekers Study – 11:30 Women's Luncheon – 7pm Cntmpltv Prayer	9	10
11 ***4th Sunday of Lent*** – 8:30am Adult Sunday School – 10am Worship, Communion 	12 – 8am Men's Fellowship – 7pm Session	13 – 6:30pm Al-Anon	14 – 9am Wisdom Seekers Leaders – 7pm Choir Practice	15 – 9am Wisdom Seekers Study ***Parish Sounds*** – 7pm Contemplative Prayer/Haskins	16	17
18 ***5th Sunday of Lent*** – 8:30am Adult Sunday School – 10am Worship, Communion 	19 – 8am Men's Fellowship	20 ***First Day of Spring*** – 6:30pm Al-Anon	21 – 7pm Choir Practice	22 – 7pm Contemplative Prayer	23	24
25 ***Palm Sunday*** – 8:30am Adult Sunday School – 10am Worship, Communion 	26 – 8am Men's Fellowship	27 – 6:30pm Al-Anon	28 – 7pm Choir Practice	29 ***Maundy Thursday*** – 7pm Worship, Communion 	30 ***Good Friday*** – 12–3pm Prayer Vigil 	31

WHO'S WHO

Pastor: Rev. Christopher Brown 532-2192
Choir Director/Organist: Neil Forsythe ..... (319) 830-2478
Clerk of Session: Julie Heim 532-4807
Financial Secretary: Ann Hughes..... 587-4057
Treasurer: Virgil Downing 622-8847
Bookkeeper: Lu Ann Hostetter..... 532-2192
Facility Manager: Karin Sommers 631-3373
Administrative Assistant: Marty Hyde 532-2192
Parish Sounds Editor: Marty Hyde 532-2192

SESSION

Julie Heim .....'18 532-4807
Bettie Dinsmore .....'18 532-3033
Joy Woodruff .....'18 412-0217
Ruth Fletcher-Carter .....'19 532-2681
John Sommers .....'19 631-3374
Virgil Downing .....'20 622-8847
Jeremy Doan .....'20 ..... (303) 550-1357

DEACONS

Karin Sommers.....'18 631-3373
Vivian Downing.....'18 622-8847
Marian Thrush .....'18 532-5989
Ray Gurney .....'19 ..... (303) 772-0957
Ann Hughes.....'19 587-4057
Linda Olson .....'19 ..... (720) 203-6395
Verna Covey.....'20 532-4815
Mark Johnson .....'20 532-5228
Rebecca Johnson .....'20 532-5228

SERVING SCHEDULES

USHERS

March 4
Chris Pollock
Dianne Pollock
Janice Gibb

March 11
Ann Hughes
Donald Houle
Dorothy Kurlander

March 18
Brent Anderson
Lois Anderson
Sally Groves

March 25
Linda Olson
Donald Houle
Niccole Deister

March 29 (Thursday)
_____
_____
_____

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

March 4
Ruth Fletcher-Carter

March 11
Jeremy Doan

March 18
Virgil Downing

March 25
Ruth Fletcher-Carter

COMMUNION SERVERS

See Page 6

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

March 4
Sally Groves
Barbara Losche

March 11
Jenni Doan
_____

March 18
Eileen Brown
_____

March 25
_____
_____

NURSERY ASSISTANTS

Month of March

_____

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

8:30am
Adult Bible Study

10:00am
Worship Service
Nursery Available

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"A TRADITION OF SERVING GOD AND COMMUNITY"

Holy Week at FPCB

March 25	Palm Sunday	10 a.m.
March 29	Maundy Thursday	7 p.m.
March 30	Good Friday Prayer Vigil	12 – 3 p.m.
April 1	Easter Sunday	6:30 a.m. and 10 a.m.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED