The Missive February 2017

First Presbyterian Church

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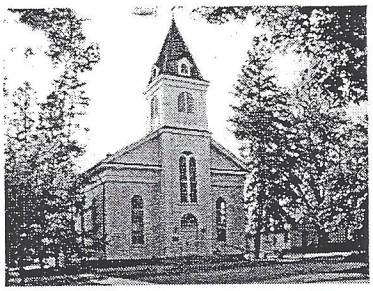


"A Teaching Church"

There was an interesting article this week in The Christian Century about education among religious groups. Worldwide the most educated religious group are Jewish people with an average of 13.4 year of schooling. Christians are second with about 9 years (9.5 for men, 9.1 for women), followed by unaffiliated people (9.2 men, 8.3 women), Buddhists (8.5 and 7.4), Muslims (6.4 and 4.9) and Hindus (6.9 and 4.2).

The study was hopeful because across all the groups, the younger generations were more educated, showing global progress and some evidence for the argument that Christian missionaries have been a positive influence on educational levels. I was also interested to see that the global data are different from the data in the United States. Because of immigration to receive education, 96 percent of Hindus in the US have college degrees, as do 54 percent of Muslims, compared to 36 percent of Christians.

This got me thinking about how important education is to us. As Presbyterians we have a long history of the importance of education. Our church is proud of the colleges and universities that have been founded by Presbyterians. The church has always supported public education in the United States. We also have always prided ourselves on having an educated clergy and we championed the Sunday School movement in previous centuries so that we would also have an educated laity.

As important as it has been to us historically, is education important to this church today? Is it important that this be a place of learning? Do we value educating adults as well as children? It is important that we know about the Bible, about great ideas of our faith, about the history of the church? Don't we learn about these things so that we may know Jesus better and follow him more faithfully? I hope all the answers to the questions are "Yes!" So how are we doing? Do you learn when you are at church?

I'm hoping to ask the Christian Education Team these questions in the next few months. I think that as our society changes, as modes of communication evolve, then our methods of Christian Education may need to develop too. Do we need traditional classes, or should we have virtual groups? Can we teach using textbooks and worksheets or should be more experiential? Can Christian education happen online or should some parts stay face-to-face?

I'd love to hear your ideas on these questions. Jesus said, "Come to me all you who labor and are heavily burdened, take my yoke upon you and ***learn from me.*** *" Let's do that.*

Grace and Peace,

Mark

February Volunteer Assignments

	Greeters	Ushers	Coffee	Nursery Help	Teacher/Crafter
5	Foster	3 Beavers Leiter	Foster Leiter	Lovequist	
12	Scouts	Scouts	Simon Rothenberg	Alspach	
19	P & C Gobble	Langshaw Petersen	P & C Gobble Smith	Smith	
26	C & J Gibson	V Osborne Schaadt Tower	C & J Gibson Kendall	Deater	

Serving Communion

Please remember that only ordained elders and deacons should serve communion.

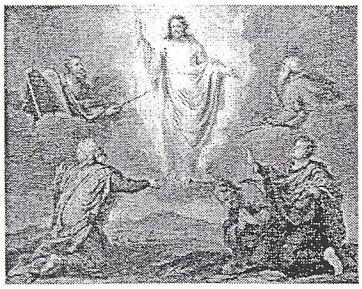
February 5
Nancy Remley
Gene Rothenberg
Sharon Rothenberg
Judy Ruser
Dick Saddler
Ed Schaadt
Ronda Schaadt
Marilynn Simon
Phyllis Youse

March 5
Sharin Noall
Tom Noall
Brent Slezak
Sheryl Slezak
Shannon Smith
Jean Stafford
Tom Stegink
Ken Sunden
Carol Thorne

April 2
Bob Tower
Terry Vantine
Donna Webb
Tunis Willemstyn
Jilisa Williams
Jerry Wittwer
Lib Wittwer
Mike Wright
Nancy Wright

We rely on many members and friends to help Sundays run smoothly and be a good worship experience for those attending our church. If for some reason you are not able to help on the day originally selected, please find a replacement or someone to trade with, and let the church office know. The yearly list of volunteers can be found at www.fpcrich.com, under "Living the Faith", then "volunteer schedule". Or call Julie for a list of names. Thank you!

February 2017



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 1:00 PW Meeting at Wanda Clawson's	2 9:00 Bible Study 7:00 Cub Scouts	3	4
5 8:30 Chancel Choir 9:45 Worship - Communion 11:00 Sunday School	6 9:00 Care Team 10:30 Office Staff 7:00 Boy Scouts	7 9:15 Prayer Moms 10:00 Connected Threads 6:00 Girl Scouts	8 6:00 Session	9 9:00 Bible Study 6:00 Deacons 7:00 Cub Scouts	10	11 1:00 Memorial Service for Helen Bolt
12 8:30 Chancel Choir 9:45 Worship - Scout Sunday; 2 cents-a-meal 11:00 Sunday School 5:00 Youth Group at Westminster	13 10:30 Office Staff 7:00 Boy Scouts	14 9:15 Prayer Moms 10:00 Connected Threads 6:00 Girl Scouts	15 12:30 Worship & Music Meeting 6:00 Committee's Meet 7:00 Scout Leaders	16 9:00 Bible Study 7:00 Cub Scouts	17	18
19 8:30 Chancel Choir 9:45 Worship 5:00 Youth Group HERE	20 9:00 Care Team 10:30 Office Staff 7:00 Boy Scouts	21 9:15 Prayer Moms 10:00 Connected Threads 6:00 Girl Scouts	22	23 9:00 Bible Study 7:00 Pack Meeting	24	25
26 8:30 Chancel Choir 9:45 Worship 11:00 Sunday School 3:00 VGA ~ Bob Milne 5:00 Youth Group at Kalamazoo 1st	27 10:30 Office Staff 7:00 Boy Scouts	28 9:15 Prayer Moms 10:00 Connected Threads 6:00 Girl Scouts				

Youth Group

Youth Group Schedule

February 5 – NO Youth Group
February 12 – Westminster hosts, 5-7pm
February 19 – WE host, 5-7pm
February 26 – First Pres Kalamazoo hosts, 5-7pm
March 3-5 – Alma Youth Mix, NO Youth Group

Please consider helping with Youth Group meals on our hosting days!

Please contact Meredith Alspach with questions: mlt0002@yahoo.com

Youth Mission Can & Bottle Drive Continues!

Simply drop your cans in the collection bin outside the church office! Thank you for your support of our youth!

Youth Mission Trip 2017
West Virginia
June 17-24

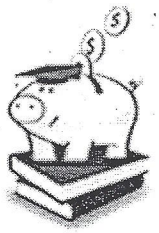
Purpose:
- To expose our students to people of all walks of life
- To help and serve
- To help bring God's love to all people

Who Is Served:
- Mostly elderly and less fortunate individuals living in the Colcord, WV area as chosen by the PC(USA) Disaster Relief.

Who Will Participate:
- 21 youth from our combined Youth Group

Youth Group

Here's your chance to …



INVEST IN YOUTH

The youth are heading to West Virginia and need your help!

- ✓ Invest in their mission
- ✓ Invest in their spiritual growth
- ✓ Invest in their desire to serve

Please consider making a donation to the Youth Mission Fund in support of the 21 amazing middle and high school students anxious to serve the people of Colcord, WV.

Along with your investment, please consider writing a note for the youth to open during the week in West Virginia:

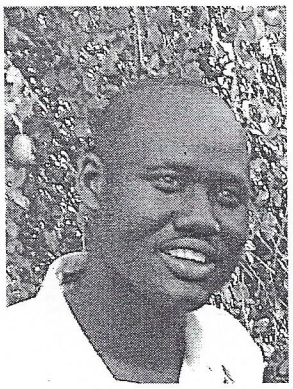
- ❖ What I hope to see you do…
- ❖ What I hope to see happen…
- ❖ What I hope you get out of the trip…
- ❖ Why I know you're worth investing in…

In return for your investment, the youth will provide updates prior to the trip as well as an in-person presentation after the trip to report on the return on your investment.

You can find investment envelopes in the Gull Prairie Room, in the Sunday bulletin, pew racks and in the office.

Thank you for Investing In Our Youth!

February 2017 Missionary Report



Dear friends,

I want to take this opportunity to first say Happy New Year. All of us are looking forward to 2017. I am thankful that God protected you and me last year. As you know, South Sudan has not been peaceful since December 15th, 2013. There have been many atrocities committed nationwide and it is only God who can judge those who carry out the killings of innocent people. Again, I thank God for his protection when I was working with Partners in Compassionate Care (PCC) in Werkok, South Sudan.

As you all aware, I am not working anymore with PCC and my last day at work was December 1, 2016. I was not surprised when I got notification from PCC that my contact will end in December. The organization funding has been reduced and this has affected my position. I welcomed the decision and I sent the PCC Board my appreciation letter. I thanked them for the opportunity they gave me to work for their Christian organization. The experience I gained from that work will help me in my future jobs. I will send my updated resume when I am in Kenya. The Internet is very expensive nowadays and I decided to work on my resume in Kenya.

I am still in Bor but I will travel to Juba at the end of January. My wife, Mary Ayen, doesn't have a South Sudanese passport and I need to get her a passport in Juba. The process of getting a passport is a long process but I can consolidate the whole process to be done in one to two days. The only problem with that is that I will have to pay double price. Not only that, I will have to pay many agents to maneuver Mary's passport application. Since I don't want to be in Juba for long, I will do anything to secure Mary's passport. Mary needs a passport for a Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA) application for our baby, Thon, Jr., and this one of the reasons I need to Mary to have a passport.

It is looks like the US Embassy in Juba is not issuing appointments for CRBA clients. I tried to schedule my appointment several times but the appointment grid does not allow me to make an appointment. I went ahead today and scheduled Thon Jr.'s appointment in the US Embassy in Kenya for February 28th, 2017 and this was the only date open in February. I will check the US Embassy again in Juba and if they are working, then I will cancel the Nairobi, Kenya appointment, and then I will go to Juba.

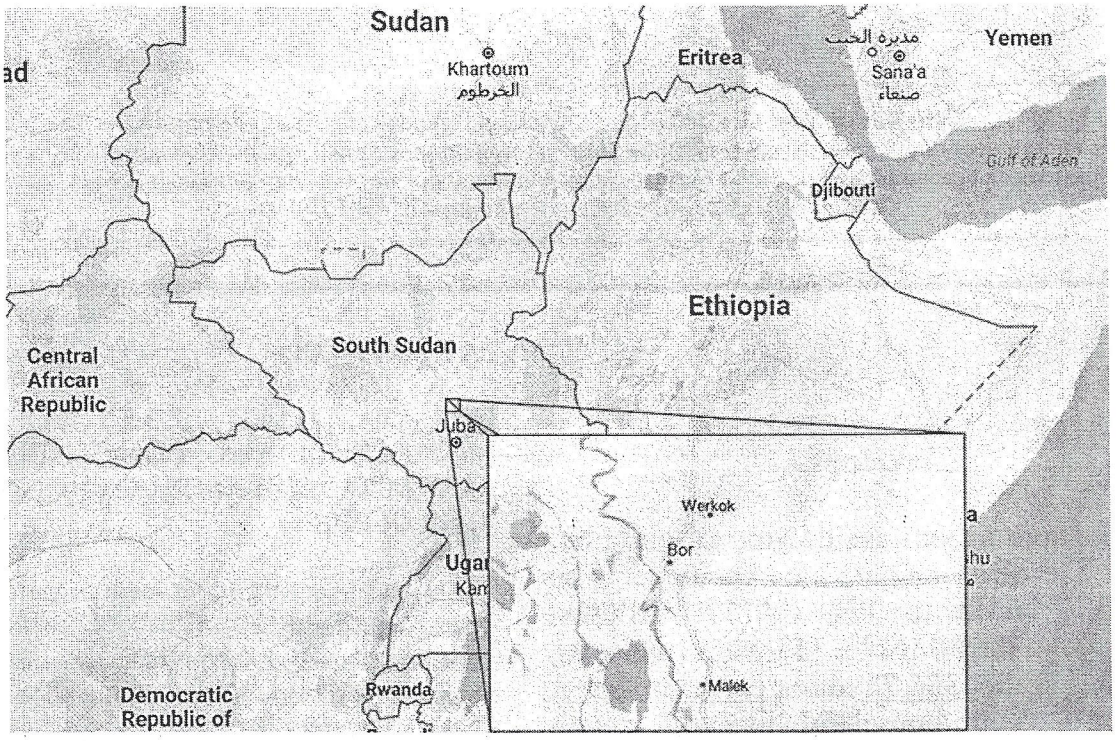
I do need your prayers throughout my son's application. It is my goal to have a passport for my son before I go to the US. I know this process will need money and I pray you will stand with me.

My Mum is here with me in South Sudan and she will be going back to Kenya with me. She came last year in December. Keep praying for our Mum. She is still taking medications and some of her meds are used up and we are looking forward to buying her more medications when we are in Kenya.

The road from Bor to Juba very rough and not secure at the same time and this will force me, my family, plus Mum to take an airplane from Bor to Juba though it is every expensive. The price for one person is $80 and we are three adults and one child and plus the luggage. The road from Juba to Nimule is also not secure and we do need your prayers for us to pass safely on that road. This is a road where many car hijackings and random shootings occur very often. It will be very expensive for three of us to fly to Nairobi therefore we have to take the road. God is great; He will let us pass there safely.

Blessings,

Deng/Samuel



NOTE: The United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, on 19 December 2016, said that the responsibility for the crisis in South Sudan lies with the country's leaders, who "have betrayed the public trust". He reiterated his call for an arms embargo on South Sudan. On December 23, 2016, the draft resolution on an arms embargo and targeted sanctions failed to receive the necessary support to be adopted. It received seven affirmative votes (France, New Zealand, Spain, Ukraine, Uruguay, the UK and the US) and eight abstentions (Angola, China, Egypt, Japan, Malaysia, Russia, Senegal, and Venezuela).

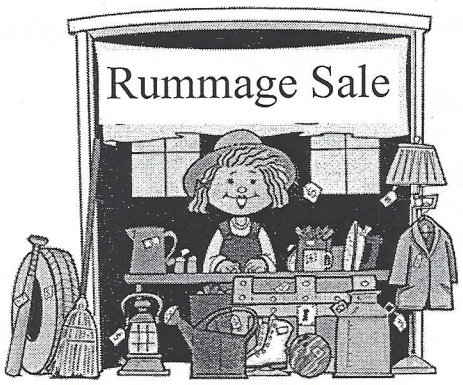
Presbyterian Women

PW meets the 1st Wednesday of each month at 1:00 p.m. in the church, however, the next meeting is **February 1st,**
AT WANDA CLAWSON'S HOME!! 1507 West Gull Lake Dr. ~ 629-5428

Looking ahead, we will be having our

Spring Rummage Sale

a little bit later than normal.
Put May 5th and 6th on your calendars now!
More time information coming next month!



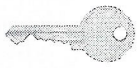
PW PURPOSE: Forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to nurture our faith through prayer and Bible Study, to support the mission of the church worldwide, to work for justice and peace and to build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (USA) and witnesses to the promise of God's Kingdom.

Envelopes....

Make sure to look inside your offering box for a single blue envelope. This is for the PER CAPITA APPORTIONMENT. If we all help pay the **$26.75** due, per member in your household, this will greatly assist in the HUGE expense for the church! Our membership is 295, so the amount due to Presbytery is almost $8000! Thank you!

FEEL FREE TO ROUND UP! Every little bit helps! If you don't have envelopes, just use a regular one, with what it's for, written on the outside, or leave in Faith's mailbox.

ATTENTION ~



DO YOU HAVE A KEY TO THE CHURCH? IF YOU DON'T NEED IT ANYMORE, PLEASE HAND IT IN TO THE OFFICE.

This could be past Scout leaders, past food pantry, past elders and deacons, past teachers, or anyone who has been involved with church life at some time. Check your key hold and if you see one you don't recognize, bring it on in and we can test it. Our keys are about 1/8 inch longer than most standard keys!

Do you have children's books that you're looking to find a home? The Food Pantry can help! When we have families that have children, they are welcome to take a book or two. We're happy to take books for all ages - toddler to school age to teen age!

Village Green Arts

February 26 * 3:00

Bob Milne

Bob Milne is an American ragtime musician and concert pianist. Considered as a "very good specialist of ragtime boogie", he was referred to as a "national treasure" after he was interviewed and documented for future generations by the U.S. Library of Congress in 2004.

Experiments conducted by Penn State neuroscientist Kerstin Bettermann established that Milne has the unusual ability to mentally "play" up to 4 symphonies in his head simultaneously.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJtEcrGtoK8

THE POWER OF PRAYER

In everything by prayer and supplication let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."
—Philippians 4:6-7

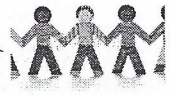
****

Could you or someone you know, benefit from the power of prayer? Did you know that it is as easy as picking up the phone to have your prayers multiplied by many caring members of your church family? We invite you to give prayer requests to any member of the Prayer Chain, who will pray for you or the person who needs God's help in a time of need.
The person you contact will pass your request on to the next person on the list until the circle is complete. Be assured that we keep these matters in confidence.

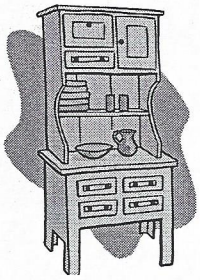
We also invite others to join this circle of prayer.
Please note: participation is in no way restricted to women!
If you are interested, or have questions, please contact Mark or Julie at the office, 629-4944.

PRAYER CHAIN PARTICIPANTS

Marilyn Alman 623-2471 Diane Meitz 685-6272 Joyce Gibson 492-5583
Joan Willemstyn 344-1203 Joyce Hubbard 372-9205
Cindi Lebiecki 365-3115 Phyllis Youse 731-4851 Caroline Gray 370-8152

PRAYER  CHAIN

FOOD PANTRY CORNER

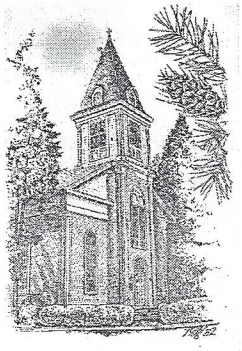


FOOD PANTRY
Suggested Giving

SOUP AND CRACKERS
(no tomato soup, please!)

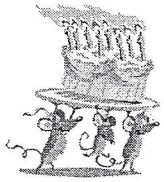
Carillon Hymns and Honoree's for February

Date	*Selection*	*Honoree*
2/1	*On Eagle's Wings*	*Morris E. Stimson*
2/7	*Amazing Grace*	*Brandon Dallace Young*
2/14	*What a Friend We Have in Jesus*	*Karen & Jon Koets*



February Birthdays

Nick Sullivan	1
Cheryl Wank	1
Blakesley Walters	4
Sean MacRitchie	6
Bob Steely	6
Paul Gobble	7
Terry Dawson	9
Ryan Romyak	9
Ed Calkins	10
Marianne MacRitchie	10
Christopher Reece	10
Brooke Saunders	10
Jack Sizer	10
Brad Brundage	11
Wendy Field	11
Becky Reinhart	11
Tyler Carpenter	12
Jean Stafford	13
Allie Steele	13
Kim Killoren	15
Lisa Miller Ballmer	15
Pat Peters	16
Ed Davis	17
Cindi Lebiecki	17
Kate Schrauben	18
Becky Stubbs	18
Fred Davis	19
Jerry Wittwer	19
Nancy Nott	20
Carol Coverly	22
Tyler Fitzgerald	23
Brittany Irey	23
Alyson Muss	23
Jill Bair	24
Stella Carahaly	24
Joyce Farho	24
Micky Kemple	25



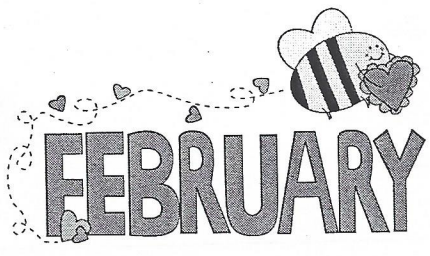
Ann Meyer Fontaine	25
Glenn Fontaine	25
Beth Farho	26
Laura Fitzgerald	26
Amelia Howard	27
Christy Stallings	27
Jamie Fiordalis Jozic	28
Richard Venner	28
Brian Young	28

and Anniversaries

6 Phyllis and Larry Youse ~ 46 years
9 Tom Steginк and Kathleen Griffin ~ 37
11 Ann and Glenn Fontaine ~ 11
22 Mike and Pam Moseley ~ 32
26 Pam and Rick Foster ~ 12
28 Micky and Mark Kemple ~ 36

First Presbyterian Church
8047 Church Street
Richland, MI 49083

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF

Dr. Mark W. Jennings, *Pastor*
Murray Cooper, *Seminary Intern*
Faith Fiordalis, *Financial Secretary*
Gretchen Ferris, *Treasurer*
Larry Myland, *Director of Music*
Sadarra Fields, *Director of Choirs*
Meredith Alspach, *Program Coordinator*
Julie Pixley, *Children's Worship Leader*
Heather Putt, *Nursery Supervisor*
Connie Slater, *Sexton*
Julie Pixley, *Administrative Secretary*