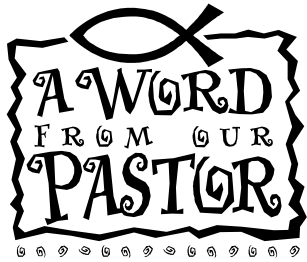




Hill Top News

Markesan United
Methodist Church

February 2012



This is February and we've been conditioned by the florists and greeting card companies to think of sending Valentines and flowers to the ones we love. It is always a good thing to tell your spouse of your love and I highly recommend you not just do it once a year on Valentine's Day

but throughout the year. I'm sure you will enjoy the rewards.

In most years February is also the month in which Lent begins. This year Ash Wednesday is the 22nd. So we think not only of Valentines but also of ashes and cross bearing, palm branches and crucifixion. Typically when we think of Lent we also think of giving up something we enjoy—doing penance or fasting to commemorate Christ's 40 days of fasting and temptation.

But Lent shouldn't be an onerous, hard thing to do—it should be a response of love and joy. Instead of giving up a favorite food like chocolate, or the movies, or something else we enjoy, how about “giving up” a bad habit or something that drives your spouse crazy or better yet—doing something *for* God and *for* the ones you love.

This year why not do something you know those whom you love will be thankful for rather than doing something you will be sorry about. Jesus Christ “gave up” His life so that we might again be in a right relationship with Him and our heavenly Father, as we once were in the Garden of Eden. Jesus' death was done out of love to win us to Himself and to God.

Might I suggest a different approach to Lent this year by *adding* something to our lives? Like *adding*: time communicating with God through prayer and Bible study (try our ready-made Lenten study mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter); being more faithful in worship attendance; inviting a friend, relative, associate, or neighbor to church; or giving to God's work the savings realized from fasting a meal or ridding ourselves of a costly bad habit.

As we think of love and Valentines this month let's also think of God's love and demonstrate for Him our love in response.

See you in church!





Administrative Council minutes-January 9, 2012

Present: Pastor Paul Yoder, Margaret Whirry, Cindy Hilke, Kathy Whitehouse, Russ Hirschy, and Lori Krueger

The meeting was called to order by Pastor Paul in the chairperson's absence at 4:38 pm.

The Treasurer presented the closing statements from 2011. At the end of the year it should be noted that our congregation was not able to pay 5 months of apportionments. As of the second week of 2012 we are making the budget. It was a recommendation from the finance committee that a group be formed by the administrative council to look for ways to remain a viable, effective church body; it is their desire to be proactive than reactive when it comes to funding ministries. This item will be revisited next month.

Kathy Whitehouse, chair of the SPRC, stated their first meeting will be on 2/14/12 at 6 pm. She may be attending training in FDL on 1/14 if she can find someone else to go as well.

Trustees haven't met yet and none are present to give a report.

Margaret has asked if someone could sign off on timesheet hours worked, she doesn't feel right just paying what is submitted. This issue will be looked at and since different work areas report to different committees a chain of authority will need to be set up.

Pastor Paul reported for the worship committee. A Lenten study, "24 Hours That Changed the World" will be offered at various times. Holy Week we have the opportunity to share a traditional Seder meal with a representative from Chosen People Ministries.

Pastor Paul and Cindy Hilke attended a course on videotaping and would like to get this ministry going. They need a few volunteers to come forward to help.

It was decided that some decisions need to be made soon in regards to a summer worship service at Margaret Whirry's house.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Krueger

Recording Secretary

Next meeting: Monday, February 13, at 4:30 pm.

February Birthday's and Anniversaries



1 Don Leider
 2 Colin Prill
 4 Abbigayle Panten
 6 Molly Scharf
 8 Grayden Vredevelde
 9 Ray Wilde
 12 Arlene Braun
 13 Dick Horn
 14 Cory Schwoch, Clayton Parker

19 Cindy Powers, Jennifer Schwandt, Carick Parker
 Nina/Tom Zick-Ann.
 23 Debbie Jahnke
 24 Derek De Chant
 25 Mike Allen
 28 Bill/Bev Fox-Ann
 29 Hannah Panten



CAMPING IS FOR EVERYONE!

Yes, there is still snow on the ground. But it is not too soon be thinking about registering to go to a summer camp offered by our Wisconsin Conference of the United Methodist Church. There are camp opportunities this summer for families, children, youth, and adults. There are even family camps where parents and children attend together. There are also mother/daughter, grandparent/grandchild, and child/caregiver camps! Remember the great times you had at camp as a child—encourage your children and/or grandchildren to attend camp this summer.

Individual camps begin with camps for children entering grade 2 next fall. There is a wide variety of younger elementary, older elementary, younger teen, and older teen camps available. Also offered are several camps for adults, including the Prime Timer's Retreat that is for people 50 or over, that are married or single. The Prime Timer's Retreat will be April 9-13 this year, and will be held at Pine Lake Camp. As you can see, there are camps available for everyone!

Don't let the cost of camp stop your child from attending camp. We will do what we can to help your child have a great camp experience.

A camp catalog is available in the office for you to find that perfect camp experience.

SPAGHETTI DINNER

Following our 10:30 Worship Service on February 19th is a Spaghetti fund-raiser in Fellowship Hall to raise funds to replace pots and pans, coffee pots, coffee and beverage servers, and small kitchen appliances, etc.

There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex for items needed for the meal. Please mark the date on your calendar and spread the news around your family and friends to come join us for a time of food and fellowship and benefit our kitchen.

Mardi gras is French for Fat Tuesday, which refers to the practice of the last night of eating richer, fatty foods before the ritual fasting of the Lenten season, which begins on Ash Wednesday. We will just do it on Sunday.

WHOOPS!

No, that wasn't exactly the word I used when I slipped on the ice in the church parking lot. I'm glad no one was within earshot. My instant thought as my feet began to go out from under me was "don't hit your head" so I landed on my left hip catching myself with my left arm instead. I didn't hit my head! But I did tear my left shoulder and so will be undergoing rotator-cuff repair in Ripon on February 20th. This will put me out of commission for several days and in a sling for four to six weeks. Sadly, golfing may be out of the question this summer. With any luck maybe I can get out of some snow shoveling and maybe even some lawn mowing? Probably not!

Certainly though I should still be able to preach and lead worship after a week or so. You will still have to put up with me in that regard. In the meantime, watch your step. Don't do as I do but do as I say.

Pastor Paul





FORGIVENESS **Game**

Try this twist on musical chairs.

What you need:

- 28 large index cards
- Black marker
- Two teams of people
- Radio or CD player

What you do:

1. On index cards, write out *forgiveness*, one letter per card. Make two sets (two F's, two O's, etc.).
2. Mix up the cards and form them face up in a circle on the floor. (You'll have six blanks mixed in.)
3. Have teams mix themselves up and stand in a circle around the cards. Ask an extra person to turn the music on and off.
4. As the music plays, teams walk around the circle. When the music stops, players each pick up the card nearest them.
5. Team members take their cards to a designated area and try to spell forgiveness. Any double letters or blanks go back to the "music person," who reorganizes remaining cards, spacing them evenly into a fresh circle.
6. Play continues until one team spells *forgiveness*.

WACUM

WACUM stands for the Wisconsin Association of Confessing United Methodists. We are clergy and lay persons from the Wisconsin Annual Conference of the UMC who are concerned with renewing The United Methodist Church by promoting Biblical truth and by praying for God's Spirit to unite His people around our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. WACUM is a part of the larger Confessing Movement across the denomination. You may learn more about the confessing movement by visiting <http://confessingumc.org/> or by visiting them on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/ConfessingMovement>.

I have been a member of the Confessing Movement in this denomination since it was founded back in 1994 and a year ago became a clergy member of the Board of Directors of WACUM here in Wisconsin. The board is composed of equal numbers of lay and clergy.

This year our denomination's General Conference will be held for ten days at the end of April in Tampa, FL for its quadrennial meeting (every four years). It is imperative those of us concerned about the direction of our church be informed and in prayer for all of the legislation coming before the conference. WACUM has an annual meeting held every spring at which we worship, receive news and updates on pending legislation at the General and our local Annual Conference, share a meal together, and have a short meeting to elect officers for the coming year. That will all take place on Saturday, March 3rd at the Portage UMC in Portage, WI from 9 to 3.

The meeting is open to all who would like to attend and I would encourage all of you with concerns for your church to come and hear Tom Lambrecht, Vice President of the Good News organization for renewal in the UMC update us on happenings and proposed legislation this year. Tom, until last July, was the President of WACUM and a clergy member of this conference serving in Greenville, WI. He now resides in Texas.

If you are interested in attending please let me know so we can arrange to car-pool—and I may need a ride since I may not be able to drive yet after my rotator-cuff surgery on 2/20.

Pastor Paul



GIVING IS AN ACT OF LOVE.

Protect yourself against the least little bit of greed. Life is not defined by what you have, even when you have a lot.” Luke 12:15 *The Message*

Valentine’s Day is around the corner. When I was in college, living in an all-women’s dorm, Valentine’s Day was “the” holiday of the year! There was more activity at the front desk on February 14th as retailers and beaus brought in a steady flow of flowers, candy, cards and other goodies to be delivered to various residents. Flowers were definitely the gift of choice, the gift of “true love!” And every woman who thought she would (or should!) receive flowers, stayed close to the phone waiting and hoping that at least a single rose or a few carnations would arrive in her name.

What a different view I have of Valentine’s Day now. That’s not to say I won’t accept flowers from my husband, but I certainly don’t wait for them with baited breath! This year Valentine’s Day is still in the season of Epiphany, when the love of God is made real and known to us in concrete and “ah-ha” kinds of moments. How do we as God’s people make this love known to the world?

For some, it’s done in gifts for present need. Others feel called to make gifts to Endowment funds, which Webster defines as a “permanent fund or source of income.” What a wonderful way to make the love of God in Christ known to the world through the church forever! The principal is invested and the income may be used for further investments and supplementary expenses. Endowment income is often used to match ordinary income and giving from parishioners, to meet unexpected and extraordinary expenses, or to provide for new and creative ministries.

Endowments are often used to provide matching funds to help a congregation meet unexpected building expenses or begin a new ministry. For more information on how you or your church can establish an Endowment fund, contact us at:

Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation
750 Windsor Street Ste 305, P.O. Box 620
Sun Prairie, WI 53590-0620
1-888-903-9863 or wumf@wumf.org



Throughout the month of January the church has received several “Thank You’s” from many of our Second Mile Giving organizations. Please take some time and read the Thank You’s on the bulletin board in the hallway, See how your Second Mile Giving dollars have changed lives throughout the world.

We would also like to thank Susan Miller, Dr. and Mrs. Cupery’s daughter, for the gift of money to our church.

We’d like to express our appreciation to all who offered their support following the death of our mother. Special thanks to the church women who donated food for the luncheon and to all those who assisted in the kitchen.

The Family of Geraldine Jackowski



LEADERSHIP CHANGES HANDS

There are two major changes in our church leadership this year. On January 1st Kathy Whitehouse became the chairperson of our Staff Parish Relations Committee, SPRC. The SPRC serves as the church personnel committee and is tasked with being the go-to group in the church concerning any issues between church staff and the congregation.

The SPRC has the difficult job of being both advocates for the staff to the congregation and advocates for the congregation to the staff. Most of the work of the SPRC is done in strictest confidence to be most effective. This does not mean, however, that they can respond to anonymous issues in the congregation. To best manage conflict whenever and wherever it may occur anonymous sources are impossible to work with so “people are saying” or “they” limit any ability to bring resolution with the aggrieved parties. That said, where individual names must be held in strict confidence depending on any given situation they will be so held by the committee.

Special thanks to Jim Clark who has faithfully served as SPRC chair for several years. Thank you, Jim!

The church Trustees are the legal entity of the church responsible for the care of all property. As such they are the body to be served with any legal notices and are authorized to process and sign legal documents on behalf of the congregation. David Severson has been the elected chair of the group for the past year. The baton of leadership was passed to John Panten when he was elected chair of the group at their January 17 meeting. Thank you David for so capably serving as chair this past year—and welcome John.

Other officers are Richard Schweder, Vice-chair; and Kathy Kohn, Secretary.

They are called “trustees” because all church property is held in trust for the denomination. In the UMC all property is owned by the denomination and managed and cared for by the trustees on behalf of the congregation and the denomination.

Both the SPRC and the Trustees meet as needed but the SPRC is required to meet at least four times a year.

FIFTY-EIGHT PERCENT

58%. That is how much of our share of the budget of our Annual Conference we paid in 2010. It is a legitimate expense of this congregation and we failed to pay it in its entirety last year. We fell woefully short paying just over 50%. If this was our gas or electric bill we’d be sitting in the dark in our coats, hats and gloves in our unheated sanctuary in worship on Sunday mornings. If it was our mortgage we’d shorted, we’d be in foreclosure.

In January when the church Finance Committee met to go over the yearend financial report the committee strongly suggested to the Administrative Council that we form a task force to look into the long-term viability of this congregation. What does it mean for this congregation that it cannot pay all of our bills and what, if anything, what plans must we put in place now, to either cover the bills or dramatically reduce our costs. We can’t continue to not pay our bills.

We are an aging congregation. In the last three years we’ve lost five members to death meaning we’ve also lost their financial support. Death has removed thousands of dollars of giving annually and their giving has not been replaced by others—either new members or younger members substantially increasing their giving.

We’ve conducted stewardship drives in each of the last three years with some initial success early but reduced participation this past year. As the task force is formed soon we invite you to volunteer to serve or respond positively if asked. We want to be proactive about our future rather than simply react to changes that we may be forced to take.

Thank you for your prayers as we seek God’s guidance in our future direction as a congregation.

24 HOURS THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

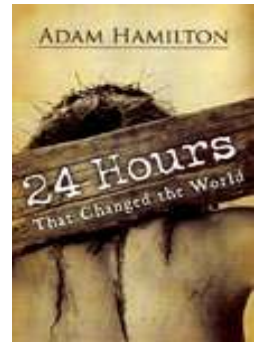
No single event in human history has received more attention than the suffering and crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth. In this book, Adam Hamilton guides us through the last twenty-four hours of Jesus' life. Each chapter is designed to help us experience and understand the significance of Jesus' suffering and death in a way we may have never done before. Whether you are a long-time Christian or simply curious about the story of Christ's crucifixion, we invite you to join us with the author in retracing the last 24 hours of Jesus' life.

Adam Hamilton is the pastor of The Church of the Resurrection, a UMC near Kansas City that is one of the largest UMC's in the nation. This study is comprised of seven lessons including a video filmed on location in the Holy Land.

The study will be given on Wednesday's during Lent at 10:30 a.m. with coffee and snacks and also following a light meal served at 5:45 p.m. with the study beginning promptly at 6:30. A third option is the study is also being offered during the Sunday school hour at 9:35 in the adult class. Starting on Feb. 26th and concluding on Easter Sunday. Books are \$6:50 each are advised and may be ordered through the office. Hardcover books are also available for \$11.40 ea. and can be ordered through the office.

The study may also be given to our Sunday school children so the whole family will be able to discuss the lessons weekly. Please plan to join whatever study works for you.

The Wednesday studies will begin on February 22nd. Please mark your calendar.



Second Mile Giving for February-

RED BIRD MISSION and CLINIC

Our Second Mile giving in February will be targeted to the Red Bird Mission in Kentucky. Remember that your financial gifts are matched, up to a dollar per dollar given from the Wendlandt Mission Fund of this congregation. Please give as liberally as you are able.

Red Bird Mission and Clinic have been providing ministries in this region of the Appalachian Mountains since 1921. Today the need remains critical in this isolated, rural distressed area. Chronic poverty, lack of jobs, poor housing, and rugged mountainous terrain provide obstacles to a fuller life for the residents of this area. Red Bird Mission and Clinic strives to meet these needs through ministry in five areas: Education, Health and Wellness, Community Outreach, Economic Opportunity, and Community Housing Improvement.

Support for these ministries come from churches and individuals across the nation. However, in recent years we have seen a decline in the support we are receiving. We are currently facing a financial crisis that is making it difficult to continue all the areas of ministries we provide. Without more funding today, we will have to reduce the level of ministry provided to this community. Your donations to Red Bird Mission and Clinic will help us continue these vital ministries in this distressed region of Appalachia.





From the Memorial Committee-

Thank you to everyone who donated to the Memorial Fund of the Markesan UMC, giving monies in memory of a loved one. The Memorial Committee was able to help by donating monies, to the Prison Ministries, purchasing new Communion Linens, and also helped in the purchase of the new Worship and Song Hymnals that are the pews in the sanctuary.

Remember that you can always donate to the Memorial Fund, by just noting it on your weekly offering envelope.

Prayer and Self Denial Breakfast

Sponsored by the UMW

Will be held on Ash Wednesday,

Feb. 22, 2012

With breakfast at 7:00 a.m. and

A program to follow.

A Free Will Offering for Mission Technology will be collected.

All are Welcome to attend.




FOLLOW GOD'S EXAMPLE

In a letter to the church in Colossae, the apostle Paul wrote about the importance of forgiveness.

• • • • DIRECTIONS • • • •

To complete Colossians 3:13 (NIV), use the smaller words to fill in the larger words.

 **gain as or ear van an for give**
gave her on it one other he an a

B _____ w _____ h each
 ot _____ d _____ give
 _____ e an _____ if _____ y
 of you h _____ grie _____ ce
 a _____ st some _____ .
 For _____ as t _____ L _____ d
 for _____ you.”

COLOSSIANS 3:13, NIV

Answers: "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you." Colossians 3:13, NIV



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
February 2012			1 6:30 Celebration Singer 7:30 Chancel Choir Practice	2	3	4
5 8:30-Worship 9:30 - Hospitality/SS 9:35-Adult SS 10:30 -Worship	6 6:15 pm—Worship Committee Mtg	7 6:30 Men's Prayer Breakfast & Bible Study at Sandy's Diner 6:15 p.m.—Worship Committee Mtg	8 6:30 Celebration Singer 7:30 Chancel Choir Practice	9	10	11
12 8:30-Worship/Communion 9:30 - Hospitality/SS 9:35-Adult SS 10:30 -Worship/Communion	13 4:30 pm—Admin. Council Mtg.	14 6:30 Men's Prayer Breakfast & Bible Study at Sandy's Diner 6:00 p.m.—SPRC Committee Mtg	15 6:30 Celebration Singer 7:30 Chancel Choir Practice	16 7:00 p.m.—Friendship Circle at Carla Buchanan's home	17	18
19 8:30-Worship 9:30 - Hospitality/SS 9:35-Adult SS 10:30 -Worship 11:30 a.m. -12 Spaghetti Dinner	20	21	22 7:00 a.m.-Prayer and Self-Denial Breakfast & program 10:30 a.m.—24 Hrs Study 5:45 pm—24 Hrs Study 7:00 Ash Wednesday Service	23	24	25
26 8:30-Worship 9:30 - Hospitality/SS 9:35-24 Hr Study 10:30 -Worship	27	28	29 10:30 a.m.—24 Hrs Study 5:45 p.m.—Light Supper & 24 Hrs Study 7:30 p.m.—Chancel Choir Practice			