

THE FIRST PRES

March 2008

Fist Presbyterian Church

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<http://www.theufpc.org>

Winnebago, Illinois

“Don’t Be Afraid of the Future”

Once every couple of years I fly back to my home town of Lakeview, Oregon where I was born and raised. Every time I go back I notice all over again how many things have changed. While my memories of my childhood growing up are pleasant for about an hour or so, soon there after I am ready to leave. Thomas Wolfe was right when he observed that you can’t go home again. You can’t turn back the clock.

A woman named Mary Magdalene learned that lesson early on the first Easter morning. She wanted nothing more than to go back to the good old days, to pretend that the terrible crucifixion had never happened.

When the risen Christ confronted her, she fell to her knees and clutched his feet, almost pleading with him to stop this crazy chain of events. She thought perhaps the past few days were all a dreadful nightmare. Can we wake up now and go back to the good old days when Jesus taught by the Sea of Galilee, preformed healing miracles, and fellowshipped with his friends over supper? Can’t we turn back the clock?

You and I should be able to empathize with Mary. We have lots of schemes designed to slow down or reverse the clock. We are part of a youth-glorifying, death-denying culture. After about the age of 29, we try not to get any older, or at least not to look like it. Rather than looking forward to the future, we try to fend it off.

Not only do we fight aging; we evade the subject of death in every way possible. Even network television avoids the word, preferring to say someone “passed away.” Why are we so threatened by death and the passing of time? Because we in the great American middle class dearly love the set-up we have on earth. We’ve got a pretty good deal going right here. The great Bible teacher, R. C. Sproul, says “Modern man is betting his life that this world is all there is, and that there is no judgment and no eternity.” Contrast this mind set to the Good News of Christ’s resurrection which calls us to embrace the future rather than run from it. Easter proclaims that the future is good because the risen Christ owns it and guides his followers through it. God awaits us not only in heaven, but also around the next bend in the road. Therefore, don’t be afraid of the future.

Jesus and the angel gave Good News to the women at the tomb. This is the same message I declare to you. **First, Don't be Afraid.**

So much in this fast-changing and frightening world scares us. We have been reminded in the last month that none of us, of any age, has a guarantee of a normal life span.

Jesus told the two Mary's on the first Easter morning not to be afraid. The same admonition is listed 365 separate times in the Bible, one for each day. There is good reason for us to take courage. The risen Christ has defeated the Evil One. The final enemy, death, has been vanquished. The final victory of Christ in this world is no longer in doubt. The resurrection gives us a glimpse of the final scene on the world's history. We have a sneak preview of the last act of the human drama every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Don't be afraid of tomorrow! The Lamb has won!

The second message of Jesus, backed up by the Angel, is this:

Jesus Will Be Our Road Guide!

Jesus told the women to inform the disciples that he was going ahead of them to Galilee and would meet them there. Jesus is always out in front of his followers, paving the way, filtering our future. Our challenge is to note where he is at work and join him.

Jesus will meet you at every fork in the road. If you have enough faith to ask, He will direct your path. The Bible promises, "In all things acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight." When life breaks your heart, Jesus will be there, saying, "Come unto me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28) "Cast your burden upon the Lord and He will sustain you. (Psalm 55:22)

The Easter Good News is that we must not fear the future. Jesus owns it and wants to escort us into it. In his company we will be more than conquerors!

Pastor Steve



Session Synopsis

Is spring here yet? Many of us wish spring like temperatures would soon arrive and refresh our lives as it does nature. The month of February has been unusually cold, but warmer days are ahead.

The Season of Lent, like the coming of spring re-invigorates us. As we look to the upcoming events of Holy Week culminating on Easter morning, many plans first have to be made. This calendar year, we at Winnebago First Presbyterian have the privilege of hosting the World Day of Prayer Service for our community and the surrounding area. As we move into Holy Week, we will hold our Maundy Thursday Communion services at 6:30 p.m. The following day March 21, 2008, we will host the Winnebago community Good Friday Service at 6:30 p.m.

Pastor Steve will be on "Study Leave", Sunday February 24, 2008, and on vacation Sunday March 2, 2008. We hope you enjoy listening to the two guest preachers who will fill the pulpit.

Pastor Steve expressed his pleasure with new church secretary, Betsy Carr. Betsy is doing a great job, and is helping to reorganize the office and its filing system.

In the coming weeks we will have several fellowship opportunities and hope everyone will enjoy them after worship.

While the recent session meeting had several members who were unable to attend, it is especially gratifying to know that Judy Coots, and Jill Sunday are getting better health wise.

We wish to extend our heart felt thanks to everyone who gave so generously in remembering our soldiers. Avis Lind coordinated the effort to send everything that was donated.

With Easter just around the corner, please remember that the "One Great Hour of Sharing" offering will be collected on March 30, 2008. Information will be presented during our worship services prior to that date.

We the session and staff wish you a happy, healthy and joyous Easter season. We look forward to see you in the coming weeks.

In Christ's service
Pastor Steve and the Board of Elders

Prayer Chains

If you have a prayer request for the phone prayer chain, please call Bev Samsel at 335-2892 or (cell: 871-8969). If you cannot reach Bev Samsel, please call Bev Barker at 335-2963 or call Bev at work at 964-5591. Please leave a message on Bev Samsel's answering machine as she will later check to see that Pastor has been notified and if the information has been placed on the church e-mail prayer chain.

If you wish to place a prayer request on the church e-mail the address is: prayer@thewfpc.org. These requests will be started on the phone prayer chain by Bev Samsel or Bev Barker.

Deacons

The Deacons met on February 19, at 6:30 p.m. with seven members present. Chairman Bev Samsel welcomed everyone and Elaine led us in prayer. Minutes from last meeting were presented and new correspondence was read by Bev in Darla's absence. The treasurer's report was given by Norma and accepted by the membership. Shirley Burkhart presented the sunshine report with many cards being sent out.

Pastor Steve reported on members of the congregation needing our prayers and then led us in prayer.

Bev thanked everyone for their contributions to the Deacons' fellowship last month after church.

Bev discussed an article to be published in the newsletter giving the church's email address and information and changes to the prayer chain.

Communion schedule was discussed for the month of March. The size of the bread cubes was again topic of discussion. The cubes tend to stick together when the trays are stacked. Bev will provide the cubes for the month of March so she can experiment with size and number of cubes.

Spring flowers were distributed to the members present to give to our shut ins.

There being no other business, the meeting was closed with the reciting of the Deacon's Prayer. Our next meeting will be March 18, 2008, at 6:30 p.m. Pastor Steve will lead us in prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Darla Cunningham

Thank You

I would like to thank Betsy Menge and her crew, for helping with the newsletter and the PW dial.

Betsy Carr

Newsletter Articles

Newsletter articles are due by March 18, 2008.



You may email them to secretary@thewfpc.org

Greeters/Ushers



This year we are again asking church members to take turns greeting at our Sunday worship. You will receive a postcard with your Sunday to welcome our friends to the worship service.

Thanks to our February greeters:

3rd- Jeff & Bonnie Gray, Clyde Grover
 10th- John & Corrine Guslof, Paul & April
 Haeflinger
 17th- Dave & Shirley Heslop, Phyllis Hogberg
 24th- Steve & Traci Hohlfelder, Lynn & Sue
 Jansen

Ushers:

3rd- Bob Samsel, Skip Leden
 10th- Greg Rittmeyer, Bob Reed
 17th- Norm Dean, Matt Smith
 24th- The Jr./ Sr. High Youth

January Church Budget

Beginning Checking:	\$18057.95
Month Income:	\$13320.64
Month Expenses:	\$16701.39
End Checking:	\$14677.20

Trustees



Meeting date: February 7, 2008

Members Present: Sheldon Speers, Mick Franklin, Bruce Benning, and Greg Rittmeyer

New Business:

Our meeting night consisted of four small repair/replacement projects. They were: replacing a leaking coupling connection on the water line to the boiler makeup tank, priming the ceiling in the fellowship hall where a sanctuary radiator had leaked causing a water stain, replacing the burned out bulbs in the choir loft, replacing the mercury vapor light bulb in the east entrance, and repairing the leaking kitchen garbage disposal.

On Sunday morning, Feb. 17, we had several inches of rain and many of us awoke to the sounds of our sump pumps running and water in our basements. The church too had water in three of the Sunday school classrooms. The Trustees spent most of the day Sunday trying to divert water runoff and manning shop-vacs. The classrooms have been dried and cleaned up and ready for use.

Respectfully Submitted,
Greg Rittmeyer

YOUTH NEWS

Sr. High Youth Group

We will meet at the church for dinner and a movie, Wednesday March at 6 p.m. Friends are welcome.

Jr. High Youth Group

We will not be meeting this month.

Naomi Circle

Naomi Circle will meet on March 18th at 12:30 p.m. Doris Jones is the hostess.

Mary Martha Circle

Mary Martha Circle will meet on March 13th at 7:00 p.m. Marian Pedrick is the hostess.

Fellowship Supper Club

On March 29th, Fellowship supper club will be going to an Agatha Christie play at Rock Valley College, in the studio theater. The play begins at 2 p.m. and dinner will follow. Nominations for new officers will also be held. Jill Sunday is our host.

I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else.

—C.S. Lewis

PW News

Thank you to all who donated salads and bars and helped in anyway with the Barbequed Pork Luncheon that PW served on Sunday, February 17. The free will offering collected was about \$270. Thanks to the approximately seventy hearty souls that stayed after church on such a blus-tery winter day to eat!

Coming events include:

- March 4 (Tuesday) 7 p.m. Coordinating Team Meeting at the home of Sue Jansen
- March 7 (Friday) 9:a.m - World Day of Prayer Service at First Presbyterian Church, Winnebago, Coordinated by Jill Sunday
- March 13, (Thursday)- 7:00 p.m. - Mary Martha Circle will meet at the church with Marian Pedrick hostess
- March 18, (Tuesday) - Naomi Circle will meet at the home of Doris Jones
- March 21 (Friday) - Good Friday
- March 23 (Sunday) - Easter

God Bless!

Sue Jansen, Moderator



Service will be at our church on
Friday March 7, 2008 at 11:00 a.m.

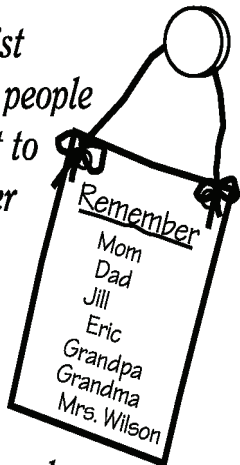


JUST A REMINDER

Join the ladies for bazaar work day every Thursday from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. *Craft skills not required.*

Make a Prayer List

Make a list of all the people you want to remember in your prayers.



You will need:

- piece of poster board (approx. 9" x 12")
- markers or crayons
- yarn or ribbon (approx. 10")
- paper-punch

How to make it:

- Punch a hole in the top corners of the cardboard.
- Tie the ribbon or yarn to the holes to make a hanger.
- Write the names of people you care about on the cardboard.
- Decorate with markers or crayons.

Hang your list near your bed, so you can see it when you say your prayers at night.



Jesus Teaches Us to Pray

In Luke 11 Jesus taught his disciples to pray:

“Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.”

In the puzzle below, find and circle the words from the prayer above. (Note: If a word is in the prayer more than one time, it is used only once in the puzzle.) → ↓

G	K	A	G	A	I	N	S	T	D	T	O
I	U	F	O	R	D	F	A	T	H	E	R
V	D	A	Y	E	A	C	H	S	T	W	W
E	A	I	B	E	N	L	S	C	E	G	S
H	I	O	R	E	S	E	Y	O	M	H	F
O	L	U	K	V	I	A	O	M	P	A	O
U	Y	S	I	E	N	D	U	E	T	L	R
R	B	N	N	R	S	N	R	A	A	L	G
W	R	O	G	Y	S	A	A	L	T	O	I
H	E	T	D	O	B	M	N	S	I	W	V
O	A	W	O	N	O	E	D	O	O	E	E
F	D	E	M	E	I	N	T	O	N	D	B

March 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 9:00 a.m. SS 10:30 a.m. Worship Communion Fellowship	3 Praise Band 6:30 p.m.	4	5 5:30-7 p.m. Soup Supper Lenten Service Choir 7 p.m. Sr. High	6 Trustees 7 p.m.	7 11:00 a.m. World Day of Prayer Service	8
9 9:00 a.m. SS 10:30a.m. Worship	10 Praise Band 6:30 p.m.	11	12 Choir 7 p.m.	13 Mary Martha 7 p.m.	14	15
16 9:00 a.m. SS 10:30a.m. Worship	17 	18 Naomi 12:30 p.m. Deacons 6:30p.m.	19 Choir 7 p.m. Sr. High Youth 6 p.m.	20 Maundy Thursday 6:30 p.m. Session 7:15 p.m.	21 Good Friday 6:30 p.m.	22
23 7 a.m. Sunrise Service 9:00 a.m. SS 10:30 a.m. Worship	24 Praise Band 6:30 p.m.	25	26 .	27	28	
30 9:00 a.m. SS 10:30 a.m. Worship	31 Praise Band 6:30 p.m.					

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This year, First TEAM is selling both lily plants and lily vials for the crosses of lilies for Easter morning. Lily plants are available for \$12.50 each. Lily vials (bloom only) will again be available to transform the old wooden cross which is in the sanctuary during lent at a cost of \$3.50 each. Please turn in order forms by March 9th (if possible, by March 2nd for the lily plants). Please call Barb Whitney (815) 335-1048 for more information.

Name _____

I would like to order _____ lily plants @ \$12.50.

In memory of _____

In honor of _____

I would like to order _____ lily vials @\$3.50 each.

In memory of _____

In honor of _____

Total paid _____

Please make checks payable to First TEAM. Thank you!



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Butter Braids are available again this year to help the Work Campers raise money for their trip to Pennsylvania. The cost is \$10.00/ braid. The flavors are: **Apple, Cherry, Cinnamon, Cream Cheese, Raspberry and Bavarian Crème**. Orders need to be in by **March 6**, for delivery on **March 15**. Please contact a **Work Camper or Randi or Tyler Busch** to place your order, phone 815-335-7106.

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