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Office Hours 9-1 Tuesday through Thursday
Worship Service on Sunday Mornings at 8:00 and 10:00 a.m.;
Sunday School at 9:00 a.m.

Volume 25 Issue 2

Spreading the Word

February 2024

February is coming and wow! With it comes the beginning of Lent. Perhaps it is very fitting to have Ash Wednesday on Valentines Day. After all, Lent is a time when we are reminded of God's sacrificial love for all of us.

What will Lent mean for you this year? I also need to ponder this. I think Lent, like so many things, is really about intentionality. Before we just willy nilly say we are going to give something up or start that exercise routine maybe we should pray about what God wants the Holy Spirit to highlight in our lives and instead, work with that intention. We would certainly be more successful. After all, the purpose of fasting or abstaining is to grow closer to God.

Some inspiring words to consider as you ponder the question of Lent for your own life.

"Unless there is Good Friday in your life, there can be no Easter Sunday."

- Fulton J Sheen, American Bishop

"No act of virtue can be great if it is not followed by advantage for others. So, no matter how much time you spend fasting, no matter how much you sleep on a hard floor and eat ashes and sigh continually, if you do no good to others, you do nothing great."

— John Chrysostom

"Lent is a time for discipline, for confession, for honesty, not because God is mean or fault-finding or finger-pointing but because he wants us to know the joy of being cleaned out, ready for all the good things he now has in store."

— N.T. Wright

"I imagine Lent for you and for me as a great departure from the greedy, anxious anti-neighborliness of our economy, a great departure from our exclusionary politics that fears the other, a great departure from self-indulgent consumerism that devours creation. And then an arrival in a new neighborhood, because it is a gift to be simple, it is a gift to be free; it is a gift to come down where we ought to be."

— Walter Brueggemann, *A Way Other Than Our Own: Devotions for Lent*

"...a guilty suffering spirit is more open to grace than an apathetic or smug soul. Therefore, an age without a sense of sin, in which people are not even sorry for not being sorry for their sins, is in a serious predicament. Likewise an age with a Christianity so eager to forgive that it denies the need for forgiveness. For such an age, therefore, Lent can scarcely be too long!"

— Edna Hatlestad Hong, *Downward Ascent*

Some ideas to pray about- journaling, fasting, helping others, reading and meditating on scripture. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you draw near.

Let us all find our path to know Jesus better this season. Amen~ *Inger*

Youth News

On January 14, 100 bags for the Nelson County's Food Pantry were packed by Sunday School students and their teacher, Ms. Christy Ruta, Ms. Jill Averitt, and Ms. Lynne Hess. Three stations were set up, and students picked the station they wished to help manage. They formed a formidable force.

For February the children are working on creating Valentine messages for each bag and will be asking the congregation for help to make sure each bag has a inspiring message.



Mission Ministry

The Mission Ministry Committee met in January and reviewed several new opportunities to serve our community. We will donate \$1,000 on an annual basis to the Nature Foundation at Wintergreen to help fund a science/math camp for underprivileged K-12 children in Nelson County.

We will also donate \$500 to the Gladstone Senior Center that serves and delivers meals to Gladstone residents, and will plan a trip to join them for lunch in the Spring.

Magnolia Rose, the safe house in Waynesboro that helps women overcome addiction and trafficking, will receive a \$1,000 donation in 2024.

Helping Hands approved a \$1,000 special donation to NCCDF towards an HVAC system for Wood Ministry (WM) client Daniel Brown.

Wendy Culberson has created a shared folder of resources for food, medical equipment, and social services for use by WM or any other caregivers. She also reported 57 gift bags were delivered for Care Bears at Christmas. There was \$553 of unspent donations that can be used toward next year.

Missions will be supporting the PACEM Programs at Westminster and Mt. Tabor Presbyterian Churches with food gift cards and deserts, respectively. This program provides evening housing and a meal for homeless people during the winter months in local churches on a rotating basis.

Our next meeting will be at 4 PM on Monday, February 5, 2024, and anyone interested in helping or learning more about our work is welcome to attend.

Bill Iverson,
Mission Ministry Chair

Session Highlights 1/16/24

Moderator Rev. Inger Manchester called the Session Meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. with prayer. Prayers were asked for Steve and Jerry, Ken Engebretson's daughter's significant other, Cathy LeGrow's stepson Aaron LeGrow, Chuck Thornsvard, and Betty Marker.

Guest Gordon Walker who is on the Board of Here to Stay in Wintergreen spoke to Session Members proposing a partnership with Here to Stay in Wintergreen to offer social respite services at RCP for caregivers of dementia patients. Partnership would include RPC to help with outreach, financial assistance, providing lunch all by volunteers. Fee for the service would be \$40/day. Further discussion is planned.

PASTOR'S REPORT: Rev. Inger Manchester reported that she was approached with the possibility of a Spring Recital being held at RPC with a performance by Danielle Talamantes on May 7 or May 28. A motion was brought to approve a Spring Recital and to help financially by taking up a love offering or by selling tickets. Session approved this.

CLERK'S REPORT:

- Approved minutes of Stated Meeting 11/28/23.
- Approved Elder Roger Fulton and Elder Sue Nichols as Co-Treasurers for 2024
- Approved Elder Ken Engebretson to Chair 2024 Nominating Committee and Susan Luscomb to Co-Chair.
- Approved Church's 2023 Statistical Report for General Assembly.
- Elected Elder Mac Lumpkin and Elder Bill Iverson to serve as our two Commissioners for POJ Stated Meeting scheduled for 2/17/24.
- Dates/Devotion Schedule and Session Directory for 2024.

STEWARDSHIP/FINANCE: Elder Mac Lumpkin presented a positive Stewardship Committee Report. He presented the 2024 Budget. He reported that the RPC responses to the Stewardship campaign were very generous and will fund all requests. He brought a motion to approve the 2024 budget and Session approved this.

NEW BUSINESS: Sue Fulton requested a Liaison to Session representing Congregational Life. Elder Susan Luscomb volunteered to serve as the Liaison.

MINISTRY TEAM AND COMMITTEE REPORTS/MOTIONS:

- Elder Mary Hopkins (Worship Ministry Team) Proposals for Session, all of which were approved:
 - Proposed 2024 Communion at RPC on 42 calendar days; includes all 8 AM Services, 10 AM Services on the first Sundays of the month, Easter, Christmas Eve, and Maundy Thursday; plus, a proposal for the occasional communion provided by Inger, with an Elder present, to congregants at home.
 - Proposed vacation days for Inger – with 10 AM Service only planned for Feb 18th & April 7th:
 - Feb 18-20 – include Sunday, Feb 18th (single service); Feb 26-29 – weekdays, does not miss Sunday; April 2-7 – includes Sunday, Apr 7th (single service)
 - Proposed Easter Service Schedule –
 - Feb 14 - Ash Wednesday - offer ashes 12:30-1:30 PM and a short Service at 5 PM
 - Wednesday Lent Services – 5:30-6:00 PM
 - March 28 - Maundy Thursday in Fellowship Hall – similar to last year, 6 PM
 - March 29 - Good Friday Stripping of the Sanctuary - 6 pm
 - Easter Sunday – Sunrise in pavilion @ 6:45 AM & 10 AM in Sanctuary
- Elder Sandy Gallagher (Outreach Ministry Team) reported that the Talent Show date has changed, TBD; thanked the Mission Ministry Team for funding for a Habitat for Humanity house; and announced a new Singles Support Group being planned for RPC.

Session Highlights (Cont'd)

- Elder Bill Iverson (Mission Ministry Team) reported on annual funding for:
 - \$1,000 for a Nature Foundation, \$500 for Gladstone Senior Center, \$1,000 for Magnolia Rose, and \$1,000 to NCCDF towards HVAC system and Wood Ministry client. He also reported that Wendy Culberson created a shared folder of resources for food, medical equipment, and social services for use by Wood Ministry folks or any other caregivers. 57 gift bags were delivered for Care Bears at Christmas. There was \$553 of unspent donations that can be used toward next year. Also, the Mission Ministry Team will be supporting the PACEM Programs at Westminster and Mt. Tabor Presbyterian Churches with food gift cards and desserts, respectively. This program provides evening housing and a meal for homeless people during the winter months.
- Elder Ken Engebretson (Facilities Management Team) reported LED lightbulbs have been installed in the narthex chandelier after several burned out in December. Incandescent bulbs are in the process of being phased out, we will be replacing them with LEDs. A motion was brought to approve providing accommodations at RPC for unhoused individuals in extreme inclement weather emergencies following constraints and conditions. The motion was denied.
- Elder Susan Luscomb (Christian Education Ministry Team) reported that Elder Dave Lawson will teach a self-written Adult Sunday School class entitled, "Nouns and Verbs of Christianity" and Inger will offer a new study based on the book, "Second Thoughts about the Second Coming" 11:30-12:30 on Wednesdays. The children's programs are running smoothly and Leslie Buchanan's fourth Tuesday book club meetings are well attended and feature terrific discussions.
- Elder Sally Bryant (Personnel Ministry Team) reported that all job descriptions have been approved and employees agree.
- Elder Joe Steele (Liaison Cemetery Committee) reported the following Cemetery update: Interments: July – December 2023 Ray & Nellie Koon, Kenneth Borgman

COMPLETED ACTIVITIES:

1. Power washed the Lower Cemetery and Upper Cemetery sidewalks to remove black grime and moss to improve the look and make safe to walk on. 2. Trimmed lower tree branches and shrubs and remove invasive plants from Upper Cemetery. 3. Washed black grime from the General-Purpose Memorial to All Members in the Lower Cemetery located next to the front parking lot. 4. Tested a repair to the Cremains Garden outer wall cracks and crevices using isomeric sand. Cannot claim success yet. 5. Filled in the outer circle of the Cremains Garden which is around the Inner Garden of the Celtic Cross. Used soil to fill up to the level of the inner wall damage to remove it from sight. Attempted to seed with grass, but the drought prevented new growth. Will attempt again in the Spring. When successful, the cost of a repair or renewal of the stonework will be prevented. Behind the Celtic Cross. 6. Cheryl Borgman placed a QR code LivingTag on a stake with brass plates for her parents' names behind the Celtic Cross. The QR code links to a Google document that can be updated. These LivingTags can be attached to gravestones. The durability of LivingTags is being tested. 7. Leveled the dirt height of the Mike Thomas Plot (A-6). 8. Held a Cemetery Ministry Team retirement party during the social hour after services on Dec. 3rd for Diana Rockwell and Jeff Wilk. 9. Welcomed Carol Kingsley as a new member of the Cemetery Ministry Team.

PENDING ACTIVITIES:

1. Cheryl Borgman, Chair of the Grounds Ministry Team, is to be consulted before any vegetation trimming. 2. The Cemetery Ministry Team and the Grounds Ministry Team will work together in the planning of landscape plantings, tree maintenance, and semi-annual grounds clean up. 3. Plant grass seed or install sod in the Cremains Garden and on other new burial plots. 4. Investigate how to improve the grass or ground cover of the Lower Cemetery.

Cemetery Ministry Team: Mike Chambers - Chair, Cheryl Borgman – Co-chair, Carol Kingsley, Hilary Day, Tim Hess
 Note: The Cemetery Ministry Team does not have an RPC budget entry. It has its own funds from plot sales and donations which may be spent as needed or as earmarked.

CELEBRATION AND GRATITUDE:

We give thanks for: Session and all the hard work they do for RPC. (Inger)

Rev. Inger Manchester closed the meeting in prayer at 8:39 PM.

Next Stated Session Meeting Tuesday, 2/20/24 at 7:00 PM, in the Library. Mac Lumpkin will have Devotions and Opening Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, *Cathy LeGrow, Clerk*





February 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Noon—Men's Group Lunch 3:15 Rockfish Ringers 4:30 Rockfish Community Children's Choir 5:30 Chancel Choir	2	3
4 8:00 a.m. Worship Service 9:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Worship Service Five Cents a Meal Offering	5 2:30 p.m. Personnel Committee Meeting 4:00 p.m. Mission Team Meeting	6 9:30 a.m. Outreach Ministry Meeting	7 10:00 a.m. Knitting and Nurture 11:30 Book Discussion 2:00 Where We Are Support Group	8 Noon—Men's Group Lunch 3:00 Worship Committee 3:15 Rockfish Ringers 4:30 Rockfish Community Children's Choir 5:30 Chancel Choir	9	10
11 8:00 a.m. Worship Service 9:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Pack Pantry Bags for Kids 5:00 p.m. Pub Theology at Brewing Tree	12 5:00 p.m. Stewardship Meeting	13	14 10:00 a.m. Knitting and Nurture 11:30 Book Discussion 12:30-1:30 Imposition of Ashes 5:00 Worship Service with Ashes	15 Noon—Men's Group Lunch 3:15 Rockfish Ringers 4:30 Rockfish Community Children's Choir 5:30 Chancel Choir	16	17
18 9:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Single Worship Service	19	20 7:00 Session Meeting	21 10:00 a.m. Knitting and Nurture 11:30 Book Discussion 5:30 Lenten Service	22 Noon—Men's Group Lunch 3:15 Rockfish Ringers 4:30 Rockfish Community Children's Choir 5:30 Chancel Choir Spreading The Word Articles Due	23	24 9:00 a.m. Distribution at Food Pantry
25 8:00 a.m. Worship Service 9:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Worship Service Emergency Relief Offering	26	27	28 10:00 a.m. Knitting and Nurture 11:30 Book Discussion 5:30 Lenten Service	29 Noon—Men's Group Lunch 3:15 Rockfish Ringers 4:30 Rockfish Community Children's Choir 5:30 Chancel Choir		