

The Spirit

Byron Presbyterian Church Sept. - Oct., 2009

The Lord's unfailing love and mercy will continue; fresh as the morning, as sure as the sunrise. The Lord is all I have, so in God I put my hope." [Lamentations 3:22]

The Basics

Sunday Worship happens at 9:45 AM
Christian Education for K-6th on Sunday mornings.
Nursery Care is available for young children
Church office phone is 548-2800
Contact Pastor James Renfrew at 548-2800.

We're Going Green!

Some of you will notice that in addition to receiving your church newsletter in the mail this month, you are also receiving it through the internet as an attached e-mail file. By the end of 2009 we hope to send as many of our newsletters as we can by e-mail. Those without e-mail capability, of course, will continue to receive their newsletters by first class mail.

"Going green" will mean less use of paper, reduced use of copier toner, and savings of hundreds of dollars on postage.

You can help us make this transition. Let us know if you have difficulty opening e-mail attachments, or have any other questions about e-mail. If we do not have your e-mail address, please submit it to our office at **office at yronfpc.org** or call 548-2800. By the way, you can provide multiple addresses so different family members can each receive their own copy! We will treat your e-address as confidential information, not to be published or given out to others unless we have your permission.

Some have asked if the church should simply post the newsletter on our www.byronfpc.org web site? We already put much of the newsletter there, but since it is a public place we never post prayer concerns, phone numbers, or any of the other personal information that makes our newsletter a good read!

Questions, comments, or ideas about "going green" with our newsletter? Please let us know!

Squashed?

Lots of people are harvesting squash from their gardens this time of year, and sharing it with their friends. When three people tried to give me extra ones last week - it felt like I was getting 'squashed'! Sometimes we feel that way when too many problems push in on us at the same time. Our prayer chain is ready to help you get 'un-squashed', so give us a call and we'll get to work with you through prayer.

Please contact Laura or Jean. By the way, yellow squash are a great addition to many delicious fall recipes.

Trustees Tidbits

The Church roof (laid down in Fall of 2005) has been repaired (hopefully permanently) under a warranty claim

filed with the shingle manufacturer. Wind damage to siding and trim on the steeple was also repaired at the same time by the roofing contractor (RA Hartz), and at no additional cost to the Church.

Our thanks to the youth and all the other volunteers (led by Tamarah Hillabush-Walker) for the improvements to the fellowship hall and front entry. Also, our continued thanks to the volunteers mowing the church lawn this year....keep up the good work!

Have you noticed the odd looking pipe extending out and down from the front gable of the Church?....One could make hundreds of guesses and probably never get it right. Many of you may know we have had on-going problems with bats in the Church attic (yep....that's right, we Byron Presbyterians have bats in our belfry). Anyway, this odd looking pipe is intended to allow bats out but prevent re-entry because bats can't fly vertically straight up. This contraption was researched by Don Britt and installed by him and Tom Nesbitt with assistance from Connor Nesbitt. This was installed in a location where bats were known to be entering & exiting, and will be removed and the hole plugged when the bats are thought to be gone. It should work IF this was their only entry / exit point, which cannot be assured.

Trustees have also been investigating why the floor of the sanctuary is heaving up in a few locations. Some limited access has been made into the area between the floor and the basement ceiling, but no definitive conclusions or reasons have yet been ascertained.

In order to comply with NYS Building code, additional exit signs will soon be installed in the sanctuary, and new fire extinguishers have been purchased for installation in the sanctuary, fellowship hall and kitchen areas. Other building maintenance and improvements we need to soon address is 1) the replacement of some rotted trim boards around the lower exterior of the church building and 2) the installation of newell post(s) and maybe some hand railing on the pulpit for improved accessibility for those with physical impairment. There is always plenty of work to do around our old church building, so if you want to lend a hand, please contact me. [*Marc Kenward, Trustees*]

From the Pastor

Dear Friends,

Since the topic of health care has been in the news I thought I would share my recent experience of hospitalization. Though I was the subject of the hospital stay I was also able to consider it as something like a field trip, since I had a lot of time to observe. I have visited many of you in the hospital, but it has been a long time since I have had to go to emergency for myself!

I went to Unity Hospital for lower abdominal pain. I entered at 2:30 PM, with a packed bag, because I believed that I had a surgery-ready hernia. I was released to go home around 11:30 PM, after a CAT scan indicated that I did not have a hernia, Diverticulitis, kidney stones or appendicitis. The ER doctor suspected a virus, and prescribed pain medication. So, no surgery!

The next morning I called my clinic. The doctor there consulted with the radiologist and I was told of evidence of appendix inflammation. So, back to emergency at 11:00 AM, once again packing my bag for surgery. I sat in a bed parked in a busy hallway all day because there were no rooms available in the ER. Since I was a candidate for surgery I went all day without food or water. Late afternoon an IV was attached, there was an EKG test of my heart, and then a final meeting with the surgeon.

The surgeon seemed perplexed, because the CAT scan did not match my symptoms. With an infected appendix there are usually a wide variety of other symptoms, but except for the pain spot I had none. He finally concluded that I must have an abdominal muscle tear. So no surgery for the second day, and his advice to take ibuprofen for the inflammation and take it easy for a while.

I fully expected the emergency room to involve a lot of waiting, and there were lots of people who kept moving to the head of the line because of the seriousness of their condition - heart attack, auto accident, neck injury, etc. I was impressed with the quality of modern medical care, and everyone informed me about exactly what they were doing. One doctor told me how lucky I was to have a surgeon who was hesitant to operate. I am guessing that two full days in the emergency room with all of the examinations, tests, and procedures will end up costing at least \$2,000. I had to pay a \$50 co-pay upon leaving, but I suspect that more paperwork and bills will follow. I have major medical coverage through the Presbyterian Church (USA), but I wonder what my final out-of-pocket expense will be. At times I felt like asking the nursing and tech people what each procedure would cost ("hey, I test my

blood glucose at home, for free!)", ,but when I'm the subject I don't want anyone to hold back what I might need!

I think the Prayer Chain call went out as I prepared for surgery. When the surgery was cancelled a few minutes later, my wife Robin commented "It's a miracle! The Prayer Chain worked!".

A final note: I hate to think of what happens to people who don't have adequate medical coverage. In such a case, \$2,000 would be an almost impossible burden.

Blessings and Peace! And let's all stay healthy!!

James R. Renfrew, Pastor

Deacons In Action

Deacons continue collect food donations for the emergency food cupboard of Genesee County Churches United that is located at Salvation Army in Batavia. Welcome items include macaroni and cheese, rice, crackers, peanut butter, fruit juice, and nutritious snacks for children.

With the Kiwanis Club of Byron and the South Byron Methodist Church we have circulating "welcome" packets to new residents of Byron.

Please visit our book shelf in the back lobby by the restrooms. There are many interesting books and magazines for all ages.

If you hear of someone going into the hospital or requiring medical care, please inform one of the deacons so we can arrange a card or visit.

With the H1N1 virus recently confirmed in our area, and expected to return in the fall, please make use of hand sanitizers in the sanctuary provided by the Deacons. Thank you! [*Pam Boshart Lynch, Deacons*]

Session Notes

The Fundraising Committee reported that \$441 was raised at the Heritage Day Pig Roast. The meal was completely sold out, assisted by a t-storm that forced people into the shelter of the fire where the meal was being served! Thanks to all who helped.

In September the church newsletter will be sent as an attachment to e-mail addresses, a first step in a transition to regular e-mail newsletter distribution by the end of the year. Those without internet capability will receive the newsletter by first class mail. The church expects to save several hundred dollars in postage costs, as well as to reduce the use of paper and copier toner.

A supplemental worship booklet is being prepared for September that will include music material and responsive readings. The new Hymnal will be dedicated during worship on Sunday, September 27th.

Session agreed to contribute \$25 to the Presbyterian Church (USA) Theological Education Fund. The fund supports the educational program in seminaries for pastors and other church professionals. In the past this was done as a special offering, but to keep things simpler, Session decided to offer the support in this way.

Natural Church Development

Believe it or not I am listening to Led Zeppelin performing their old hit "*Whole Lotta Love*" on the radio as I begin this section. I continue to be impressed that through the Natural Church Development process we have more than doubled our score for "Passionate Spirituality". I don't think we have done anything extraordinary to accomplish this. It's simply been a process of giving one another permission and encouragement to say more about the faith that is so important in our lives. During our stewardship emphasis, and throughout the fall, there will be ample opportunity for you (yes, you!) to share a story about your faith, and how it has made a huge difference to you in time of difficulty or challenge. When we share these stories I notice that everyone is listening carefully. As others volunteer to add a story, we have an experience of faith multiplying. This is aptly described, using that phrase from led Zeppelin, as a "whole lotta love" ... for Jesus Christ, our families, our church and community. (Yes, I know that Zeppelin might have been talking about some other kinds of love, but I'll just use the image of love multiplying to make a good point about the health of our church! [*Jim Renfrew, Pastor*]

Growing in Faith - Christian Education Fall Plans

For our K-6th graders we will be offering Sunday School classes during worship. Children will begin worship with the congregation, and then depart during the greeting time. On Communion Sunday, and other special services, children will remain to worship with their families. Children in this age group will spend the year exploring stories in the Old Testament, beginning where we left off last year in Genesis.

For our 7th-12th graders we will be offering a new program this year led by Tamara Hillabush Walker. We will gather once each month on Sunday, 5:00—7:00 PM. Exact dates and details will be sent to families in a separate mailing. If your son or daughter does not receive this letter, please contact Tamara. Youth will be creating Faith Journals, based on Paul's Letter to the Colossians, outlining Christian virtues and guidelines for living a holy life (Colossians 3:12-17). The virtues we'll be exploring include compassion, patience, forgiveness, peace, and love, among others. Our first meeting will be September 13th, in the Youth Room. We will spend the first 45 minutes creating covers for their Faith Journals based on verses they believe represent them. We will then break for dinner, and spend the last 45 minutes sharing our journals with each other. For these dinners, once a month, we're looking for volunteers in the congregation who might be willing to prepare a meal or two throughout the year. If you're interested, please contact Tamara at the e-address above. It is our hope that some of the youth will share their Faith Journal pages with the congregation during worship throughout the year.

For adults we have a variety of exciting opportunities this year: an evening Bible Study led by Jim Moore, after-church "Nooma" conversations led by Rev. Jim Renfrew, and Sunday evening Faith Journaling (mirroring the youth program) facilitated by Jeanie Sloat. The evening Bible Study group will start by meeting on the fourth Tuesday of every month at 7:30 PM, beginning September 22nd. For more information, see the article below, or you can contact him at [jim@jwmoore.com]. The Nooma discussion will take place following worship on the last Sunday of each month. For more information, please contact Rev. Jim Renfrew. The Adult Faith Journaling group will meet on Sunday evenings, once a month, beginning September 13th. For more information, please contact Jeanie Sloat or Tamara.

As always, the Christian Education Committee welcomes your comments, ideas and helping hands as we continue to Grow in Faith together in this exciting new year! [***Tamara Hillabush Walker, CE Committee***]

We're Starting a Bible Study!

Why? Simply to understand God's word and make it a living part of our day-to-day lives. As with all questions, we can find the answer in the Bible.

James 1:22-25 *"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this. Not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does."*

When? The fourth Tuesday of each month starting in September, 9/22, 10/27, 11/24 for starters. The December date will probably be changed so as not to fall in the busy week before Christmas. If there is sufficient interest we may go twice a month after December. Time: 7:30 til ?? It's likely to run 1 to 1 1/2 hours, but will be flexible. Where? At the church in the Youth Room. What? We will be taking a topical approach to the Bible. At each gathering we will focus on a particular word, thought or question that pertains to our lives today. We will explore and compare related passages from the Bible, what they mean, and how to apply them to our personal day-to-day lives. Who? This is a study intended for adult men and women, but young adults are certainly welcome to come if they have a sincere interest in the topic and would like to share their perspectives and learn with us. [***Jim Moore***]

Mission Committee News

Backpack Program Update: We have approximately \$1000 for start-up money for fall for the Backpack Program. I have contacted the School Social Worker and asked for up to 25 kids for the fall, with the hopes of expanding the program over what we did last year, which was supply the food backpacks to about 18 kids. (This number often

fluctuates as there often are changes due to families moving out of the district.)

We will be launching the program mid-September. A "training date" will be offered prior to then...please watch your weekly bulletin for the date. Each week, we will need 2 volunteers to pack the bags and deliver them to the elementary school. A sign up sheet will be available at the training event, followed by it being available at the back of church. I would like to have some trained people from our church willing to show others from the community how to pack the bags and explain what is involved, and hopefully get some others involved in this. It literally only takes about 1/2 hour to 45 minutes each week, and if we rotate volunteers it is not such a daunting task! Last year volunteers included Marilyn Britt, Luan Riner, Marsha Crawford, Elizabeth Weber, Debra Buck-Leaton, Marc, Michaela and Pam Kenward, and Samantha Walker for packing bags and Laura Platt pitched in and delivered bags to the school when others couldn't. Lara Ezard and Laurie Simmons faithfully picked up the empty bags and dropped them off at Gillam-Grant where the bags were packed. A large thanks also goes to the many who supported the program financially, including the Bergen Grange, the Bergen Ladies Auxiliary, Bergen Historical Society, Tops Market in Batavia, Bergen Presbyterian Church, Stone Church Presbyterian Church, North Bergen Presbyterian Church, the Bergen Rod & Gun Club, and our own church. (Hopefully I didn't leave anyone else, and sincere apologies if I did.) As you can see it takes MANY to make this program happen!

If you would like to donate money to the program, you can make checks payable to Byron Presbyterian Church, signifying that it is for the Backpack Program. If you would like to donate items, we ask for the items to be packaged for individual consumption, and welcome packs of crackers, instant oatmeal, small boxes of cereal, granola or cereal bars, 100% juice boxes, individual microwaveable soups or meals, small cups of fruit. If you would like other ideas let me know. We will be setting up a box somewhere at church for these items only and it will be marked "Backpack Program".

The Elementary School secretary, Becky Kelly said the children are very excited when they come in each week to pick up the backpacks. It is rewarding to know that we are filling a need to those involved, and that there is enthusiasm for it!

Pot Luck Dinner and Mission Event: Saturday, September 26, 6:00 PM- Our church is hosting an evening potluck dinner and program on Saturday, September 26 at 6 PM. We will have visitors from Russia, Mr. Piotr Anatolyevich Romme, International Peacemaker and Mrs. Ellen Smith, Mission Co-Worker join us to present a program. This is made possible through the Presbytery of Genesee Valley through "From Russia with Love".

Piotr is coordinator of a network for ministry with the Roma people. Piotr is Russian-German, descended from the Volga River Germans who were transported to Siberia, where Piotr was raised. Translation will be provided by Ellen Smith. Ellen and her husband, Al, are coordinators of the congregational twinning project in Russia and Belarus that matches interested congregations in the United States with congregations in Russia and Belarus for friendship and mission.

We always find it enlightening to hear news from other countries and are sure this will be another interesting program. Please join us, bringing a dish to pass (main entree, salad, desserts). Beverage and table service will be provided!

Cameron Community Ministry: We will be traveling to Cameron Community Ministries on Sunday, December 6 to offer a warm, filling meal and a Sunday Celebration Service to the residents of the Cameron area in Rochester. Please save the date in join us! It is always a fun, rewarding experience when we go to Cameron. Great chance for community service hours, high school students! If you have questions or already know you are interested in joining us, please talk to Pam Kenward.

Special Music Program October 4

Joining us for worship on World Communion Sunday, October 4th at 9:45 AM will be members of the ***Striking Strings Hammered Dulcimer Ensemble***. This is a group led and taught by Mitzie Collins, a world-renowned Hammered Dulcimer player. Our own Mary Ann Blair is also a member of the group.

We will have a light meal after the service, followed by a concert with the full Ensemble at 2:00 PM in the sanctuary. The concert will be free, but the group is accepting free-will donations to help cover the anticipated

costs of their planned trip to Hungary in 2011. We are very privileged to have music of this caliber at our church.

Youth Group News

The Youth have been busy this summer working on a number of mission projects. Students spent several days at Grace's Place, a head start program for children of migrant families in the Orleans County area. While there, they helped care for infants, toddlers and preschoolers. They also did a great deal of landscaping and painting to help the organization prepare for its annual inspection. Students also had the opportunity to spend some time with Project Life again this summer, a program that helps war orphans from other countries. Our youth spent time at Brown's Berry Patch and Stony Brook Park engaging in a number of activities with children from Chechnya.

Additionally, youth spent a number of hours working on a number of projects around our church. They cleaned and painted the upstairs Sunday School room, and transformed it into an office space for Rev. Jim Renfrew, and a small meeting space for small groups. They cleaned and organized the Christian Ed storage closet, and other supply cabinets around the church were consolidated. Some spent a few days emptying and cleaning shelves and cabinets in the kitchen. Perhaps their biggest undertaking was renovating the Fellowship Hall. We hope you like the new spaces they've worked so hard to create this summer, and find some time to enjoy them, as well!

Beginning in September, the Byron Youth Group will meet on a monthly basis to plan this year's upcoming events and fundraisers. These meetings will be on Sunday evenings from 5:00-7:00 p.m., and will correspond with the 7th-12th Grade Christian Education program this year. Specific dates and details will be sent to youth members in a separate mailing. If your children do not receive one of these mailings, please contact Tamara Hillabush Walker.

Celebration & Dedication!

Our Youth Group and lots of other volunteers have done amazing work in renovating and painting the Dining Room, painting and reconfiguring one of the upstairs meeting rooms (turning it into a work space for our pastor), repairing wallpaper in the front entryway, cleaning the kitchen, and de-cluttering the Youth Room. We will be celebrating and dedicating this work after Sunday worship on September 13th.

Instead of a French Toast breakfast before worship to begin the new Sunday School year, we will have French Toast and other brunch goodies after the service that day. Please, if you can, bring a brunch item to share. "Brunch" means either breakfast or lunch, so feel free to be creative.

Please join us after the service. We would like to take a photo of all the people of the church enjoying the new Dining Room!

Resource Saturdays at the Presbytery

At the Presbytery Resource Center
1190 Winton Road South

September 26th Courses

Registration Deadline: Thursday, September 24, telephone 244-0099

Stewardship 101, with Bob Spratt, Pastor, Bethany Presbyterian Church. Jesus spoke about money more than any other topic. In today's tough economic times, it's even more important to lift up stewardship to our congregation to focus on the important things in life. Come and learn about the importance of financial stewardship and the reasons stewardship programs fail or succeed.

Who's That Kid? Helping Your Youth and Your Congregation Build Relationships, with Niki Brodeur, First Presbyterian Church of Pittsford and Gretchen Roth, Central Presbyterian Church of Geneseo. Ever feel like your youth ministry has become a congregation within a congregation? Ever wish your teens and adults chatted during more than just Sunday School? Come share your thoughts and ideas.

From Russia With Love, with Piotr Anatolyevich Romme and Ellen Smith. World Mission Challenge is sending forty PCUSA mission co-workers into 140 presbyteries to tell how God is at work around the world. The Presbytery of Genesee Valley welcomes Piotr and Ellen as they share the story of how churches in Russia live out their faith in the gospel, and how we might partner with them in ministry.

Minutes Readings Tips for Clerks of Session, with Lynne Peffley of Lima Presbyterian Church. Do you have questions or need suggestions about your Minutes Book or record keeping procedures? We will review the checklist used for the reading of the minutes, and clerk handbooks will be available, too.

October 24th Courses

Registration deadline Thursday, October 22, telephone 244-0099

Holistic Small Groups: It's the Adjective that is Key, with Rev. Nancy Tripp and Rev. Jim Renfrew, Natural Church Development Coaches. A Natural Church Development Update. Do you have a group in your church where you go for help with the challenges you face, prayer support, spiritual growth, and to find relevant biblical applications for your everyday life? If not, come and explore that a holistic small group can bring to you and your church, why they are important, and how to begin one. Although many of our churches have found Passionate Spirituality to be their minimum factor, holistic small groups may be the key to the difference between a healthy and an unhealthy church.

Church as Employer: A Seminar for Personnel Committees, with Linda Badger Becker, General Presbyter. Whether your congregation employs several staff persons or simply a solo pastor, attending to the healthy and productive functioning of personnel is an essential right and responsibility of the local church Personnel Committee. This seminar will offer a brief overview of the work of the personnel committee, including hiring practices, personnel policies, performance reviews, and promoting healthy relationships.