

"The Spirit"

Byron Presbyterian Church Newsletter, MAR-APR 2010

"I praise you, Lord, because you heard me, because you have given me victory. The stone which the builders rejected as worthless turned out to be the most important of all. This was done by the Lord; what a wonderful sight it is!" [Psalm 118:21-23]

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 or 638-6679.

Forty Days to the Cross ... and Beyond!

A friend once decided to wash the wall around his refrigerator, to remove all those sticky fingerprints left by his children, thinking it would take only a few minutes to do the complete job. But when he had wiped away the smudges and dirt in that one small section it made the rest of the kitchen walls look dirtier than ever. By the time he was done that quick chore took up the rest of the week!

All of us want to improve something in ourselves, but it's hard when we find more layers of dirt than we expected after just the first few minutes of scrubbing. To change lives takes more than the five minutes of a quick chore.

It's been said that it takes 21 days of practice to change a bad habit. Just think, if you put your mind to it, in 21 days you can make a change! 21 days? Sometimes 40 minutes seems too big to take on to make the changes we want to make, even when we know how important it is, to preserve our health, to secure our family, to save our lives.

We find encouragement in scripture: Jesus died for us when we were at our worst. At your worst? If you're angry, if you're worried, if you're sick, if you're depressed, if you're disruptive, if you're violent, if you're out of control or have no control, if your life is a mess, if the community and nation that you live in teeters on the brink of disaster - in Jesus' forty day journey to the cross not one of us is left out: the purpose is not to defeat you, but to lift you up.

Paul says, "Everyone who calls out to the Lord will be saved." Paul could have chosen to go on and on about how bad people are, about how bad we are. Instead he took a different approach, showing not so much the consequences of sin, but the consequence of saying YES. In the nothingness God said YES and the universe began. In the face of evil, God said YES to Noah giving him the ark. In the face of injustice, God said YES to the Israelites and brought them out of Egypt. In the face of an impossible obstacle, God said YES, and the walls of Jericho tumbled. In the face of defeat, God said YES and brought Jesus out of the tomb. In the face of the challenges that you face in your life, God says YES ... to you!

The basic lesson of the Gospel is not negative. A Christian doesn't just go around saying NO to temptations. The Christian says YES to all of the opportunities and possibilities for welcoming the power of God into the life of the world. The Christian says YES to opportunities and possibilities for God. Shall we help and encourage? YES! Shall we heal? YES! Shall we bring God's peace and justice into the world? YES! YES! YES!

Pampered Chef Fundraiser - Tuesday, March 9, 6:30 PM

Everyone who enjoys cooking, baking or eating is invited to attend a Pampered Chef Show on Tuesday, March 9th at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall at the Byron Presbyterian Church. By ordering products either for yourself or the church kitchen, you will be helping five youths raise money to attend the 2010 Presbyterian Youth Triennium at Purdue University, Indiana.

If you plan on attending the show, please call Chrystal to RSVP at 548-7190. If you cannot attend the show but would like to order, you may see the catalog at www.pamperedchef.biz/marlae and when ordering enter your host, Chrystal Britt's name in order for our youth to receive credit.

Kylie, Lacey, Larisa, Chelsea and Alex thank you!

Natural Church Development - "Passionate Spirituality"

During the spring, we will approach Passionate Spirituality in a different way, by encouraging you to experience a "Small Group". Unlike most of our boards and committees that focus on specific tasks, a Small Group experience is an opportunity to enjoy the company of others. There is no homework in advance, and no tasks to take home afterwards. If you are simply looking for a way to get to know other folks a little better this is your chance! We will have a series of Small Groups during March, April and May. Sign up during March, and we will divide everyone up into groups to share a dessert at different homes. Watch for more details each Sunday!

Small Group Invitation

Our Membership Committee is planning to initiate some small group experiences for our church during April, May and June. Many churches in diverse denominations have developed this idea with great success. As we strive to develop a richer spiritual environment in our congregation, this seems like a great idea and we hope you will want to try it.

The idea is to create an enjoyable opportunity for folks in the church to get to know one another a little better. During March we will have a sign-up list for those interested in participating, Towards the end of March we will establish dates in April for "Small Groups" to meet. Each group - how many will we have? One, Two, or Three? - will meet in a home for dessert. All we ask is that you try this out for three months, and then we'll review what we've done and see about continuing in the fall for another three months.

Unlike many of the gatherings that take place in our church, each small group will be free of responsibilities, homework, and duties. The idea is no more and no less to get to know one another better! We also believe that small groups can be a different doorway into the life of our congregation.

Mission News!

MISSION EXTRAVAGANZA: Please plan to join us at the church on Saturday, April 10 for an afternoon of mission extravaganza. We are putting together an afternoon of opportunity for you to support some local mission causes, including our youth group, the backpack program, Crossroads House, and our own church kitchen. Lunch will be available--to benefit one of our church groups. More info will be published in the church bulletin come March, but please make sure you set aside the afternoon! Local churches will be invited to join in the fun as well. Ideas to contribute or want more info? Contact Pam Kenward.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING: We will once again participate in the One Great Hour of Sharing offering. The theme is based on this verse: Jesus said, "Do you love me? ... Feed my sheep." (John 21:16-27). Since 1949, Presbyterians have joined with millions of other Christians through One Great Hour of Sharing to share God's love with people experiencing need. Our gifts support ministries of disaster response, refugee assistance and resettlement, and community development that help people find safe refuge, start new lives and work together to strengthen their families and communities. Recently we have watched a tragic disaster in Haiti and one source of funding to help with such disasters comes from One Great Hour of Sharing. Recognizing that the hope we have in Christ is lived out in our hope for one another, we respond with gifts that help our sisters and brothers around the world find the hope for a brighter future. Watch the weekly bulletins for inserts. Minutes for Mission will also be coming up in church to offer more insight into this offering. Maybe a skit or two as well!

BACKPACK PROGRAM: The Backpack Program is rolling along...we could certainly use a few more volunteers to help with packing. If you would like to sign up for a date, please see Pam Kenward. Want to know what is involved in packing bags? The best way is to come and experience it hands on. If you would like to do that, please let Pam know and she will give you a contact for the week you would like to come and learn what to do. At any time if you would like to contribute money to the program for food items, feel free to drop a contribution in the weekly offering--mark it "backpack program" and we will add it to the transitory line.

Youth Group Activities

Spaghetti Dinner: Thank you to everyone who so generously donated items for the youth spaghetti dinner this past week! And, a BIG thank you to everyone who came to eat! The youth raised about \$550. This money will be used to

support the Byron Youth Group's summer mission projects and travel plans for Presbytery's Triennium 2010.

Triennium 2010: Five youth from our church submitted nomination materials for Presbytery's Triennium 2010 (Kylie Britt, Chelsea Hartman, Lacey & Larisa Sloat, and Alexandra Walker). This is an amazing opportunity for youth, who will travel, by bus, to Purdue University, Indiana, in July. They will spend a week with thousands of other Presbytery youth from around the world worshipping and participating in small group sessions. Our youth delegates will also attend two orientation sessions (June 12th and July 12th) where they will meet other youth from the Presbytery, with whom they'll be traveling to Indiana. The youth group is hoping to raise \$1,437.50 to cover half the cost to send these delegates to Indiana; the families of the five delegates will pay the other half. We hope you'll consider supporting the youth fundraising efforts over the next few months to help them reach their goal. If you'd like to make a donation for the Triennium fund, please contact Tamara Hillabush Walker or Rev. Renfrew.

Mission Madness: The youth group will be participating in the Presbytery's Mission Madness, April 24, from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. This is a great opportunity for our youth to meet other Presbyterian youth in the region, and work with them in a variety of mission projects, such as sorting food at FoodLink, helping out at a community garden which helps feed the hungry, caring for children, or other light construction/cleaning tasks to help a variety of non-profit organizations or individuals in need. Adult supervisors/drivers are also needed! If you're interested, please contact Tamara Hillabush Walker by April 1st. All participants must complete a registration form. We will meet at the church at 7:55 a.m. (PLEASE make sure everyone eats a hearty breakfast!) and travel together to Gates Presbyterian. From there, youth will be divided and given their assignments for the day. Youth will return to Gates at 12:30 p.m. for lunch (provided) and closing activities/prayer. We will return to Byron at 2:00 p.m. Participation fees will be covered by our Youth Activities budget.

Youth Meetings: Youth will meet March 21st, 5:00-7:00 p.m. in the Youth Room to work on summer mission plans, and begin planning a summer retreat at Hamlin Beach. A large portion of this time will be spent putting together Sand Art Bar jars, which will be sold at the BPC Mission fundraiser, April 10th. Thank you to Barb Emerson who inspired this project and is helping us pull this together. If you'd like to help with some of the ingredients for this project, we need: flour, salt, brown sugar, white sugar, cocoa, chopped walnuts, coconut, and chocolate chips. Contact Tamara Hillabush Walker for more information. Youth should also contact Tamara to let her know if you plan to help out with the youth table on April 10th (time to be determined). Our next meeting will be April 25th, 5:00-7:00 p.m. in the Youth Room. During this meeting we will continue planning our summer mission projects, the summer retreat at Hamlin Beach, and our summer fundraising projects (car wash, Memorial Day, etc.).

Christian Education

Faith Journaling: The 7th-12th grade Faith Journaling group will meet March 7th, 5-7 p.m., in the Youth Room. The topic will be *Gentleness*. Students should come with a Bible verse, stories/poems, and pictures of items that represent *gentleness* to them. The following month, the Faith Journaling group will meet April 11th, 5-7 p.m. in the Youth Room. The topic in April will be *Forgiveness*. No one has signed up to provide a meal for these dates. If you're willing to provide a light dinner (pot of soup, pan of pasta, sandwiches, etc.), please contact Tamara Hillabush Walker. THANK YOU Jim Renfrew, Robin Dunnington, and Jeanie Sloat who provided meals during the months of January and February! The adult Faith Journaling group has tapered off and been discontinued. If you're interested in re-starting this group, please contact Jeanie Sloat.

Easter Sunday Egg Hunt: The Christian Education Committee will once again be hosting an Easter Egg hunt immediately following service Easter Sunday, April 4th. Anyone who would like to donate wrapped candy (small enough to fit into a plastic Easter egg) may leave them in the kitchen, clearly marked for the Easter Egg hunt, by Sunday, March 28th.

Christian Ed Meeting: The Christian Ed Committee will meet immediately after services, Sunday, March 28th. During this meeting we will discuss upcoming events, such as Children's Sunday, Baccalaureate Sunday, and curriculum plans for the 2010-2011 school year. We will also fill eggs for Easter Sunday, while we chat. Youth and adults will continue their Faith Journaling March 7 and April 11th. In March our theme is , our theme is Humility and in February our theme is...you guessed it...Love. Please bring any Bible verses, stories, poems, and/or pictures which demonstrate what these qualities (humility and love) mean to you. ALL are welcome! If anyone is willing to prepare a meal for any of the Faith Journaling programs, please contact Tamara Hillabush Walker.

Lenten Devotional Book

Instead of a booklet handed out at the beginning of the Lenten season, as was done last year, we are going to

try to gather your Lenten reflections at the end of the Season, by Palm Sunday and use them for devotional material in other ways during the summer and fall. If interested, please speak to Jim Renfrew and he will supply you with some helpful ideas to get you started.

News From Haiti *From Presbyterian Disaster Assistance:*

In a perfect world, distributions of humanitarian aid after a major disaster would occur without a hitch. Everything would be orderly and proceed with precision. But life is messy and Haiti is far from perfect. Humanitarian practice, even during relatively small emergencies, is hard and imperfect work — a fact often not fully understood or appreciated by donors and even non-emergency staff of humanitarian groups. In light of the challenges — poor existing infrastructure, massive damage and the huge toll the earthquake has taken on everyone — the need to accept some imperfection and to improvise has become part of the daily realities of aid workers. "You need to be patient to do this kind of work," said Emmanuela Blain, 30, a medical doctor helping distribute food and goods in and outside Port-au-Prince for ACT Alliance member the Lutheran World Relief.

The patience Blain described is certainly needed now, nearly a month after the devastating January 12 earthquake. "Coordination and distribution remain difficult (and) overall public interest in Haiti may be waning, but needs will remain for months to come," said Dirk Salomons, humanitarian affairs program director at Columbia University in the United States. Salomons notes other potential problems. "There are initial information gaps, as not only the physical infrastructure breaks down, but also communication systems like cell towers and landlines," he said. "So chaos ensues."

And then, in Haiti, there are the difficult pre-existing realities. "It's a special place, a special country, it has its own context, it's chaotic in normal times, and it's a challenging place to work," Waddell said. Those realities exacerbated what became a unique catastrophe: "a direct hit on a capital city which then paralyzed an entire country," he said.

The trick, Waddell added, is maneuvering around the challenges while still being accountable to donors and, most importantly, those needing the assistance. The job is not going to get any easier. In the end, he said, everyone affected by the earthquake is vulnerable in some way, and in coming months Haiti faces a rainy season and the threat of storms, floods and hurricanes. "How do we prepare for that?" Waddell asked. In other words, the challenges in Haiti are just beginning.

Information for this update was provided by Chris Herlinger, a communicator for the ACT Alliance. Action by Churches Together (ACT) is a global alliance of churches and related agencies working together for positive and sustainable change in the lives of people affected by emergencies, poverty and injustice, through coordinated and effective humanitarian, development and advocacy work. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is a member of the ACT Alliance.

Boinggg!!!!

That's the sound when a tight spring is suddenly uncompressed. All that tension gets released ... boing!!! With spring in the air perhaps this is a good time to relieve a winter's worth of tension by connecting with our Prayer Chain? Prayer has that effect on people: relieving tension, boosting our spirits, sometimes even making us laugh with surprise! Our prayer chain is ready to help you rebound this spring, so give us a call and we'll get to work with lots of prayers. Please contact Laura Platt or Jean Roda.

Still Going Green!

Since September we have been sending out our newsletter to many of our readers as an e-mail attachment. The experiment appears to be working well, so many of you will continue to be receiving your newsletter that way from now on. If you are receiving this in your postal mailbox, it means that we don't have your e-mail address yet. You can help us "Go Green" by sending your e-mail address to our secretary, Janet Pike. Those without e-mail capability, of course, will continue to receive their newsletters by first class mail. "Going green" means less use of paper, reduced use of copier toner, and savings of hundreds of dollars on postage each year. By the way, you can provide multiple addresses to us so different family members can each receive their own copy! We are happy to send this newsletter far and wide. We will treat your e-address as confidential information, not to be published or given out to others unless we have your permission.

2010 Offering Envelopes

We thank all who have made a financial commitment to the church for 2010. Please note that there is an envelope marked "*Per Capita*". Per Capita, set at \$25.82, represents each church member's fair share of the administrative expenses of the Presbytery of Genesee Valley, Synod of the Northeast, and the Presbyterian Church (USA). Members typically contribute this amount during January, but any other time during 2010 would be fine, too. A box of offering envelopes, and periodic financial statements, are made available to all who request them from the Stewardship Committee. We are fortunate to have a great team of Deacons at work, leading us all in a ministry of care and service within the church and in the surrounding community. "God's constant love fills the earth", and we are glad to have our Deacons demonstrating that throughout the year!

Deacons in Action

Deacons currently in service include *Kathy George* (Moderator), *Doris Hillabush*, *Bridgette Yaxley*, *Luan Riner*, *Barb Emerson*, *Jane Ezard*, *Lynne George*, *Harley George*, and *Faline Tyler*.

An important project of the Deacons is preparing "Easter Baskets" for some of our older members who find it difficult to come to church each week. As we get closer to Easter, please watch for the list of items needed for this project.

Every Sunday Deacons welcome contributions of food items that are added to the Genesee County Churches United Emergency Food Shelf located at the Salvation Army in Batavia. Hundreds of families benefit from the Food Shelf during the year.

Looking for a good book? Deacons have set up a library of interesting books in the hallway behind the sanctuary. Feel free to browse or borrow!

Session Notes

The Congregational Meeting in January was an enjoyable opportunity for those in attendance to hear each board and committee share excitement about the previous year's ministry and to express enthusiasm for the coming year.

Session met at the end of January to organize its activities for the coming year. Tom Nesbitt, Marilyn Britt and Audrey Blount were welcomed to new terms of service on Session. Mary Ann Blair will continue at Clerk of Session and Robin Glazier will continue as Church Treasurer.

The 2010 Budget presented at the Congregational Meeting was approved by Session. The Pastor's 2010 Terms of Call were approved at the Congregational Meeting. We were fortunate that the deficit that we had at the beginning of 2009 turned into a surplus by year's end. This gives us a good start on 2010. The Finance and Stewardship Committees did an excellent job of keeping the church financially healthy in 2009 in spite of the challenges of the current economy.

During 2010 Kathy George will be Moderator of the Board of Deacons. Ron Glazier will serve as Chair of the Board of Trustees. Session is completing the roster of committee assignments for 2010.

Trustees Report

In recent weeks Trustees have been working with the Town to bring the church into compliance with building codes. This involves improved "exit" signage, posting information about maximum occupancy of meeting rooms, and closer attention to fire extinguisher inspection. Trustees are also examining the requirements for emergency lighting.

Trustees are close to starting repairs in the attic area above the back hallway. The first step is to install a set of pull-down stairs that will allow for easier access to the attic. Once this is complete, Trustees will begin construction of a special enclosed "room" in the attic to house the ventilation system for the organ. It is hoped that this project will extend the life of the organ, and minimize the need for frequent repairs due to the corrosion of moving parts.

If you have any questions about these projects, please speak to any member of the Trustees. Trustees also welcome ideas for improving the condition and operations in our old building.

Preaching Themes for January and February

MAR 7	Psalm 63:1-8 "Hope for the Thirsty Soul"
MAR 14	Psalm 32:1-7 "Hope for Those Worn Out"
MAR 21	Psalm 126 "Hope for Those in Tears"
MAR 28	Psalm 118 "Hope for Those Left Out"
APR 4	Psalm 118:14-24 "Victory for the Defeated"
APR 11	Rev. 1:4-8 "Grace and Peace"
APR 18	John 21:1-19 "Come and Eat"
APR 25	Psalm 23 "The Lord is My Shepherd"

Abitibi Paper Retriever Program

We want everyone's newspapers, magazines, office and school papers, shopping catalogs, mail, envelopes, folders, fax and copy paper, colored paper! Bring it to the bins behind the church - it's that easy! No cardboard, please. We earn \$5 per ton.

Tables & Chairs

Folding tables and chairs may be loaned to church members free of charge. Non-members are charged a fee of \$5 per table plus \$5 for each set of five chairs. Those wishing to borrow these must make arrangements well in advance with the Church Secretary.

Nooma

On the fourth Sunday of most months after worship we've been viewing Nooma DVDs. "Nooma" is the Greek word for Spirit, "Pneuma". It's always a lively conversation.

Resource Saturday

At the Presbytery Resource Center, 1190 Winton Road South

All courses are FREE! Pre-registration requested for all courses. Contact Susan Orr , 242-0099.

Saturday March 13, 9:30-11am. Registration Deadline: Thursday March 11

Hospitality as Evangelism: With Linda Badger Becker, General Presbyter - What do newcomers experience upon arrival at your church? What do they learn about your congregation and its spiritual vitality by what they see and hear on Sunday morning? This hands-on workshop on biblical hospitality and church growth is a real eye-opener.

The 3 Colors of Spirituality: A New Resource for NCD: with Rev. Nancy Tripp-Leport and Melinda Gaudioso, Natural Church Development Coaches - In *The 3 Colors of Spirituality*, Christian Schwarz, founder and president of the Institute for Natural Church Development, has written a book to help us understand more fully passionate spirituality as well as 9 spiritual types or ways we connect to God. Come and see how this book can open up a whole new understanding of our most common minimum factor, passionate spirituality, and help us to understand which of the 9 basic types we use most naturally. Discover your personal spiritual style and learn how to relate to styles different from your own.

The Byron Dig Needs You!

One of North America's most important archaeology sites is right in Byron. Through 27 years of digging by volunteers, including your friends and neighbors, fossils and artifacts have been wrested from the ground to tell the story of Byron from the Ice Age to the present.

Now the Byron Dig needs your help. The economic climate prevents the Buffalo Museum of Science, for the first time in 27 years, from funding this project. For it to continue, it needs support from you and people like you. Please consider a donation in any amount, payable to "Buffalo Museum of Science - Byron Dig." Mail it to: Buffalo Museum of Science, c/o Michelle Rudnicki, 1020 Humboldt Parkway, Buffalo, NY 14211.

There will be a board displayed at the Byron Dig listing donors in categories for contributions of \$150 or more. [***Richard Laub, Buffalo Museum***]