



March 2011

The Peace Visitor

Dear Friends,

In AD 325 at the Nicene Council it was decided that Easter should always be celebrated on Sunday and not be linked to the Jewish Passover. So calculations were made. Tables of dates were drawn up. The rule became that Easter is celebrated on the first Sunday following the first ecclesiastical full moon that occurs on or after the day of the vernal equinox and the vernal equinox is fixed as March 21. This means that Easter can never occur before March 22 or later than April 25. Easter this year falls on April 24!

Easter comes late this year. While the date of Easter can be calculated, God is not constrained by our calculations. Easter 'coming late' is a good reminder that our schedule may be different than God's schedule. How many times have we wondered why God was late coming to our aid? How many times in our lives have we waited for God and waited and waited? We have all prayed "Hurry, Lord, hurry!" But God is not constrained by our schedule. Even when we think that God's grace, healing, and mercy are passing us by, it may be that God has a different schedule than ours. When we pray we acknowledge our dependence on the Almighty. That confession of faith means we can rely on God's schedule.

There are blessings when Easter is celebrated later. Ash Wednesday is March 9. Daylight Saving time begins March 13. So our Wednesday evening Lenten Services will benefit from more light. The weather will be correspondingly more Spring like.

Easter is April 24 but Easter is not really a matter of the calendar. It is a matter of the heart. Easter's blessings begin in preparation, prayer, and patience. Christ died for our sins and was raised for our salvation. The blessing is recognizing that God has redeemed us and will continue to redeem us in Christ Jesus, according to God's own time.

Easter is late this year. But let us not be late in recognizing the beauty and the blessings, the majesty and the miracles of God's care for us this day and every day, even to eternity.

Shalom,
Pastor Hal

**Peace United Church of Christ
Council Meeting Minutes**

February 17, 2011

Present: Pastor Hal Spann, Mark Hoff, Shirley Hoff, Jay Yunek, Val Broste, Chet Johnson, Linda Bueckers, Karen Johnson

Opening prayer by Pastor Hal.

Linda Bueckers, our new bookkeeper, was introduced.

Secretary's Report: January meeting minutes approved as printed in the February Visitor.

Financial Secretary's Report: Report was reviewed and approved as printed.

Treasurer's Report: Linda Bueckers and Pastor Hal have been working on getting things running with the transition from an internal treasurer to an external bookkeeper. Linda will be creating a spreadsheet to help keep track of all bills and due dates. This should help with determining a set schedule for Linda to meet with Pastor Hal. The general fund is doing well.

Pastor's Report: Since we last met I led worship on January 23 and January 30. Also led worship on February 6 when we had communion and on February 13.

On January 23 we had our Annual Congregational Meeting where we elected officers, passed the budget for 2011 and received reports from 2010. We had a potluck afterwards and good food was enjoyed. Thanks to everyone who helped.

On January 25 we held the Committee orientation meeting and attempted to get the committees to each name the Chair, the Secretary, and the Council Representative.

On January 30 we were blessed to hear Linda Tramm tell us of her trip this past summer to the Dominican Republic with a church group. She showed us wonderful pictures afterwards also.

Also on January 30 we celebrated the baptism of Nora Rajkowski, daughter of Frank and Ellen. On February 13 we celebrated the baptism of Tessa Foster, daughter of JR Foster and Tabitha Whitley.

I met with the Pastor-Parish Committee on February 3. The Reach out Committee and the Deacons met on February 9. The Christian Education Committee met February 10. The Time, Talent and Treasure Committee met on the 16th and we just met with the Trustees.

Talked with Bill Conlon and met with a couple of roofers about the ice dam on the old flat roof. The \$500 - \$600 estimate to steam the ice away seemed way too expensive to me and I emailed that sentiment to Brad Hanson who had originally contacted Conlon. **SO FAR NO LEAKS!**

I met with Juan Rivera and Kelly Reich concerning their wedding that is scheduled for October 22, 2011.

I met with Derek Blonigen and Jessica Miller about their wedding that is scheduled for July 30.

I met with a representative from Liberty Insurance about a competitive quote for Church insurance.

Met with the Sunday morning Adult Group on January 23, 30, February 6, & 13 on the book of Acts.

Saw Dennis Clark in the hospital but visited nowhere else this last month due to my rotten health.

Deacons: Met on February 9th. Discussed Communion on Sunday, March 6th and Ash Wednesday, March 9th.

Lenten Suppers will again be provided by the Deacons. Discussed responsibilities and schedule for 2011.
Trustees: Met on February 17th. The trustees have set Saturday, April 9th as spring cleaning day beginning at 10:00 a.m.

Time, Talents and Treasure: Met on February 16th. There are still a few openings on some committees so will be continuing to recruit members to fill these. We are planning to reduce the size of committees to five members with the exception of the Deacons and Trustees.

Christian Ed: Met and discussed various ways to improve activities for our youth.

Special Events: No Meeting.

Pastor Parish: Met, but due to confidentiality there is no report.

Renewal Task Force: Met on February 13th. The Congregational meeting that was scheduled for February 27th has been postponed. A new date will be announced.

Mission Committee: No Meeting.

Reach Out: The committee met and discussed ways of reaching out within the congregation. We will be posting information on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall to help us get to know each other better. Small group in-home 'potlucks' will be coordinated. A Family Tree will be posted to help people get to know how some members are related and which members are descendents of some of the founding members of our congregation. We are in the final stages of the new Pictorial Directory.

Other Business: Discussed the need to change the Constitution to accommodate the committee size changes as proposed by the Time, Talent & Treasure committee. Pastor Hal will ask Brad Hanson to make the necessary changes so this can be addressed at the next congregational meeting.

Meeting was adjourned and closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Karen Johnson.



Grandpa's Hands

Grandpa, some ninety plus years, sat feebly on the patio bench. He didn't move, just sat with his head down staring at his hands. When I sat down beside him he didn't acknowledge my presence and the longer I sat I wondered if he was OK. Finally, not really wanting to disturb him but wanting to check on him at the same time, I asked him if he was OK.

He raised his head and looked at me and smiled. "Yes, I'm fine, thank you for asking," he said in a clear strong voice.

"I didn't mean to disturb you, Grandpa, but you were just sitting there staring at your hands and I wanted to make sure you were OK," I explained to him.

"Have you ever looked at your hands," he asked. "I mean really looked at your hands?"

I slowly opened my hands and stared down at them. I turned them over, palms up and then palms down. No, I guess I had never really looked at my hands. I tried to figure out the point he was making.

Grandpa smiled and said, “Stop and think for a moment about the hands you have, how they have served you well throughout your years. These hands, though wrinkled, shriveled and weak, have been the tools I have used all my life to reach out, grab and embrace life. They put food in my mouth and clothes on my back. As a child my Mother taught me to fold them in prayer. They tied my shoes and pulled on my boots. They have been dirty, scraped and raw, swollen and bent. They were uneasy and clumsy when I tried to hold my newborn son. Decorated with my wedding band they showed the world that I was married and loved someone special. They trembled and shook when I buried my parents and wife and when I walked my daughter down the aisle. They have covered my face, combed my hair, and washed and cleansed the rest of my body. They have been sticky and wet, bent and broken, dried and raw.

“And to this day, when not much of me works real well these hands hold me up, lay me down, and again continue to fold in prayer. These hands are the mark of where I've been and the ruggedness of my life. But more importantly it will be these hands that God will reach out and take when he leads me home. And He will take my hands and lift me to His side and there I will use these hands to touch the face of Christ.”

I will never look at my hands the same way again. Not long after, God did reach out, took Grandpa's hands and led him home. Now, when my hands are hurt or sore I think of Grandpa. I know he has been stroked and caressed and held by the hands of God. I, too, want to touch the face of God and feel His hands upon my face.

~ Submitted by Becky Reich



“Recent research shows that many children who do not have enough to eat wind up with diminished capacity to understand and learn. Children don't have to be starving for this to happen. Even mild undernutrition, the kind most common among poor people in America, can do it.”
~ Carl Sagan, Cornell University

March is the Minnesota Food Share Campaign and Peace U.C.C. has participated in this mission project for years to help the hungry in our state.

Please bring non-perishable food items to church with you during the month of March.

This year MN FoodShare has set a campaign goal of raising 12 million combined pounds and dollars for Minnesota food shelves. **Consider a cash donation.** Every dollar given to Minnesota FoodShare during the March Campaign goes directly to local food shelves to purchase food for the hungry. For each dollar contributed, food shelves can purchase \$4 worth of food. However, this essential effort cannot succeed without our help.

Happy March Birthday!



Alison Meyer – 1
Bob Levine – 2
Matthew Poster – 2
Clarence Giloy – 3
Jack Gburzynski – 4
Roger Barthelemy – 4
Blake Kayser – 5
Jaime Hoff – 6
Buzz Lyon – 6
Andrew Supan – 11
Bev Doeden – 12
Leif Larson – 14
Sue Primus – 14
Loren Boone – 15
Harold Schleicher – 16
Dennis Clark – 18
Laura Schroeder – 18
Peggy Wensman – 18
Susana Manea – 20
JoAnn Higgins – 22
Chris Supan – 22
Sheila Devine – 24
Carter Kayser – 24
Joseph Forbregd – 24
Dan Joyce – 25
Helene Ringenberger – 27
Adam Lehner – 28
Kole Winters – 29
Jon Tufte – 31

Charlotte Naegeli
900 14th Ave S
St. Cloud, MN 56301

Deloris Olson
835 N 31st Ave
St. Cloud, MN 56303

Helene Ringenberger
1810 Minnesota Blvd. SE
#306
St. Cloud, MN 56304

Laura Schroeder
5914 5th Ave NE
Sauk Rapids, MN 56379

Lucy Siercks
1605 Goettens Way
101
St. Cloud, MN 56301

Ron Vierkant
4738 45th St. NE
Sauk Rapids, MN 56379

Betty Butterfield
1211 4th Ave N # 313
Sauk Rapids, MN 56379

Betsy Dablow
909 Dellwood St. # 214
Cambridge, MN 55008

Lillian Fors
520 – 1st Street NE
Sartell, MN 56377

Winnie Galbraith
2509 15th Street N.
St. Cloud, MN 56303

Rose Gronau
520 – 1st Street NE
Sartell, MN 56377

Bernice Hofstater
358 3rd St. NE
Sartell, MN 56377

Lief Larsen
1790 W Mill Street
Paynesville, MN

*Are you able to visit or send a
note to these members
who are homebound, or living
in long-term care?*



*They would love
to hear from you.*



Joys & Concerns

Get Well – Dennis Clark

**Please note the change of Winnie Galbraith's address.
She has returned to St. Cloud and is living at her
previous St. Cloud residence.**



Lenten Schedule

During Lent the Deacons will provide a light dinner prior to the worship on Wednesday evenings, March 16th – April 13th.

Skits from “The Power of His Last Words” by Susan Pargman will be presented during worship. Please watch for the sign-up sheet.

Ash Wednesday – March 9th, Worship at 7:00 with Communion: “Forgiven”

March 16th – Lenten Meal prepared by Lela Clark 5:30, Worship 6:30: “With Him in Paradise”

March 23rd – Lenten Meal prepared by Mark Hoff, Worship 6:30: “Behold Your Son”

March 30th – Lenten Meal prepared by Chet Johnson, Worship 6:30: “Forsaken”

April 6th – Lenten Meal prepared by Jay & Deb Yunek, Worship 6:30: “I Thirst”

April 13th – Lenten Meal prepared by Roger Towler, Worship 6:30: “Into Your Hands”

Palm Sunday, April 17th

Maundy Thursday, April 21st – Worship 7:00 p.m. with Communion: “It is Finished”

Good Friday, April 22 – Worship location to be announced

Easter, April 24

CONSIDER YOUR CALL FOR THE TRUSTEES

According to the Constitution of Peace United Church of Christ the **Board of Trustees**, has six members, three are elected each year to serve a two year term. But this year we only filled two of those positions for the Trustees. We need you to step up and volunteer.

The Trustees develop the Annual Budget for the congregation. Each month they receive the Treasurer's report and gauge the financial health of the church. The Trustees make sure the church has appropriate insurance coverage for liability, property, Workers Compensation. They are responsible for the invested funds of the church. The Trustees also oversee the non-pastoral employees.

The Trustees are charged with the care and custody of the property of the church. *And in a building as old as ours that is always exciting!* The Board has no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer property without specific authority by vote of the members of the church.

Currently the Trustees meet the third Thursday of the month at 6:00 P.M. It is so important to have a full complement of Trustees. Please prayerfully consider volunteering for this position.

Thank you,
Pastor Hal
& The Time Talent & Treasure Committee



Hi!

Thanks to all for the cards, gifts & hugs and for coming for the coffee and helping me celebrate my birthday! Thanks also for the cards I got in the mail.

My love,
Phyllis Hartwig

Stewardship Message

Lenten Self-examination

“Yet even now, says the Lord.” Joel 2:12

Traditionally in the season of Lent we are called to self-examination. We’re called to look at our lives, to remember the words we wish we had not said or the actions we regret doing, or *not* doing. We’re invited to take a deep, honest look at ourselves, to try to see our lives as God sees them, and to understand we are being held accountable for how we spend this one life we are given. The point of this is not to then wallow in how awful we are or to despair in our weakness. The point is to repent, to turn around and to renew our dedication to our baptismal vows. As the prophet Joel said to Israel, God is ready and waiting to work beside and inside you. God is ready to empower you to do great things!

What if we understood Lenten self-examination to apply to congregations as well as individuals? What might we discover in our churches if we spent six weeks examining how we are living into God’s call to us as a community of faith? Some churches might despair in their lack of resources or people or energy, but the point is not to wallow in the “ain’t it awfuls!” The point is to invite God in all over again and discover what new thing God might do in you as a congregation. “Yet even now,” God is waiting!

Rochelle A. Stackhouse is the Senior Minister of The Church of the Redeemer, United Church of Christ, New Haven Connecticut.

March 2011

God is still speaking,



This resource is a free service and is made possible by your gifts to Our Church's Wider Mission.

Peace United Church of Christ

Pastor: Rev. Hal Spann

Office: (320) 251-6289

Church Office Hours: Tuesday -Friday 2:00 – 5:00 p.m.

email: Peaceucc1908@yahoo.com

