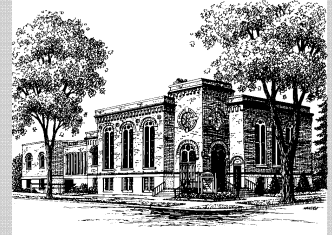


THE CORNER CONNECTION



Christ Jesus is the
Chief Cornerstone
Ephesians 2:19-20

Summer
2007

First Presbyterian Church

301 Central Avenue
Whitefish, MT 59937
(406) 862-2802
Fax: (406) 862-1683
E-mail: info@fpcwhitefish.org

Pastor:
Dan Davis

Youth and Family:
Michelle Kuntz

Secretary:
Jacqy Little

Treasurer:
Deloris House

Organist:
Kathy Murphy

Pianist:
Karla Kirkemo

Custodian:
Donna Simpson



Cater-Corner

Summer 2007

There is one summer wedding down and two to go. The first phase of planned major work on the building, checking and repairing the masonry, has been completed. A week of VBS took place during one of the hottest weeks of the summer. A man walks into the office needing food and a bus ticket. A family calls on a Tuesday and wants to schedule a memorial service on Friday. Nearly every week a new regular summer family arrives. Meanwhile, the visitation list waits on the office wall. Now I know why the session and deacons take the summer off – so the pastor can get things done!

Every place has its rhythms as it moves from season to season; every church has its way of responding to those changes as it serves in those places and communities. I am still learning about you, about Whitefish, about your rhythms, your pace, your gifts, and about the potential that exists in serving our community. I am also still learning about myself and how to best use my gifts in serving you.

In a way it is like each wedding I officiate. The first thing I do is spend time with the couple, I share about who I am and how I look at weddings and they share with me. I let a couple know that I do not have “a” wedding ceremony wherein I simply plug in the next two names, the next set of families. I want them to have input into their ceremony so that it will be “their” ceremony. I do not have a formula that allows me to come to a church, set up my office, change the name on the letter head, and away we go. I believe God works through each member, each church, each pastor, each community and it is the discernment of those workings that allow a church and pastor to serve together faithfully and well.

I have a poem I found to share in this summer posting of the Corner Connection. I lived and served for years in an area where the rhythm of life was driven by winter wheat; preparing fields, planting, harvesting. It's called *If God Is This Winter Wheat* and is written by Warren Molton.

If God is this winter wheat
whose seed slept
under snow just months ago,
awaiting still another awakening,
and now stands raised yet deep-rooted
on heads-up stalks
billowing in the wind
like the sea
that once labored here;

If God is this winter wheat
flooding these plains
and rolling away from me
as far as I can see
even to that distance only
seen beyond sight,
that further view of faith;

If God is this winter wheat
I wave and beckon
into the fields threshers
arriving to harvest our God
whose body will be broken
to become bread of life
for the bellies of her world
even as some of us
eat her bitter chaff
to fuel our souls.

It took a move to Montana to find this poem about the rhythms of Kansas. I am learning the rhythms of northwest Montana and of this church. Maybe I'll find our poem sooner. Meanwhile we serve God together.

Dan

New Books
in the Church
Library



SUMMER READING RECOMMENDATIONS:

DAKOTA: A spiritual geography
By Kathleen Norris

"A book of stories, a book of prayer, a book to be read meditatively and well," DAKOTA offers a timeless tribute to a place in the American landscape that is at once desolate and sublime, harsh and forgiving, steeped in history and myth. From the award-winning author of AMAZING GRACE, DAKOTA is Kathleen Norris at her most thoughtful, her most discerning, her best. She gives us, once again, a rare "gift of hope and balance, a place to begin" (Chicago Tribune) and assurance that wherever we go, we chart our own spiritual geography.

Voluntary Simplicity

Eighteen of us met faithfully on Tuesday evenings for two months (March and April) to discuss what it means to choose to live simply. Four of the participants joined us from other churches and two people came all the way from Kalispell. Discussion topics included: the meaning of simplicity, living more with less, simplicity and your money, simplicity and your time and your work, how much is enough, and living simply when others around you are not. We also addressed the changes we each wanted to make in our lives.

Voluntary Simplicity made us all aware of how we live our lives on “automatic pilot” most of the time. To add to our unconscious state of mind, our culture continually bathes us in the merits of being “over the top” busy, buying and spending, and keeping up with the latest technology. All this cultural “hoopla” is fueled by our advertisement industry which ultimately drives our economy. In 1996 there were 42,130 shopping centers in the United States. Dee Risher in his Article on “A Spirituality of Contentment” states that how a culture uses its most valuable resource (time and money) indicates its deity”. For us in the Western world... it’s acquiring and maintaining our possessions. Bishop Festo Kivengere, said “technology and material things can never liberate you. They have a tendency to squeeze you into their own image”.

So how much time is left to live our values? To answer that question, one needs to stop living on “automatic pilot” and consciously make decisions that honor a respect for ourselves, others, and the earth we inhabit. This means that we live deliberately and are mindful of the choices we make. We looked at several people’s views of what it means to live simply. Here is Ann Morrow’s definition of what she thinks it means:

“I want to be at peace with myself. I want a singleness of eye, a purity of intention, a central core of my life that will enable me to carry out the obligations and activities of my life as well as I can. I want to borrow from the language of the saints- to live “in grace” as much of the time as possible. By grace I mean an inner harmony, essentially spiritual, which can be translated into outward harmony. I would like to achieve a state of inner spiritual grace from which I could function and give as I was meant to in the eyes of God”

Many of us felt that it was hard to know where to begin to simplify our lives and to believe that our personal changes would make a difference to our larger society. However, all of us were inspired by Duane Elgin’s quote “The character of a whole society is the cumulative results of countless small actions day in and day out of millions of persons”.

Besides grappling with these concepts, we did this within the context of our group. For it is within relationships that we are stimulated to expand our vision of ourselves, others, and the world we live in. Our sense of self and others and also our sense of place were reaffirmed and challenged. We discovered once more, the meaning and significance of community.

Ways to Simplify Your Life from “Shelter for the Spirit” by Victoria Moran

1. Say “no”
2. Tithe your time
3. Put things with feeling first
4. Allow more time than you originally planned
5. Prioritize (must be done today, soon or sometime)
6. Stay well
7. Let the answering machine get it.
8. Turn off the TV
9. Put off procrastination
10. Schedule fun

Finally... Ask Pastor Dan how the course has changed some things in the church office.

Ada Casazza

SESSION HAPPENINGS – MAY 16, 2007

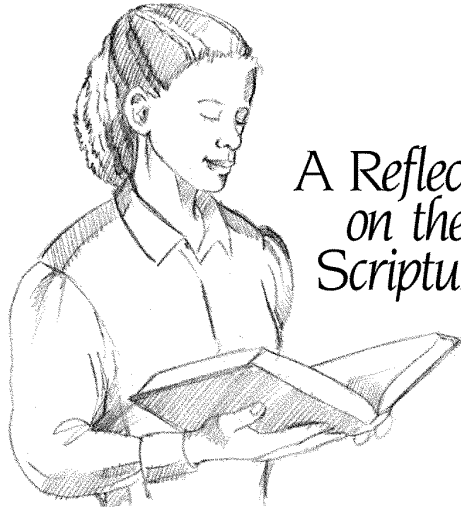
- † Parker Williamson, ex officio Chief Executive Officer of the National Board of the Presbyterian Lay Committee, will preach on September 9. Steve Strickler, Personnel Director of the Lay Committee, will also take part in the service.
- † Bob Sheldon, Mission Development Director for the Synod of the Rocky Mountains, will fill the pulpit on June 3, and Rev. Bob Schurr from Missoula will preach June 10.
- † A motion passed to approve October 9-13 as study leave as Pastor Dan will attend the Western National Leadership Training Event in Jackson Hole, Wyoming.
- † A motion passed approving Pastor Dan's vacation dates of November 1-8 and a week in mid-July.
- † The transfer of Gina Barker's membership to Mount Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church, University Place, Washington, was approved.
- † Graduating high school Seniors Chris Kirkemo and Zach Wooten will be recognized May 27.
- † A motion passed to help the Libby church with their annual shortfall of \$5,000 after the call of a new pastor. Presbytery has pledged \$2,500 a year for the next 3 years and is asking area churches to help with the additional \$2,500 as an outreach in church development. The congregation will be given the opportunity to participate.
- † The Building and Grounds Committee was given approval to move ahead in securing a work plan and bids to repair several cracks in the brick walls, re-attach and repair the rubber roofing membrane, repair grout in brickwork and repair and/or replace the cap stones. Bruce Tate and Joe Fagan reported the areas of damage that need to be rectified to preserve and protect our historic church building.
- † The Deacons voted to give \$1,000 to Cross Currents in response to their 3 year pledge program. They hope to match that amount in 2008 and 2009.

MISSION STATEMENT

The main purpose of the First Presbyterian Church is to glorify God and enjoy God forever.

To fulfill this purpose, we affirm three God-given responsibilities:

- ⇒ To know, love and worship God through Jesus Christ
- ⇒ To serve and build up one another in love as members of the body of Christ
- ⇒ To go into our community, our country and the world, empowered by God's Holy Spirit to make disciples, teaching them all that Christ commands



*A Reflection
on the
Scriptures*

**August
SCRIPTURE
READINGS**

*“I will pour out my Spirit upon all
flesh, and your sons and your
daughters shall prophesy.”*

(Acts 2:17)

18th Sunday in Ordinary Time— August 5

Hos. 11:1-11; Ps. 107:1-9, 43
Col. 3:1-11; Luke 12:13-21

19th Sunday in Ordinary Time — August 12

Isa. 1:1, 10-20; Ps. 50:1-8, 22-23
Heb. 11:1-3, 8-16; Luke 12:32-40

20th Sunday in Ordinary Time— August 19

Isa. 5:1-7; Ps. 80:1-2, 8-19; Heb. 11:29—12:2
Luke 12:49-56

21st Sunday in Ordinary Time— August 26

Jer. 1:4-10; Ps. 71:1-6; Heb. 12:18-29
Luke 13:10-17

Permanent Repairs and Church Maintenance

An exciting period of change and growth is upon us. Your Session has agreed to undertake major repair work - starting on the roof. Turner Askew, Chair of the Building Committee is coordinating this effort. The initial phase will include permanent repair of masonry and sealing of the capstones. This work has been contracted out to Selig Masonry at a cost of around \$20,000. That will be followed with much needed repair of the roof over the Fellowship Hall. Other work will follow as we focus on the future of the church building and its service to the congregation and the community. We will be depleting funds that have been so generously given and stewarded over the past years. This maintenance work is timely and critical. Opportunities to be an important part of the church life and to establish a firm foundation for church members and friends of future generations will be brought to each of you in the coming weeks.

BITS & PIECES

Uncorked Small Group

The new “UNCORKED” Small group will be meeting in July and August. Please check for details in the FELLOWSHIP HALL or ask Dan.

No Motor Boaters

Anyone interested in paddling a kayak, canoe, row boat, or Bill and Ann Tarr’s six-man Hawaiian Outrigger, assemble at Whitefish Lake State Park on August 4th at 10:00am. We will be paddling to Les Mason park for a picnic, so pack a lunch.

A couple of people have extra paddle craft to loan for the day. Wear appropriate clothing because you will get wet. Thrill as Dan attempts the Eskimo Roll. Be awed by Sheila’s reverse paddle upside-down stroke. Fun for all! Bring your water-proof camera because your friends won’t believe it.

Glacier Presbyterian Women Annual Retreat: August 17-19, 2007

All Presbyterian women and/or their female friends and relatives are invited to attend the Annual Retreat at beautiful Spruce Lodge on Flathead Lake (our own Glacier Presbytery Camp).

Women from 19 churches take advantage of this opportunity every year. It is a time to enjoy a spirit-filled lesson each day, with fellowship, activities and free time for relaxing and reflection. IT IS A RETREAT!

The leader for the lesson will be Rev. Karen Peterson Finch. Karen will be making her second trip to Glacier PW retreat to be the plenary speaker. Her theme is “How Great Thou Art”, the attributes of God. Although these attributes are theological and biblical they are also very practical. Karen will take us through some of the more important attributes while asking: How does God want to show His love or justice or omnipotence to me today? What would it mean for me to live as a woman made in the image of God? And, most importantly, how can we as Presbyterian Women tell the good news of who God is and what God has done in Jesus Christ to a hurting world?

The cost for the entire weekend is \$87, which includes very comfortable rooms for 2 nights and 5 meals from Friday— Sunday. Where could you beat that! Part time or day charges will be taken upon arrival.

For more information or to make reservations, contact Evelyn Peterson (755-7555) or Marlene Barnes (862-4075).

Wedding

Congratulations to Donnie Clapp and Pam Hadley who will be married in our church on July 28th.