

the LANTERN

First Presbyterian Church

FEBRUARY 2009

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Isaac Clown Troupe Visits J.O.Y.

On Wednesday, February 4, the Isaac Clown Troupe will visit *Operation J.O.Y* between 4:00 and 5:00 pm. Each child is encouraged to invite a friend to come along for the fun! The Isaac Clown Troupe is a group of Christian clowns from First Baptist Church in Ewing, Missouri. They were previously scheduled to appear in January, but were forced to reschedule due to a family illness.

Notes from Session

BUDGET AND FINANCE

Because of the early meeting, it was too early for the final December report, but regular giving was up, with people making up differences at the end of the year. We had been averaging \$11,000/mo, but we took in approximately \$18,000 in December. That figure puts our yearly giving up around \$137,000, which is closer to our \$141,000 goal for the next budget year.

A motion was made to use the "internal" portion of the Oliver Fund income to pay for Michael's D.Min. tuition, with the goal of paying for approximately four classes per year. It was argued that this use of the Oliver Fund does fall within its stated mission because Michael will be pursuing a dissertation in hunger issues. However, the cost of tuition will use most or all of the "internal" income, which means that we cannot plan to continue to use that money to buy school snack milk. Because of an accumulated reserve, we will continue to be able to purchase milk in 2009. The motion was amended to include a review of funding sources each year.

Lenten Events in February

ASH WEDNESDAY
February 25, 6:00 pm

THURSDAY LENTEN LUNCHES BEGIN
February 26, noon

BUILDING IMPROVEMENT

We had planned to discuss the possibility of a bank loan to move the elevator project forward, but no numbers were yet available. The topic will be discussed again in February.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Michael will be teaching a Lenten class using a book by Raymond Brown.

PERSONNEL

Megan Riley has agreed to be our organist for 2009. She's the new quarter-time accompanist at Truman.

The congregation gave approximately \$650 to go toward staff Christmas gifts.

HOUSE AND GROUNDS

In fixing some of the plaster damage in the church balcony, it was discovered that there is still a bit of a leak.

OTHER BUSINESS

As allowed by the John Bell will, the Bell Trust paid \$7000 in compensation to the Bell Trustees at the end of December.

the Lantern

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Congratulations February Birthdays and Anniversaries!

Doris Bohon
 Hannah Faith Easley
 Georgette Achimbi
 John Slavin
 Janice Biehl
 Marian Bell

Natie Cannaday
 Robert Sprehe
 Mary Ann Flanagan
 Barbie Sanders
 Jeff Arabas

Financial Report

DECEMBER, 2008

	Month	Month	YTD	YTD
	Income	Expense	Income	Expense

Giving & Other Revenue
 Restricted Program Transfers
 Designated Income/Expense

Direct Mission
 Pastoral Leadership
 Worship & Music
 Christian Education
 Administrative Support
 House & Grounds
 General Needs
 Campus Ministry
 Membership Shepherding
 Community Ministries
 Rollins Ministry
 Westminster House Ministry

Total

Undesignated Cash Checking Account:



Mike's Page (cont.)

[Continued from page 3.]

Also, I managed to continue an old seminary tradition of mine: I received an A- on my first paper. I can't tell you how many A-'s I received in seminary. I felt this was a great joke that God played on me.

So there you have it: something I want to say, something I need to say, and something I don't get to say anywhere else. And I'll tell you something else: there's no one else I'd rather share it with. Blessing to you as we approach this holy season.

mm

Mike's Page: Preparing for the Spiritual Acts of Lent

I enjoy writing these little newsletter articles because I get to share three kinds of information: things I want to share, things I need to share, and things I don't get a chance to share anywhere else. Today's article will accomplish all three.

First, something I want to share. Elizabeth and I appreciate your concern and care for her during this period of time as her back heals. We had an amazing conversation with her neurosurgeon which turned into, "do you want to have surgery tomorrow?" "Uh...I guess so..." It has been a difficult time with many challenges, but your affection, prayers, meals, and presence have made this time more than bearable. I cannot speak for Elizabeth, but I will say from my perspective: I have seen the true church at work through your attitude and actions. Thank you very much.

Second, something I need to share: In February we will begin the season of Lent. There are a few details I want to share with you about Lent. Ash Wednesday is February 25, and our service will be at 6 pm. We will "impose ashes" at the service, that is, have the sign of the cross marked on our foreheads with the ashes of palm leaves from Palm Sunday 2008. When the sign is made, we hear the words, "remember you are dust and to dust you shall return." These words remind us of our mortality, our limits, our dependence on God to give us everything. The impositions of ashes is the first spiritual act of Lent.

Fasting is a second spiritual act of Lent that you may want to add. Fasting is something you probably know a little bit about. You may have missed a meal or two in your day. But fasting is a spiritual discipline. It's not dieting, and it's not the same as "giving up something for Lent," although it could be connected to that. Fasting is abstaining from food for a period of time so that you can pray more earnestly and be reminded of your dependence on God for all things (including food). Fasting can be a way of solidarity with people in the world who are hungry all the time. There are a group of Presbyterians who, since Advent, have been fasting once a month. From

dinner time on Friday until the Lord's Supper on the first Sunday of the Month. This may be something you would want to consider. Or you may want to fast by not eating in between meals (something the monk John Cassian is reported to have done). If either is the case, I would like to help you do that.

A third spiritual discipline for you to consider this Lent is our "Lent Lunch." I know it's funny to mention lunch after fasting, right? But the Lent Lunch is a simple brown bag lunch we eat together in the Fellowship Hall each Thursday in Lent, followed by a simple service of daily prayer. We will begin the Lent Lunches on February 26 at noon, and these will run until Maundy Thursday. Come and join us in this time of prayer and fellowship.

Now, something I want to share with you and don't really have another place to share it. I attended two different seminars at Saint Paul School of Theology in January. The first seminar, Doctor of Ministry Orienting Seminar, was just that: a time to meet those who will be studying with me off and on for the next four years. We discussed what we want our final projects to be about, resources that would best help us achieve those ends, and formed new friendships. We even had a little field-trip to Arthur Bryant's for barbecue.

The second seminar was about theology and the church's ministry. The seminar is topical, up to the professor's discretion. This class was a theology of preaching class that I found very challenging and also very good. I was drawn back to our Book of Confessions: "When this Word of God is now preached in the church by preachers lawfully called, we believe that the very Word of God is proclaimed, and received by the faithful." (Second Helvetic Confession, 5.004.) What a challenge to me that the words I say could be the Word of God. Of course, I was also reminded that this is by God's choosing, not by my choosing. And sometimes the words I preach are not the Word of God, and I will never know. But I must also make a faithful attempt. The class gave me much food for thought.

[Continued on page 2.]

February Lectionary

FEBRUARY 1

4th Sunday in Ord. Time
Deut. 18:15–20
Psalm 111:1–10
1 Corinthians 8:1–13
Mark 1:21–28

FEBRUARY 8

5th Sunday in Ord. Time
Isaiah 40:21–31
Psalm 147:1–11, 20c
1 Corinthians 9:16–23
Mark 1:29–39

FEBRUARY 15

6th Sunday in Ord. Time
2 Kings 5:1–14
Psalm 30:1–12
1 Corinthians 9:24–27
Mark 1:40–45

FEBRUARY 22

Transfiguration of the Lord
2 Kings 2:1–12
Psalm 50:1–6 2
2 Corinthians 4:3–6
Mark 9:2–9

FEBRUARY 25

Ash Wednesday
Joel 2:1–2, 12–17 or
Isaiah 58:1–12
Psalm 51:1–17
2 Cor. 5:20b–6:10
Matthew 6:1–6, 16–21

Mike's Office Hours

MONDAY:

8:30 am – Noon

TUESDAY:

8:30 am – Noon

WEDNESDAY:

1:00 – 5:00 pm

THURSDAY:

8:30 am – Noon



Dates to Remember

SUNDAYS

9:30–10:45 am: Sunday Worship Service

11:00 am: Sunday School for All Ages

5:30 pm: Campus Ministry meal at the
Westminster House

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Feb. 8: Second-Sunday Brunch

Feb. 15, 2:30 pm: Twin Pines Service

TUESDAYS

Feb. 10, 7:00 pm: Session & Deacons

Feb. 24, 3:30 pm: Christian Ed. Comm.

Feb. 24, 7:00 pm: Presbyterian Women

WEDNESDAYS

1:15 pm: Bible Study

3:15 pm–5:15 pm: *Operation J.O.Y., P.Y.F.*

5:30 pm–6:30 pm: Adult Choir

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Feb. 4: Montreat deadline

Feb. 4, 3:15 pm: Isaac Clown Troupe at
Operation J.O.Y.

Feb. 25, 6:00 pm: Ash Wednesday Service

THURSDAYS

Feb. 5, 1:30: Budget & Finance

Feb. 12, 9:00 am: Presby Seniors at Rosie's

Feb. 26, noon: Lent Lunch series begins

February Food:



Pork & Beans!