

the LANTERN

First Presbyterian Church

FEBRUARY 2011

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Central College Choir Preparations Continue

Volunteers are still needed to help when the A Capella Choir of Central College comes to our church on Thursday, March 17.

We need hosts to provide a bed to one or more pairs of students on the night of March 17 and return them to the church on Friday morning. We are told the students are used to sleeping two-to-a-bed, but we are asked not to sleep students on the floor or on couches.

Volunteers to help with a dinner on Thursday evening are also needed. We hope you'll help us show hospitality to these students who will be providing us with a wonderful night of music!

*Paula Presley
Worship Committee*



Above: The A Capella Choir from their 2009 tour of major basilicas and cathedrals throughout Italy..

Getting Ready for Montreat



The month of March is fast approaching, and with it the season of Montreat fundraisers! Be on the lookout for announcements of the Dessert Auction/Talent Show and other opportunities to support our youth.

Right: Entering the Montreat Conference Center.

News from PC(USA)

[A Selection of News from www.pcusa.org]

BELHAR CONFESSION GENERATING SPIRITED DISCUSSION

The Belhar Confession, which is being considered as an amendment to The Book of Confessions of the PC(USA), is generating a vigorous and spirited discussion on the General Assembly Mission Council's website (gamc.pcusa.org/gamc/). It's an interesting read.

MEMBERSHIP TRENDS FOR U.S. CHURCHES "STABLE"

Trends in church membership in the United States remain stable, with churches that have grown in recent years showing continued growth and those with declining memberships experiencing continued drops, according to an annual publication that tracks church membership. Many mainline denominations, including the PC(USA) reported declines between 1% and 3%.

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February Lectionary

FEBRUARY 6

5th Sunday in Ord. Time

Isaiah 58:1-9a

Psalms 112:1-9 (10)

1 Corinthians 2:1-12
(13-16)

Matthew 5-13-20

FEBRUARY 13

6th Sunday in Ord. Time

Deuteronomy 30:15-20

Psalms 119:1-8

1 Corinthians 3:1-9

Matthew 5:21-37

FEBRUARY 20

7th Sunday in Ord. Time

Leviticus 19:1-2, 9-18

Psalms 119:33-40

1 Corinthians 3:10-11,
16-23

Matthew 5:38-48

FEBRUARY 27

8th Sunday in Ord. Time

Isaiah 49:8-16a

Psalms 131:1-3

1 Corinthians 4:1-5

Matthew 6:24-34

Congratulations February Birthdays!

Doris Bohon

Georgett Achimbi

John Slavin

Janice Biehl

Marian Bell

Natie Cannaday

Robert Sprehe

Barbie Sanders

Jeff Arabas

Financial Reports

DECEMBER 2010

	Month Income	Month Expense	YTD Income	YTD 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:				

JANUARY 2011

	Month Income	Month Expense	YTD Income	YTD 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				
Westminster House Ministry				
Total				
Undesignated Cash Checking Account:				

Mike's Page: A Season of Epiphanies

According to some lectionaries that I've seen, it is technically still the season of epiphany. Or at least it seems like it. For example, February 6 was the 5th Sunday after Epiphany. So epiphany is still a word that we might focus on a little bit, or at least still hear the echo of it from a month ago. We recall that the world, represented by the Wise Men or Magi, saw the Christ Child, and it was a revelation to them. An Epiphany.

What epiphanies have you had lately? It seems like whenever I go for classes at Saint Paul School of Theology, I have at least one good epiphany in every class I take. Something becomes clearer or an awareness takes hold. I had a few over my January session that I'd like to share.

My first class was called "Leading a Holy Life Retreat." We used to joke that the class was about leadership. Like, students would ask, "How can I lead others on a holy life retreat? Oh! I'll sign up for this class." Actually, it is about how each of us can lead a more holy life. And it's a retreat. Now, the professor for this class, Robert Martin, is working on a book that has to do with seeing the pattern of our life as communion. Everything we do and are is about the relationships we create with each other and God. His book takes into account Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Perhaps one day this book will be finished, and we can read it together.

The first epiphany I had was about the Lord's Supper. Martin pointed out that we become so focused on the bread and the cup, that we forget what we are doing with the bread and cup: giving it to one another. When I pass you the cup, it is because you need it. I have it to share, and I pass it to you. It's not only about the elements. It's about our relationship together. We are the Body of Christ, sharing with one another. Do you get that? That made me think about the Lord's Supper in a more robust way.

The second course I took was, honestly, a little bit of a let down after the first. But it was good. When asked in the halls about how it was, I would say things like, "it's almost over" or "I'm getting three credit hours out of this." But it did introduce me to some writers I would have never read before (Like Donald Messer, who co-wrote a book with George McGovern and Bob Dole about ending hunger). The epiphany in that class was listening to the African students share stories from their countries about poverty, HIV/AIDS and traditional tribal rituals of reconciliation. After a few days with them, I realized how impoverished I am, because I just didn't know anything about Africa. It was an epiphany of the neighbor across the ocean, in this case across the table from me. Made in God's Image, both of us, I felt like I needed to start to care more about them. Africa IS far away from us in the U.S., but I think there's a lot to being aware of what is happening politically over there.

The third class was taught by my advisor, Shannon Jung. I was looking forward to this class, not only because it had less reading and writing involved than the others (!) but also because I knew we would get to talk about the Lord's Supper and food. Shannon asked a question that really rocked our worlds, at least mine. "Do you ever sit around together and talk about your experience of taking the Lord's Supper?" Crickets, I could hear crickets chirping. No one said anything. He banged on the table. "We are truncating the power of the Lord's Supper by not sharing with one another what it means to us." I realized, we don't really have a place to do that, or a time when we can share what it meant to us today to have partaken. Shannon emphasized that we could share anything that it meant, even if it meant nothing that day. But an important part of the Supper is sharing, both sharing of food and sharing of our lives. Boink. Another epiphany.

[Mike's Page, Continued on Page 4.]

Mike's Office Hours

MONDAY:

8:30 am – Noon

TUESDAY:

8:30 am – Noon

WEDNESDAY:

1:00 – 5:00 pm

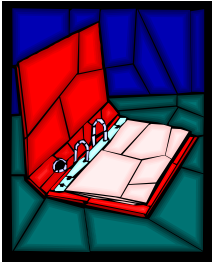
THURSDAY:

8:30 am – Noon

FRIDAY &

SATURDAY:

No office hours.



Notes from Session (January)

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The Christian Education team is ready to start our spring semester. Sledding is planned for January 19th at Mary Elam's house. An off-campus activity is planned for the first Wednesday of each month. *Operation J.O.Y.* will end on the last week of April.

The Sunday school classes are progressing as planned, but Susan Presley will be leaving her Senior High class when she leaves town. We're still looking for a replacement.

The young children will be learning about parables this spring.

The Montreat youth conference costs about \$750 per student. Be on the lookout for two Montreat fundraisers this spring:

- The Talent show and Dessert Auction in February.
- A No-Show Ball.

BUDGET AND FINANCE/TREASURER'S REPORT

Our expenses year-to-date were pretty well in line with the budget. Rollins expenses were over budget, but that included the building appraisal and closing costs.

We had a good month in December, with regular giving of \$18,066, giving a year-to-date revenue of \$125,501.44. This was under our budget for the year, but we were under budget and had some reserves at the beginning of the year, so were able to make our expenses.

We received \$1174 in the Christmas JOY offering, which is close to our largest special offering amount. We sent \$767 to the Stubbins youth home after the White Gift service.

Michael shared a letter from John Rowe encouraging us to go forward with the elevator project. It was noted that with the sale of Rollins, we are now close to the cost of a standard cab elevator.

The session considered whether to invest the proceeds from the Rollins sale, at least temporarily, while plans are made as to what to do with it in the long term.

BUILDING IMPROVEMENT

A motion was made to start the bidding process for the elevator and ask the Budget and Finance committee to investigate ways to invest the proceeds from the Rollins sale for six months to a year.

It was noted that the congregation had narrowly approved seeking a loan to fund the elevator, but that it had previously, and more overwhelmingly, approved of the project itself. Members of the Session observed that continued communication with the congregation about the project is key.

The contractor doing the new window coverings for the front stained glass window intends to begin work as soon as a string of relatively nice days presents itself.

WORSHIP AND SACRAMENTS

Linda Hudnall will be coordinating the reception for the visiting Central College choir, and Paula Presley will be coordinating housing for the students.

OTHER BUSINESS

Phil Slocum was elected as a new trustee of the Charitable Endowment fund.

Mike's Page

And in each of those epiphanies, I was seeing something I hadn't seen before, or seeing something from an angle I hadn't seen before. Either a new way to see a practice of the church (the Lord's Supper) so that I could be more deeply involved, or a way to recognize someone else, their struggles, their humanity, the Image of God that they are. What epiphanies have you had lately? And, if you haven't had any... then maybe you'd like to start? Wanting to see Christ, to see the Other, to see God in a new way is a great way to begin that long journey, like the Wise Men did, all the way to your epiphany.

[Continued from Page 3.]

Notes from Session (February)

NEW MEMBERS

Anna Lochbaum has asked to join our church. Her membership was accepted, and she'll be received in church soon.

PASTOR'S REPORT

Michael met a fellow student at seminary who has started a counseling and support program for people in Uganda. He is partnering with many different churches here and elsewhere. Michael has agreed to explore helping in this ministry. He has also been asked whether we're interested in offering for sale crafts made by these Ugandan villagers, perhaps displaying them in Fellowship hall, in order to help this program. No one on Session objected to us receiving a sample pack of things that could be sold.

JOINT DEACONS/SESSION MEETING

We still need families to take in students from the Central College Choir. Some members have who can't take students in their homes have offered to pay for a motel room for a group of students. Others will need the church van to deliver students. We have some volunteers to help serve the meal to the choir on Thursday, but we need more.

We will be focusing on the Maundy Thursday meal during Holy Week, rather than planning a large meal on Easter Sunday.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

We've been glad to have Paula Presley as new Sr. High teacher. Andrew Roby, a new Truman student, has been helping Paula lead the Sr. High on Sunday morning.

Elizabeth will be working with Truman's career center to help us find a new intern when Shannon's internship comes to an end. This student would worship with us and be the person who makes sure college students feel welcome. They would also take care of opening the church on Sunday morning.

Elizabeth is looking for a person who is interested in helping to maintain our web site. We are also looking for a part-time van driver

for *Operation J.O.Y.* (a 2:45–3:20 commitment for a few Wednesdays).

BUDGET AND FINANCE/TREASURER'S REPORT

Our regular giving was down for January at \$8,213. We need to bring in approximately \$12,000 to meet our budget, but we're still doing all right at the present time because we did have some reserves.

It was decided to invest \$170,000, the proceeds from our sale of Rollins, for at least a year in order to earn better interest while we wait for plans on how to use the money to come together.

BUILDING IMPROVEMENT

The pews from our basement are gone—they can now be found at Pickler's Famous, which is apparently opening soon.

Some water-damaged and otherwise decrepit items were removed from the Travers room.

Benton and Associates have been asked to give us another set of plans with a regular cab elevator (expected to lower the cost of the elevator project). These will cost approximately \$4000–7000 and be ready in approximately 30 days. Completion of these plans would be followed by a call for bids. Once these bids are in, a final decision about the elevator project can be made.

WORSHIP AND SACRAMENTS

The worship and sacraments committee has been working on preparing for the Central College Choir visit. A baked potato bar with chili will be offered to the students, and Western's volunteered to provide meat for the chili.

SOUPER BOWL/DEACON OFFERING

The loose offering on the first Sunday of the month is usually designated for the Deacon's fund. However, this month there was no distinction between the regular offering and the Souper Bowl of Caring offering. A motion passed to give all the loose offering to the Souper Bowl of Caring fund.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
February 2011			1:15: Bible Study 3:30: <i>Op. J.O.Y.</i> 6:00: Adult Choir	1:30: Budget & Finance		9:00–2:00: Church Work Day
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
10:30: First Feast 2:30: Twin Pines Service 5:30: PCF Dinner 7:00: PYF		Session/Deacons: 6:45: Prayer 7:00: Business Meeting	1:15: Bible Study 3:30: <i>Op. J.O.Y.</i> 6:00: Adult Choir		5:30: Parents' Night Out	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
3:00: Manor Care Service 5:30: PCF Dinner 7:00: PYF			1:15: Bible Study 3:30: <i>Op. J.O.Y.</i> 6:00: Adult Choir	9:00: Presby Seniors at Rosie's		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
5:30: PCF Dinner 7:00: PYF		7:00: Presbyterian Women	1:15: Bible Study 3:30: <i>Op. J.O.Y.</i> 6:00: Adult Choir			
27	28					
5:30: PCF Dinner 7:00: PYF	3:30: CE Comm.					