

From the Pastor (continued from front page)

Because each Sunday during Lent is a little Easter, we also celebrate the resurrection of the Lord and our own expectation of resurrection. Many Christians fail to recognize that when they symbolically sacrifice for the Lord by “giving up something for Lent”, they are allowed to relax their fasting on Sundays. I would hope, however, that if one is involved in giving up a behavior or activity that is detrimental to body and/or soul, that no backsliding would occur on those Sundays.

For children, we often provide ways for them to give extra amounts of money for those in need through the One Great Hour of Sharing offering. We do this for adults also. Sometimes, Lent becomes a fund-raising opportunity, and the main purpose becomes lost in the details. We even joke about what we are giving up for Lent, similar to the way we joke about New Year’s resolutions, especially when we don’t follow through with our commitment. It is always good, therefore, to stop and reflect on the meaning of this season.

When we receive the ashes on Ash Wednesday, we are being marked outwardly as a Christian, as a follower of the Way. Some will wipe the ashes away when they leave so that others in the community will not see them, so that they will not be embarrassed. This happens each Sunday throughout the year for many as they try to hide or at least subdue their Christian nature for fear of not fitting into the everyday secular world of their friends. I am always reminded of a child at one Ash Wednesday service who proudly proclaimed “I’m going to keep this on forever!” I maintain that we have all been marked forever by the Lord. Although the mark may have dissipated, it is still there.

That is what Lent is all about. It is a reminder of whose we are. We have been marked by the Lord for a life of surrender to the will of God. We have been marked by the Lord for a life of giving ourselves away, not only to God, but to others. We remind ourselves during Lent that we have been set free from the bondage of the material world so that we can live a life of servitude in the presence of the Lord. I pray that each of you will be looking with anticipation to the season of Lent and the opportunities it gives us to prepare ourselves anew or to repair our hearts for the journey of faith that is the Way of the Lord. In our daily lives, we experience a lot of celebrations and victories, but we also experience defeats, but through these all we can always look forward to Easters in our lives, because we have a God who will not let us fail. God enabled us to repent and draw us back to himself! Let Easter come and let it be most welcome.

Blessings,
Pastor Bob Boyar

Della Chisholm would like to thank the Deacons and congregation for all the cards, calls, and prayers.

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FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Marcy Szarkowski	2
Vicki Enger	2
Carrie Orn	6
Doreen Wegner	12
Brent Giesler	18
Ruth Bossingham	22
Porter Orn	24
Paul Worm	24
Janet Miller	28



DEACON DIALOGUE . .

The Deacons are a group of men and women from our congregation that have a heart to serve those in our church and community. The Deacons organize a variety of activities by which they share the love and joy of Jesus Christ. The service of deacons in the Presbyterian Church (USA) is to lead the church in its ministries of compassion (distributing aid, caring directly for the poor, the sick, refugees, and prisoners), and justice (working for equity) in society.

Deacons will sponsor a “Souper Bowl of Caring” fundraiser luncheon for James River Senior Center on Sunday, February 4 after worship service. Sign-up sheet in narthex for soups and chili.

Don't forget there is a shopping cart in the narthex for Community Action. Please consider a donation of non perishable items for those in need in the community.



Women of the Church are invited to ***The Circle*** which will meet at the church on February 22nd at 1:00 PM.

Judy Lonnberg will lead Lesson 6 , *A Person with a Physical Disability Encounters Jesus* based on Acts 3:1-10. The main idea for this lesson is to know God calls us to affirm that each person is a child of God who should be treated with dignity and equity.

Mary Muhs will provide a treat with coffee, a time for fellowship, and announcements.

Financial Update

Year to Date Revenue	\$8,525.00
Year to Date Expenses	<u>\$6,916.10</u>
Year to Date Excess Income/Loss	\$1,608.90

We thank you for your continued support of United Presbyterian Church!

Per-Capita Payments: We encourage all members to pay their per-capita as a gift above and beyond their annual pledge. **Our per-capita is based on \$50.00 for each active member of our church.** To submit a check for per-capita, simply write “Per-capita” on the memo line of your check.



February Anniversaries

<i>Steve & Terry Koehn</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Pastor Bob and Ellen Boyar</i>	<i>14</i>

Session Highlights for January

- **Christian Education Coordinator—Tammie Keesee**

The job description for a full-time Christian Education and Family Ministry Outreach Coordinator is currently being advertised. If a replacement has not been found before then, my last day will be Easter Sunday 2024.

I will be out of town on February 4th. Danielle Giesler will teach the 1st-12th Sunday school class that Sunday.

Wednesday evening services at FUMC will begin again on January 31st. We usually have 1-2 students join in.

We had 5 students from 3 families attend Jesus's Birthday Celebration for 6th-12th grade at the Buffalo City Escape room on December 28th where they completed the mission of finding Granny's lost belongings with 5 minutes to spare and only used 3 hints.

We had 15 kids and youth participate in the Christmas program on December 17th.

First Presbyterian Church of Bismarck is sending us their extra youth curriculum.

- **Christian Nurture – Danielle Giesler**

Danielle still has contact with an individual that may be interested in the Christian Education Coordinator position.

- **Property and Finance – Mark Lee**

Elevator: Supply issue with elevator parts. Maintenance contract with Otis Elevator was cancelled when the elevator stopped working.

Kitchen hallway water issue: Spring project.

Heartland Heating and Cooling replaced heat pump on 2nd floor and fixed motor for heater above the organ pipes (NE entrance).

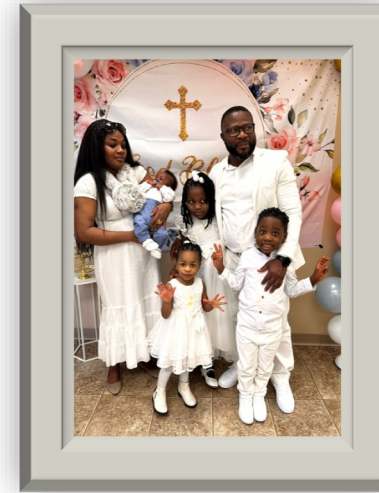
Christian Endo is handling the sound system.

Mary Reed reviewed the additional insurance cost to cover the electronic sign.

- **Worship Committee – Duane Dunn**

The Worship Committee recommends, "to approve the baptism of Jerome Janjay G. Zamgba, Jr., son of Jerome Zamgba, Sr. and Laura Nyepen, on February 25th, 2024 at the 10:30am worship service by Reverend Robert Boyar with Jerome Sr providing a meal after worship. Jerome Jr. was born November 23, 2023 in Jamestown, ND."

Baptism of Jerome Janjay G. Zamgba Jr.



Laura and Jerome invite the congregation to the baptism service of their baby, Jerome Janjay G. Zamgba. The service will take place on February 25, 2024, during the 10:30 AM Sunday Worship Service.

A meal will be served right after worship. Please come and try out some traditional Liberian food.



The Souper Bowl of Caring is a national movement across the nation working together to fight hunger and poverty in their communities around the time of the Super Bowl football game.

On Sunday, February 11 we will take an offering for this cause during worship. Kettles will be set out for cash donations and we welcome canned and/or non perishable donations of your choice.

Proceeds will benefit the Community Action Food Pantry.

The Ordination and Installation of Tiffany Dauer and Steve Koehn Duane Dunn and Mark Lee served 6 years on session

Tiffany Dauer and Steve Koehn will be on the session for the first time as ruling elders. Thank you to Duane Dunn and Mark Lee who served a maximum of 6 years (two three-year terms). Tiffany and Steve went through formal training and will be ordained and installed with the class of 2026 on Sunday, January 28, 2024. Their official first meeting will be the joint Session/ Deacon meeting on Thursday, February, 8, 2024 at 5:30 PM in the parlor. Sandy Worm will join the Deacons and be installed at the same time. Thank you to Susan Bond who is going off the Deacon Board. Thanks to Elder Mark Sherfy who agreed to serve a second term as well as Deacons Vicki Enger and Jackie Tarpinian. Please pray for all of our officers.