



NEWS & VIEWS from the Pulpit & Pews

First Presbyterian Church of Fort Bragg, CA

Cheryl Finch, Interim Pastor
Sid Long, Newsletter
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PASTOR'S PEN

Never, I dare say, has anyone uttered the words, "Oh Goody! It's LENT!"

But guess what? "It's Lent! Oh goody...."

I must admit I find myself in a bit of a quandary. These 40 days from Ash Wednesday to Easter (excluding Sundays if you're counting) are traditionally meant to be days of repentance, fasting and preparation for Easter, a time of self examination and reflection. Today Christians often focus this time on a more concerted effort to improve their relationship with God, choosing to either give something up and/or take something on in order to deepen their relationship and solidarity with Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness.

This year though Lent has taken on a slightly different meaning for me, thanks to both my star word and my circumstances. This year I find myself walking through a journey of grief, and so ashes and sack cloth seems, well, appropriate. And yet...I find myself in a duality both fighting the too easy excuse of the season, to sit as Elijah under my own broom tree and throw myself a pity party, not wanting to do the painful work of reflecting too much on anything and the reality as I was reminded on Ash Wednesday, "did you not know what the Holy One can do with dust?" (from *Blessing the Dust* by Jan Richardson)

So where, you are probably asking does my star word fit in to all this? Well the word I received this year was ENTHUSIASM. (you can all stop laughing now) What in the world do Lent and Enthusiasm have to do with one another? Let's face it, it's much easier to get enthusiastic about Easter, and summer vacation than repentance and reflection right? So this is what I am left with, how do I get enthusiastic about Lent?

Enthusiasm is often thought of almost like the cheerleader on the sidelines of a ballgame. A big smile on their face, jumping up and down in joyful support, spurring their team on to victory! Not exactly the mood Lent tends to exude. So I went to the dictionary for a little help and I found that one definition was, *strong excitement, or active interest*. Active interest, as opposed to just sitting idly by and waiting for life, or death to happen around us. Hmm maybe there's something here. Given this definition, the key it seems to me, is to actively embrace the opportunity of our Lenten journey, and to intentionally take part in it. How often in our lives do we get the opportunity to reassess where we are on the journey of self, faith, life and relationship? To catch a glimpse of where God is leading us as we look forward to the promise of resurrection and newness of life, even as we walk through the shadow and contemplate the cross?

Lent provides us with a unique opportunity, and we are invited to become enthusiastic about it. To reflect on what is, to give up all that might be holding us back, to move forward into God's possibilities for us, and to do it with enthusiasm.

Hmmm, come to think of it maybe this applies to the journey of transition this church is on as well. Now there is something to be enthusiastic about!

Pastor Cheryl

Game Night! Friday March 9th at 6 pm It's a good old fashioned game night. All ages welcome from the youngest to the oldest to have some fun playing together. Bring a snack to share, your favorite board game if you'd like, or just bring yourself.



Mid Week Lenten Table worship every Wednesday 6 p.m. through March 21st. All ages and stages are encouraged to come and spend some time much as the early church did gathering around the table for food and fellowship. The topic of conversation we are exploring each Wednesday is based on a devotional by James Moore, titled *Give Up Something Bad For Lent*.

Maundy Thursday / Tenebrae Worship Thursday March 29th 6 p.m. From the Last Supper to the Cross. Come as we contemplate Jesus' last days and journey to the cross. This service will include communion in remembrance of Jesus' last supper with his disciples.



Easter worship complete with the traditional flower cross.

April 22nd We will worship at 1st Presbyterian in Mendocino at **11 a.m.**! No worship service here at 1st Fort Bragg that day. Weather permitting we will join our Mendocino friends for a picnic after worship. Watch for more details.

Joint worship with the Petker Workshop choir - April 29th 10 a.m. right here at 1st Fort Bragg. Our brothers and sisters from 1st Mendo will be our special guests for worship, as well as Allan Petker and the workshop choir. You won't want to miss all the wonderful music and fellowship.

Do you know who your elders and deacons are?

DEACONS:

Julee Estes
Cathy Hollenback
Cindi Hood
Pat Long
Betty McMillen
Marsha Robinson
Printha Worthen

ELDERS:

Sylvia Burns
Lori Cole
Leo Lanigan
Sid Long
Nancy Mantel
Jacque Moore
Larry Robinson
Ian Sanderson
Marcia Williams

Next session meeting is Wednesday March 21st at 4:30 p.m.

Here's what your Facilities Committee is up to:

- Securing a new mail box, so that mail is delivered directly into the church
- looking into resolving our bathroom plumbing issues
- cleaning of the carpets, pews and woodwork in the sanctuary
- getting together a lock-up committee for Sundays (can you help one Sunday a month?)



21ST ANNUAL COMMUNITY EASTER DINNER from Kathy Orsi

Planning is already underway for our 21st Annual Community Easter Dinner which is Sunday, April 1st! Please be thinking of how you can offer your time, talent or treasure. First and foremost we will be looking for someone to distribute flyers around town around the third week of March. We'll also need help with food prep and set up the day before the event; serving food, bussing tables and delivering food the day of the dinner, as well as the not-so-glamorous job of clean up.....just to name a few. While each of these positions are important, by breaking it down into the various tasks, it lightens the load on everyone.

It is a lot of work to put this dinner on but I think if you ask the people who have volunteered in the past, you will find that the work is rewarded by not only the gratitude of the community but the fun they had working with all of the other volunteers.

Watch for the sign up sheets on the bulletin board at church around mid March or you can contact me at 964-2758 in the evenings or by email: korsi@mcn.org. Thank you!

Our meetings are on the first and 3rd Thursdays of the month at 1:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room.

On March 1 our program will be the Mendocino Coast Children's Fund with speaker, Annie Liner. She will be telling us about what has been they have been doing and plan to do in the future. This is a very worthwhile organization and I hope you all will attend.

Our March 15 meeting will be a fellowship meeting, "Getting to Know You". It will be a chance to tell stories and get to know each other. Since St. Patrick's Day will be just a few days away our dessert will be green! Come and have a piece of Grasshopper Pie

The coordinators for March are Lori Cole and Ruth Sommer and for April Jacque Moore and Ruth Sommer.



MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

Cathy Hollenback rings the bell in Ukiah Radiation Center as she completes her last treatment for breast cancer.



photo by Marsha Robinson



Fort Bragg ~ Mendocino CHORAL WORKSHOP

April 28 - 29, 2018 \$60 per person

Please register by April 20, 2018

Register on line at our church website at

www.fortbraggpresbyterian.org Please make your check out to First Presbyterian Church, Fort Bragg, noting "Choral Workshop" on the memo line.



The first Presbytery Meeting of 2018 was held on Friday, February 9th at First Presbyterian Church, Santa Rosa, CA. Pastor Cheryl Finch, Nancy Mantel, Marcia Williams and Lori Cole attended the meeting representing First Presbyterian Church of Fort Bragg. Our Clerk of Session, Marsha Jeffries also attended an early meeting that same day to bring our Session records to be reviewed.

The first order of business was worship and it is such a blessing to worship together with fellow Presbyterians from all over Northern California. After a time of singing, a short sermon was given by Rev. Brenna Hesch on the power of light. She shared that as we begin the Season of Lent with Ash Wednesday, we enter into a time of darkness—always longing for the hope and light of Easter. But Easter will not be rushed. We are to remember that we are not the light—we are the witness of the light. We are to stay within the light, so that we can reveal the Light of the World through love, compassion and justice. The worship service concluded with the Celebration of the Lord's Supper and the dedication of the 2018 Mission Pledges.

There was an interesting report from the 2017 Hunger Task Force sharing the results of the Cents-Ability offering of \$27,194 and the Pedal for Protein offering of \$45,931. During 2017, Cents-Ability provided 22 grants totaling \$25,000. We heard a report from Covenant Presbyterian Church in Napa of turning unused church property into a garden to feed the hungry.

The proposed Mission Budget for 2018 was approved along with the Administrative/Ecclesiastical Budget.

The highlight of the day for all of us was the unanimous approval of Cassie Carroll by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry as a candidate for Ministry of Word and Sacrament with PCUSA. Cassie shared her Statement of Faith and how she grew up at Westminster Woods and yet made the decision to study four more years at the graduate level, in order to be sure her calling was to be with the Presbyterian Churches of the USA. Cassie's enthusiasm and love of Christ was contagious to all in attendance.

There were two presentations of General Assembly Overtures that were approved. The first one is a Call for RE/MAX Corporation to Cease Selling and Renting Property in Israeli Settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, from the session of First Presbyterian Church, San Anselmo. The Presbytery of New York City presented an Overture on promoting democracy, good governance, human rights and sustainable development in Madagascar.

The docket and other information from the Presbytery reports and presentations will be posted on the Mission Bulletin Board by March 4, 2018.

Marcia Williams and Nancy Mantel

I wrote this poem many years ago and feel this again. In light of all the horror going on—mass shootings becoming almost “Item of the Day”. Too much turmoil all over the world.

Since this is the season we remember Jesus on the cross, perhaps now is the time to bring these thoughts back again.

I pray constantly that we are truly all children of God and that He is also weeping for our world, lifting us up, and carrying us along.

Patricia Anne Debruyne

FROM MY HEART (AND SOUL)

INTO THIS WORLD COMES
A STRANGER
SPEAKING OF LOVE
OFFERING SALVATION FOR ALL
HE WALKS AMONG US GENTLY
SEEKING THE TROUBLED AND LAME
HE WINS OUR HEARTS
—WE ARE GLAD HE CAME—

WHAT IS THIS? SOME WILL HATE HIM?
THEY WILL CALL OUT HIS NAME
WHO IS THIS JESUS—“SON OF GOD”
HE MUST BE GONE!
THERE FOLLOWED SUCH SHAME
CHAOS AND PAIN
HE WAS HUNG ON A CROSS TO DIE
LO—HE AROSE TO LIVE AGAIN!
—WE ARE SAVED—

STILL, WHERE IS OUR WORLD TODAY
WITH UNBEARABLE HORROR
OF MAN’S INHUMANITY TO MAN?
WHAT OF THE WONDER OF LOVE—
OF FAITH—OF SHARING?
IS HIS MESSAGE LOST?
THIS CARING SAVIOR
BEING SHUT OUT ONCE MORE?

LOCK YOUR DOOR—AVERT YOUR EYES
ANOTHER SHOOTING—
SOMEONE ELSE DIES
I GROW SO WEARY OF IT ALL
THEN I LOOK UP AND SEE HIM THERE
WAITING PATIENTLY—QUIETLY
I HEAR HIM SAY
“MY SISTER—DO NOT FEAR
I WILL NEVER LET YOU FALL!”
—I AM SAFE—



YOUR CHURCH NEEDS YOU!

Over the last few weeks in January and February, you may have noticed some pink sign-up sheets with sparkly hearts. Thank you to all that signed up to share a talent or learn a new skill or just to get more involved with the life of this church body! The sign-ups yielded a

new Audio-Visual team member: Sheri Smith. And we have three new Lay Leader readers: Jacque Moore, Cathy Hollenback and Bob Jorgensen. Thanks to Nancy Jorgensen for her participation as a Coffee Hour/Fellowship Hostess and Holly Lanigan has joined the Greeter/Usher Team.

Remember, there is always a place to share your talent and to get involved with service!

**I HAVE A CONDITION THAT
PREVENTS ME FROM
GOING ON A DIET...**

I GET HUNGRY.

DEACONS ARE FULL OF BEANS

At their February meeting, Deacons unanimously agreed to change the focus of our monthly Homeless Potluck, from a general potluck to providing a big delicious bean casserole to Hospitality House on the fourth Sunday of each month. Our support of the hungry/needy has been ongoing. Besides the big community dinner on Easter and Thanksgiving we have solicited potluck dishes from the congregation once a month. This began several years ago when Light House Church was trying to provide a dinner each Sunday evening. A few other churches were involved and we “stepped up to the plate” the fourth Sunday in the month. We delivered the hot meal and stood there and served the dishes food to the needy. A couple of years ago Light House Church just could not continue with this program so we delivered our meals to Hospitality House, continuing the once a month pattern.

One of the most popular dishes was Betty Humphrey and Bill Keller’s Baked Beans! So we are continuing this tradition honoring Betty’s recipe and providing a hearty dish to our sisters and brothers in need. On the fourth Saturday of each month you are welcome to join Leaf Kelly and Cathy Hollenback in the kitchen preparing this delicious meal to be delivered the following day. It takes no more than an hour; check with Cathy or Leaf for the exact time for Saturday, March 24.

Thank you so much for your loyal support to this outreach with your cakes, casseroles, salads and prayers. Our congregation for its size has done a magnificent job. The Deacons will underwrite the major cost of the baked beans ingredients, but they would readily and graciously accept any donations congregants would wish to give. Check with any Deacon to find out what ingredients you could purchase. For example: each recipe calls for 3 pounds of lean hamburger! And three HUGE cans of beans, size number 10. As well as onions and spices.

Pat Long

SPRING BLOSSOM TEA
First Presbyterian Church
April 7th
One o'clock p.m.
No charge

SPRING FORWARD!
DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS
SUNDAY, MARCH 11th



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 1 DAVID HAUTALA
- 2 JESEE ESTES
- 3 IAN SANDERSON
- 7 BILL KELLER
- 8 LINDY PETERS
- NORMAN MALLORY
- 19 KATHY ORSI
- 20 BUDDY BROWN
- 26 PATRICIA DeBRUYN
- 27 KAREN DUNLAP
- 29 KAREN BROWN
- TARA ESTES

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- 1 ISABEL ROGERSON
- 5 KAREN JONES
- 7 JULEE ESTES
- 13 BYRON RAMOS*
- 20 ELAINE BALL
- 23 ABBY FOWLER

*Byron, from Guatemala, is one of the three "Compassion in Jesus' Name" children our church sponsors and supports

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

- 29 CLAUDELLE & CHUCK VIGGERS -1966

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

- 6 JEN & TIM ESTES - 1996
- 8 CARLETTA & FRED HOLLENBACK - 1952
- 19 MARTHA & OSCAR LOPEZ - 2008
- 22 NANCY & DONNIE POLLARD - 1978
- 24 VICKI & DAVID HAUTALA - 1965
- 30 JACQUE & MONTE MOORE - 1967



LOT'S WIFE...

The Sunday School teacher was describing how Lot's wife looked back and turned into a pillar of salt. Little Jason interrupted, "My Mommy looked back once while she was driving", he announced triumphantly, "and she turned into a telephone pole!"