

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ORONOCO

February 2018 Newsletter

Chili Cook-Off and Lunch



On **March 18**, the Publicity Team is sponsoring a chili cook-off and lunch. This will be an event open to the community as well as the congregation.

As the name suggests, there will be two parts to this event: the chili cook-off competition and the lunch that follows. All entries must be at the church by the time judging begins at **12:00 p.m.** that Sunday. Everyone will have 15 mins. to taste test the various chilis and vote for their favorite. Everyone will be welcome to enjoy the chili for lunch beginning at **12:15 p.m.** along with various fixings and bars for dessert. Once lunch begins, we will tally the votes and award cash prizes for 1st-3rd place: **\$50** for 1st, **\$25** for 2nd, and **\$10** for 3rd. There will also be a special prize of a **\$25 Target gift card** for “Most Unique Chili.”

There will be no entry fee for anyone wishing to have their chili judged, and we will ask a free will donation at the door for the lunch.

There will be a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board to help provide the fixings, desserts, and beverages. There will also be spaces for a variety of chilis just so that we ensure we have enough chili options for lunch. But rest assured that congregation members are eligible to win the prizes, too! There will also be fliers to hang up around Oronoco and the surrounding area available soon. And, of course, we will create and promote a Facebook event, so as soon as that goes up, *please share it on your personal Facebook pages* to help get the word out!

FROM OUR PASTOR

i-ro-ny ('īrānē/noun):

the expression of one's meaning by using language that normally signifies the opposite, typically for humorous or emphatic effect.

a state of affairs or an event that seems deliberately contrary to what one expects and is often amusing as a result.

If we were to sit down together and play a word association game – one of those games when I say one word and you immediately respond with whatever word pops into your head – I have a feeling that, if I said, “Lent,” your immediate response would probably not be “ironic.”

In our society today, we often use irony more for humor than anything else. In fact, we so associate “irony” with “humor” that we have come to think of irony and sarcasm and basically synonymous. The drier and more deadpan the response, the more we tend to label it “ironic.” And sometimes, that is definitely the case. Great comedians like Jerry Seinfeld and satirists like David Sedaris have built their entire careers on mastering and manipulating the subtle art of irony.

But irony is not only meant to be a comedic tool. Sometimes, irony is used to describe events that fly in the face of expectations – events that are the complete opposite of what we expect. And this year, the season of Lent strikes me as incredibly and poignantly ironic.

Let me explain.

Lent itself is a season of the church set aside for sacred reflection and penitence as we draw closer to the death and resurrection of Christ. Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, a day on which we mark ourselves with ashes as a reminder that we are imperfect people who need God in our lives and our hearts. These ashes also serve as a reminder that our lives are short and that we are called to live them to the fullest for God’s glory. Jesus himself says it in the gospel of John:

“I came so that they could have life – indeed, so that they could live life to the fullest.”
~ John 10:10

The interesting thing about Lent is that it’s what we could call a “floating season” in the life of the church. Unlike Christmas – which we all know al-

ways falls on December 25 – Lent begins at a different time each year. The specific date of the beginning of Lent differs every year because the date of Easter differs every year. The date of Ash Wednesday is determined by calculating the date of Easter and counting backward 40 days (46, if you count the Sundays). The date of Easter is determined using the date of Passover every year because Scripture tells us that Jesus rose from the tomb on the first Sunday following the feast of Passover. And the calculation of the date of Passover is quite a complex and somewhat confusing calculation having to do with the phases of the moon since the Jewish calendar is a lunar calendar.

And because of **all of that**, Lent and all of the holy days associated with it fall on different days every year. And this year is special. This year is specially ironic.

The date of Ash Wednesday? February 14 – Valentine’s Day.

The date of Easter? April 1 – April Fool’s Day.

Yup.
Ironic, isn’t it?

We’ll talk more about the irony of Easter landing on April Fool’s Day down the road. All I’ll say for now is that you may not want to miss our Easter morning worship service! 😊

But if we go by the definition cited at the beginning of this article, we’re calling these dates especially significant because they express meaning by using language that normally signifies the opposite emphatic effect. Ash Wednesday landing on Valentine’s Day is ironic because, even as we remember that we are dust and to dust we shall return, we are also reminded that no matter what – no matter how dirty and gritty our world becomes, no matter how broken and burned up we feel, no matter how far our journeys seem to have taken us from all that we know – we are never too far gone for the love of God to surround us and enfold us. Valentine’s Day is all about love, and as the author of 1 John reminds us,

“We love because God first loved us.”
~ 1 John 4:19

Pastor Gina

Update from Revs. Shelvis & Nancy Smith-Mather

Revs. Shelvis and Nancy Smith-Mather are the missionaries serving in South Sudan and Uganda who we support with our 2nd Sunday Spare Change Sunday funds. Shelvis, Nancy, Jordan, and Adalyn welcomed another daughter/sister into their lives in October – baby Nicole. If you would like an update on the incredible work that Shelvis and Nancy are doing with RECONCILE International and how their family is doing, you can either check out the Mission Connect newsletter on the information board at church or go to <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/shelvis-and-nancy-smith-mather/>. In the top right portion of the screen you will find a box with a link to their 10 most recent update letters. Also on this page, you can find links to contact both Shelvis and Nancy as well as information on how to contribute financially as an individual to their mission.

“Coffee & Conversation”

Sunday mornings starting at 9:00(ish), we are continuing our “Coffee & Conversation” time – an opportunity for us to discuss faith, life, and everything in between. No pre-reading or prior knowledge required.

We are currently working our way through “The Gospel of Mark – Jesus: Powerful, Courageous, and Trusting.” We’re just having a good time diving a little deeper into this short, somewhat frantic, powerful gospel chapter by chapter on Sunday mornings. I hope you join us!

Stewardship Giving Tree

First, I want to thank all of you who have contributed above and beyond your usual giving with our yellow Giving Tree envelopes this fall. Since we began this campaign, we have raised **over \$3000!!** to help keep this church that we love up and running. Thank you thank you thank you for our incredible generosity!!

The envelopes are still available and will remain so throughout the year. They are hanging on a little wooden dowel tree on the table in the sanctuary where you pick up your bulletins on Sun. morning. Yes, we emphasize stewardship in the church once a

year, but the truth is that we have the responsibility to be good stewards of our time, talents, resources, and devotion all day every day – 24/7/365. So if you perhaps missed your opportunity to pick up a few envelopes or would like to continue that giving into 2018, feel free to pick up more envelopes.

Also, we realize that some of those bills are fairly large – our monthly insurance bill, for example. If you would like to contribute to that bill but cannot pay the whole thing, that’s okay, too! Feel free to put whatever portion of the bill you deem appropriate in the envelope. Thank you!

February Luncheon Feb. 21st



Mark your calendar and plan to join us on February 21st for our soup, salad & pie luncheon from 11:30am-1:00pm. A free will offering helps to support our outreach programs. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the fellowship room for helpers and food donations. Thank you!

Treats After Church

Everyone loves hanging out after worship with coffee or juice and a tasty treat, right? So let’s do it *every Sunday!* We’re looking for people willing to bring after worship treats. They can be as simple or as fancy as you like. The coffee is here, but you may want to consider bringing juice for all of our beloved non-coffee drinkers. If you (or you and a group of others) are interested, please put your names on the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board. As of today, there are still plenty of available spaces in Jan., Feb., and Mar. Thanks!

Ash Wednesday Service



Our Ash Wednesday service will be held at **6:30 p.m. on Wed., Feb. 14**. This will be a special service of prayer, reflection, and the imposition of the ashes.

Annual Meeting

Our annual meeting of the congregation is set for **Sun., Feb. 11** during our regular 10:00 a.m. worship service. This is a chance for us as a congregation to take care of some important business but also to remind ourselves that even when we do to the “business” of the church, we do so for the praise and glory of God.

Following the meeting, we will have a potluck meal together. Please bring whatever dish you’d like to share. It can be breakfast. It can be lunch. It can be dessert. It can be anything in between!

About Per Capita

At the start of the new year, I wanted to once again remind you about per capita payments. Here’s a brief rundown of what per capita is and how it works.

“One of the great strengths of our denomination is its connectionism. Presbyterians in Minnesota and Wisconsin are tied to the larger church in ministry. One concrete form of that connection is through our per capita. Every Presbyterian church in the country is required to pay a certain amount for each active member on its rolls. This money goes to support the work and ministry of our church throughout the country.” – *from the website of the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area*

This year’s per capita payment is \$34.50 per member. Of that \$34.50, the largest portion (66%) is used by our presbytery while the rest is shared equally (17% each) between our synod (the Synod of Lakes and Prairies) and the General Assembly (national office).

It is and has been the policy of the Presbyterian Church of Oronoco to pay our per capita by the end of every year, whether individual members have contributed their apportionment or not. If you haven’t paid your per capita for this year, please consider doing so. You can make a check out to the O church and simply write “per capita” in the memo. If you’re not sure whether you’ve paid your per capita this year, please contact Kim Stanton.

Food Shelf News



The Food Shelf is open 2nd & 4th Wednesdays of each month. In February the hours are 4-6:00 p.m.

Persons wishing to make a cash donation to our food shelf are encouraged to submit a check written to Oronoco Food Shelf. Checks should be given to Ellen Simon.

All canned and boxed food items should be gathered at the collection basket in the fellowship room so it can be weighed before being shelved. Members & friends are also encouraged to sign up to serve on a Wednesday evening when the food shelf is open.

****Thank you to everyone that has worked to make the food shelf a success this past year and to those that have donated food and cash. The need is great and it is an outreach of the Gospel that we are able to fulfill. God bless you!**

Clearwater Forest Camp 2018



Will winter never end? Cabin fever has certainly set in as we dream of the long, sun-filled days of summer! Clearwater Forest is busy preparing for our 64th summer of life-changing experiences, faith formation, friendship making, and incredible memories! Come spend a week or more at camp, where you can worship by the lake, hang out on high ropes, play in and on the lake, try new games, dance to energizers, build relationships with others, and more, all while learning more about yourself and God! Registration is being accepted for youth entering 3rd grade all the way through those currently finishing their senior year, plus our ever-popular Grands Camp continues to expand to include new activities.

SIGN UP SOON! We know of several programs that have filled up each year for the past five summers, and we anticipate more filling this year! We are offering a \$25 gift certificate to the Camp Store for those who refer a friend who is new to Clearwater! Scholarship funds are available – either through your church or Clearwater Forest, so please do not let financial need get in the way of attending camp this summer! Register at www.clearwaterforest.org or contact us at 218-678-2325 for more information.

Birthdays for the Month of February

2/15 Dick Ostrom
2/18 Ann Hawkins
2/20 Jacky Rueber



IN TOUCH WITH THE WIDER CHURCH

Presbyterian Church Contact Information

Presbyterian national website...pcusa.org
Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area website...
presbyterytwincities.org
PTCA weekly email newsletter...contact communications@ptcaweb.org
Presbyterians Today monthly magazine...subscribe
(at cost) to Presbyterians Today, P.O. Box 5178,
Brentwood, TN 37024-9931 or call 1-800-558-1669

February Scripture Readings

Sun., Feb. 4 – Isaiah 40:21-31; Mark 1:29-39
Man of Mystery #5
Sun., Feb. 11 – Psalm 50:1-6; Mark 9:2-9
Man of Mystery #6
Wed., Feb. 14 – **Ash Wednesday**
Sun., Feb. 18 – Isaiah 43:5-13; Romans 10:8-15
1st Sun. of Lent, **Creeds & Confessions #1**
Sun., Feb. 25 – Isaiah 40:12-25; John 10:1-10
2nd Sun. of Lent, **Creeds & Confessions #2**

Church Staff

Organist: Katha Johnson
Secretary: Sue Johnson
Custodian: Sue Johnson
Pastor: Rev. Lisa Johnson

Presbyterian Leadership Team

Kay Erdahl, Treasurer
Kim Stanton, Asst. Treasurer
Mike Rand, Clerk of Session
Ron Peterson Rucker, Ruling Elder
Brenda Longman, Ruling Elder
Janice Ostrom, Ruling Elder
Mike Rand, Ruling Elder
Linda Sorensen, Ruling Elder
Lance Sorensen, Ruling Elder
Deb Nelson, Deacon
Joanne Schenck, Deacon
Karen Peterson Rucker, Deacon
Jenny Rand, Deacon
Gail Rucker, Deacon

People of the Church

Janice Ostrom, Co-Moderator
Jenny Rand, Co Moderator

SECRETARY'S OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday 10-1:00
Thursday 10-1:00

Office Phone #507-367-4711

Email address: oronocopc@bevcomm.net

In the Community

Lenten Fish Fry

Church of St. Michael
451 5th St. SW, Pine Island, MN
Tel: 507-356-4280

Serving each Friday of Lent Feb 16—March 23
Serving from 4:30PM—7:00PM

Both baked and fried fish will be offered***

Adults: \$10 Children 12 & under \$5

Family maximum \$35



“Blog unto others as you would have them blog unto you.
Spam not, lest ye be spammed! Though I surf through the
valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no virus...”

Lenten sermon series – “Creeds and Confessions”

Throughout Lent this year, we will be digging a little bit deeper into our Presbyterianism. I know not all of us are “cradle Presbyterians” – those born and raised in the Presbyterian Church (USA). In fact, most of our congregation has come to Presbyterianism by another road ... or many other roads. This is one of the main reasons I’d like to dive into some of our foundational creeds and confessions as part of our Lenten sermon series.

The Presbyterian Church (USA) has two parts to its organizing constitution. Part I is *The Book of Confessions*, and Part II is *The Book of Order*. *The Book of Order* lays out all of the technicalities for how and why we function as a church – governing bodies, worship, administration of the sacraments, etc. *The Book of Confessions* is made up of the confessional documents that we hold as informative and inspirational to our faith. From *The Book of Confessions*: “The creeds, confessions, and catechisms of *The Book of Confessions* are both historical and contemporary. Each emerged in a particular time and place in response to a particular situation. Thus, each confessional document should be respected in its historical particularity; none should be altered to conform to current theological, ethical, or linguistic norms. The confessions are not confined to the past, however; they do not simply express what the church was, what it used to believe, and what it one resolved to do. The confessions address the church’s current faith and life, declaring contemporary conviction and action.”

These confessions are not held in the same regard as Scripture, by any means. However, as Protestants and, more specifically, as Presbyterians, we believe in the theology of “a priesthood of all believers” – the idea that each of us is blessed with the knowledge of God and the inspiration from God, that we can all share the Good News of Jesus Christ . These confessions are a part of that. They are the words and witness – the confessions – of those who have gone before us.

There are 12 confessions. Throughout Lent, we will be exploring 5 of them. We’ll begin with the earliest – the Nicene Creed – then jump to the confessions that come out of the 20th and 21st centuries: the Theological Declaration of Barmen, the Confession of 1967, A Brief Statement of Faith, and the Confession of Belhar. We’ll consider how these words from Christians past continue to inform and inspire our faith today.

Sharing Prayer Requests



One of the things that so many people appreciate about our congregation is the way that we can share our lives with each other in prayer on Sunday mornings. We lift up the prayers that are a part of our lives and know that we are not lifting up those joys and concerns alone. This family of faith is lifting up those prayers with us. In order to better facilitate those prayers and in order to share them with those who cannot be with us on Sunday morning, we’re going to start sending out a Monday morning prayer email which will share the requests raised during worship on Sunday morning. If you are getting this email and would prefer not to, please don’t hesitate to let us know. If, for some reason, you would like to be getting this email and are not, also let us know so we can add you to the list.

*Create each day anew
by clothing yourself
with heaven and
earth, bathing your-
self with wisdom and
love, and placing
yourself in the heart
of Mother Nature.*

Morihei Ueshiba

Lenten Photo Challenge

For the last few years, throughout Lent, we have done a Photo Challenge. We assigned a word to each day of Lent – something to get us thinking and praying and digging deeper into our faith in some way. Sometime throughout the day, you take a picture that makes you think of that word. For example, if the word was “light,” you could take a picture of a candle or the sun rays or the smile of a friend (as it LIGHTS up your day), etc.

We’ve had such a positive response to this activity (both from people in the congregation and friends and family outside our beloved little churches!) that we’re going to do another one this year. There are copies of the word lists in this newsletter, at church, on the websites, and on our Facebook page.

There are two ways to participate. First, you can take a picture and post it to Facebook, Twitter, and/or Instagram. Include the word of the day with your post as well as #PCOLentPhoto so we can all find each other’s photos. If social media is not your forte, you can still participate. Take the pictures with your phone or your regular camera and keep track of which pictures go with which words. You can either share them with others on Sunday morning during fellowship, or if you want, get them to Pastor Lisa and she can post them on the church’s Facebook page for you (either credited to you or anonymously, whichever you choose).

In advance, thank you!

2018 LENTEN PHOTO CHALLENGE

Post to Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram using
[#PCOLentPhoto](#)

Feb. 14: DUST	Mar. 3: LIVE	Mar. 23: CONFESSION
Feb. 15: FOLLOW	Mar. 4: REMEMBER	Mar. 24: RESTORED
Feb. 16: STRUGGLE	Mar. 5: ADORE	Mar. 25: CHOICE
Feb. 17: UNIQUE	Mar. 6: VISION	Mar. 26: ANNOUNCE
Feb. 18: COVENANT	Mar. 7: WATER	Mar. 27: PUSH
Feb. 19: HUNGER	Mar. 8: NO	Mar. 28: DOUBT
Feb. 20: JUSTICE	Mar. 9: EARTHLY	Mar. 29: SURROUND
Feb. 21: BREATH	Mar. 10: LEAVE	Mar. 30: REJECTED
Feb. 22: CALL	Mar. 11: BELIEVE	Mar. 31: REDEEM
Feb. 23: WALK	Mar. 12: SETTLE	
Feb. 24: STILL	Mar. 13: KINDNESS	
Feb. 25: SIMPLICITY	Mar. 14: BREAD	
Feb. 26: SOLIDARITY	Mar. 15: ROOTS	
Feb. 27: NIGHT	Mar. 16: HUMAN	
Feb. 28: LOOK	Mar. 17: NEED	
Mar. 1: FAMILY	Mar. 18: COMMITMENT	
Mar. 2: PEACE	Mar. 19: EMPTY	
	Mar. 20: VALLEY	
	Mar. 21: GIVE	
	Mar. 22: STUDY	

EASTER
BONUS:

JOY

Presbyterian Church of Oronoco
PO Box 118
Oronoco, MN 55960
(507) 367-4711



**Check out our website at
www.oronocochurch.org**

**Worship is held at 10:00 each Sunday.
Communion is on the first Sunday of each month.
Adult Coffee & Conversation 9:00—9:45 a.m.
Sunday School for ages 6-12 10:45—11:30 a.m.**



Reverend Lisa Johnson - Contact Information
Cell Phone (507)995-7310 E-mail address: pastorlisaj@gmail.com