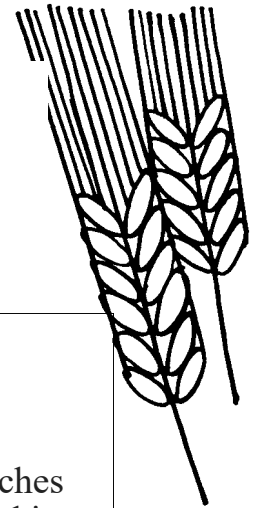


PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ORONOCO

March 2018 Newsletter



Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign

For more than 30 years, the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches has partnered with local food shelves to bring food to those in need in communities throughout the state. The Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign brings together hundreds of companies, civic groups, schools and congregations to help keep 300+ food shelves statewide stocked throughout the year. This grassroots campaign is our most enduring program. Schools, business, restaurants, congregations and stores are invited to participate in specified action weeks in March, so we will be joining in “A Different Kind of Food Fight” (this year’s campaign) by signing up your group or organization and join the fight against hunger here!

Throughout March, we will be collecting food donations and funds for the Oronoco Food Shelf. At the end of the month, we will total up our donations in dollars and pounds and report it to the Minnesota FoodShare organization, joining our efforts with those of other businesses, schools, and organizations around the state. You can designate any special offering during the month of March for this purpose by writing “March Campaign” in the memo line of your check or by using one of the small manilla offering envelopes and writing “March Campaign” on the outside of the envelope.

Also as part of this campaign, on **Sun., Mar. 25**, we will be participating in **Pack the Pews** event. The goal is to literally pack the church pews with as many donations – food and financial – as possible. Everything raised stays right here in Oronoco!



On Ash Wednesday, we began our worship service with a portion of a poem for reflection and meditation. It was a poem called "Stones" by Ann Weems:

*Was there ever anything as ordinary as a stone?
The land is full of stones;
plentiful, ordinary stones.
Stones on the bank of the Jordan
spilled over into the water –
plentiful, ordinary stones –
but there is an altar of
twelve holy stones
on the bottom of the Jordan,
and there are twelve
holy stones
in the memory of God's people.*

*Ordinary stones don't speak
and they don't sing,
but holy stones do.*

Stones on the banks of the Jordan River? What stones is she talking about? What's the importance of those stones?

Flash back to the people of Israel waiting to cross the Jordan River. They have survived the exodus from Egypt and crossing the Red Sea. They have spent the last 40 years wandering in the desert with Moses. They've finally returned to the banks of the Jordan, and while they're preparing to cross to the other side, Moses dies, and Joshua becomes their new leader. Under Joshua's leadership, the people of Israel finally cross the Jordan River into the land that God promised them. Similar to the crossing of the Red Sea, they split the water so that the people can walk across the river on dry land, but unlike the crossing of the Red Sea, this time, what splits the water for them is carrying the covenant chest – the Ark of the Covenant, as Indian Jones would call it! – into the river.

Once they're finally on the other side of the river, Joshua selects one man from each of the 12 tribes and tells him to select a stone.

"Joshua said to them, 'Cross over into the middle of the Jordan, up to the Lord your God's chest. Each of you, lift up a stone on his shoulder to match the number of the tribes of the Israelites. This will be a symbol among you. In the future your children may ask, 'What do these stones mean to you?' Then you will tell them that the water of the Jordan was cut off before the Lord's covenant chest. When it crossed over the Jordan, the water of the Jordan was cut off.

*These stones will be an enduring memorial for the Israelites."
~ Joshua 4:5-7*



These 12 holy stones are a reminder – a reminder of God's presence and protection in the midst of wilderness wanderings, a reminder of God's fulfilled promise of bringing the people into the Promised Land, a reminder of God's undeniable power. They are such a simple, ordinary thing that God turns into something meaningful ... something poignant ... something holy.

This year, during Lent, we are taking simple, ordinary river stones and using them for a holy purpose as well. The names of all of our PCO members, friends, and visitors are written on river stones. (And we have extras for new visitors on any given Sunday!) On Ash Wednesday, we spent time with our own stones. We prayed for all of those things that burden our hearts and minds like heavy stones, then we brought them up to the cross at the front of the sanctuary, placing ourselves and our burdens at Jesus' feet.

Every Sunday morning throughout the rest of Lent, we will be spending time at the beginning of worship praying for one another with these stones. Everyone will receive a stone as the service begins – a stone with a name *not* their own. Then we'll spend some time lifting one another up in prayer before returning the stones to the foot of the cross. The stones will be a reminder that God is with us in the presence and prayers of one another, a reminder of God's promise to walk with us through our most difficult times just as we walk with and care for each other, a reminder of God's undeniable power and the undeniable power of Christian community.

Just like those 12 stones piled in the middle of the Jordan River, God can transform simple, ordinary things – like us! – and make us holy.

Pastor Ana

Pastor Out of the Office

I will be out of the office Mon., Mar. 5-Tues., Mar. 6 at the Rural Ministry Conference in Dubuque, IA. I will have my cell phone and will also be accessible via email, Facebook message, and text if necessary.

“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!

****PLEASE NOTE:** We will **not** meet on Easter – Sun., Apr. 1, 2018.**

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 con-

fessional 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 10 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 century: 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.

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.

Food Shelf News



The Oronoco Food Shelf (OFS) began In February 2009. Ellen Simon has served as the treasurer since the beginning. She has taken in donations, written thank you notes for donations, and paid for food & equipment purchased for the OFS. THANK YOU, Ellen, for doing this important job.

Ellen has informed us she is resigning as treasurer. Please tell Kim, Lance or Linda if you are interested in taking on the treasurer role for the OFS.

There is also a loyal group of volunteers that help unload the delivery and put away food every month from Channel One Regional Food Bank truck. Other volunteers help guests on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays when it is open. Shelves are re-stocked and groceries are carried to guest vehicles. The OFS had a shortage of volunteers on January 27th. If you would like to be on an "On-Call" list, we could call you if we are desperate!

If you have any interest in helping the OFS, tell Kim, Lance or Linda. We will pass your name onto Rachel Stanton, the coordinator of the volunteers.

Support via cash donations, or of food, paper products, personal care items, and extra produce from your garden this summer is always welcome.

Thanks to ALL who have supported the OFS for these past nine years. We are meeting the needs of many people who are food insecure through this community mission.

POC Luncheons



Thanks to all who donated food and helped serve at the February luncheon. We had a good turnout and raised \$214 dollars! Thank you all!

March 21st will be the last luncheon for the year with hot dishes, salads and desserts on the menu. Watch for the sign-up sheet to see how you can help. Extra posters are available on the fellowship room credenza if you can help us get the word out. Be sure to invite your friends and family.

*Please Note the Leadership Changes

Church Staff

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

Presbyterian Leadership Team

Kim Stanton, Treasurer
Kay Erdahl, Asst. Treasurer
Mike Rand, Clerk of Session
Ron Peterson Rucker, Ruling Elder
Ellen Warner, Ruling Elder
Janice Ostrom, Ruling Elder
Mike Rand, Ruling Elder
Linda Sorensen, Ruling Elder
Lance Sorensen, Ruling Elder
Ellen Simon, 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

Readings for the Month of March 2018



Sun., Mar. 4 – Isaiah 61:1-9; 2 Corinthians 5:14-21
3rd Sun. of Lent, **Credo & Confessions #3**

Sun., Mar. 11 – Genesis 11:1-11; 1 Corinthians 12:12-26
4th Sun. of Lent, **Credo & Confessions #4**

Sun., Mar. 18 – Isaiah 58:1-12; Matthew 5:1-12
5th Sun. of Lent, **Credo & Confessions #5**

Sun., Mar. 25 – Psalm 36:5-11; Mark 14:1-16
Palm Sunday

Thurs., Mar. 29 – Maundy Thursday Service
Around the Table

Fri., Mar. 30 – Good Friday Tenebrae Service

Easter Garden Flower Orders



The Presbyterian Church of Oronoco will be offering Easter flowers, similar to last year, for display during the Easter service as part of a memorial garden. Choices will be lilies, cyclamen and tulips. Watch for more information in the near future. Order forms will be on the table in the fellowship room. Your order form must be given to Joanne Schenck no later than March 18th. If you have any questions, please call Joanne at 289-0093. Thank you!

Donations for Pine Haven



We are once again collecting donations for Pine Haven Care Center in Pine Island. There's a box along the western outside wall to gather the items. We're looking for the following items:

- socks
- sweatsuits for men and women – sizes L or XL
- lap blankets

We will be taking these donations through the month of March.

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 Mar. Thanks!

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).

Good Friday Readers

I need two people who are willing to help with the readings on Good Friday. As in the past, we will be taking turns reading portions of the story of the last days and hours of Christ's life up to the crucifixion. I can get you the readings as soon as you let me know. If you can help, please contact Pastor Lisa.

Presbytery meeting

The next Presbytery meeting is **Sat., Mar. 10 at 9:00 a.m.** at Valley Community Presbyterian Church in Golden Valley. As always, Presbytery meetings are open to anyone. Carpooling is most definitely available, too. If you're interested in coming, please contact Pastor Lisa.

Clearwater Forest Summer Camps 2018

Registration for Clearwater Forest summer programs 2018 is going strong! Go to www.clearwaterforest.org today or check out the 2018 lineup and register online! The theme this summer is “Light the Fire,” where campers will explore the big questions surrounding how we can impact the world with the light of Christ. Clearwater Forest offers programs for anyone grades 3rd through recent graduates, and with all of the fantastic options available this summer there is sure to be something for everyone!

Campfires, kayaking, high ropes, sailing, worship, hiking, archery, swimming, giant games on the Playfield, and s’mores are only small parts of what Clearwater Forest is all about. Living in community, learning independence and cooperation simultaneously, developing new friendships in a safe environment, experiencing outdoor ministry, and developing a deeper relationship with Christ makes a week at Clearwater Forest a truly life-changing experience.

For more information please check out www.clearwaterforest.org or give the office a call at 218-678-2325.

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.

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 congregations 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 have a Facebook event linked to the church’s Facebook page (“Presbyterian Church of Oronoco”) so ***please share it on your personal Facebook pages*** to help get the word out!

Maundy Thursday Service Around the Table

Maundy Thursday is the special service during Holy Week when we remember the last time Jesus sat down to supper with his friends before he was arrested. This Last Supper wasn't in a large, open, communal setting but in a small, intimate space – an upper room of someone's home, a space not so unlike our warm, intimate fellowship space.

In the spirit of this Holy Supper, we'll be joining together for a meal and worship around our tables over a simple dinner of soup and bread. Food will be provided. All you need to bring is yourself. Part of that worship together will be celebrating communion – the Lord's Supper – in the intimate settings of our tables together.

This service will be held on **Thurs., Mar. 29 at 6:00 p.m.**

Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday

Sun., Mar. 25, 2018
10:00 a.m. worship

Maundy Thursday

Soup & Bread Supper
Worship Around the Table
Thurs., Mar. 29, 2018
6:00 p.m.

Good Friday Tenebrae Service

A Service of Darkness and Shadow
Fri., Mar. 30, 2018
7:30 p.m.

Easter Sunday

Sun., Apr. 1, 2018
10:00 a.m. worship with communion
Sermon: "The Greatest April Fool's Joke Ever"

Holy Humor Sunday

Sun., Apr. 8, 2018
Extend the wonder and elation of the Easter resurrection with a service that embraces laughter, absurdity, and joy!
10:00 a.m. worship
*Bring your favorite, family-friendly jokes to share!!



One Great Hour of Sharing Offering will be received Easter Sunday, 4/1

Lent is traditionally a season of fasting and prayer. During this time, Christians pay close attention to spiritual disciplines that deepen our understanding of what God is doing in our lives and in the world. As a church, we spend time together hearing about and praying for the ministries of compassion and justice done through our support of One Great Hour of Sharing.

Jesus' ministry was among those who were most vulnerable. He preached good news to the poor and release to the captives. One Great Hour of Sharing helps us share this same good news to those same vulnerable people in our world today: those who are hungry, who are suffering from disaster, who are dealing with oppression in society.

Every gift made to this offering will meet the needs of people, and you will hear about just a few of these individuals over the coming weeks—in bulletin inserts and minutes for mission. These stories will help us to see the face of those whose lives have been changed by our gifts, but they are only a few of the thousands and thousands of people served in this important ministry.

Please visit the One Great Hour of Sharing website (www.presbyterianmission.org/oghs) to find out more information on how your support of OGHS helps people all over the world, and offer prayers for the projects and people who receive them

While we trust our OGHS programs to respond to the needs of our poorest and hungriest neighbors, those programs can only do so to the extent of our generosity. So I hope that you'll join us on Sunday, April 1, and that you'll join Christians all across the country in opening their hearts to witness tangibly to the abundant love of God through One Great Hour of Sharing. Please give generously.

Secretary's Office Hours

Tuesday in Oronoco 10-1:00
Thursday in Oronoco 10-1:00
Office Phone# 507-367-4711
Email: oronocopc@bevcomm.net

Birthdays for the Month of March

- 3/1 Carlyle Johnson
- 3/3 Lance Sorensen
- 3/9 Deb Nelson
- 3/13 Theodore Larson
- 3/19 Ron Peterson-Rucker
Eunice Markham
- 3/24 Kim Stanton
- 3/27 Joyce Rucker



In Our Prayers



Don't be anxious about anything; rather, bring up all of your requests to God in your prayers and petitions, along with giving thanks. Then the peace of God that exceeds all understanding will keep your hearts and minds safe in Christ Jesus.

Phil. 4:6-7

Joanne Schenck, Karen Vallejo, Eunice Markham, Joan Swarhout, Joyce Rucker, Deb & Bob Larsen & family, family of Luella Rueber

2018 LENTEN PHOTO CHALLENGE

Post to Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram using [#PCOLentPhoto](https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/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.**

Pastor Lisa Johnson - Contact Information
Cell Phone (507) 995-7310 E-mail address: pastorlisaj@gmail.com
Pastor's Blog: pastorlisaj.wordpress.com