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THE GRINNELL PRESBYTERIAN

The monthly newsletter of First Presbyterian Church

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January 2012

Kirsten Klepfer, Pastor

GARDEN OF READIN'...

The mature follower of Jesus will probably look more like a holy fool than a pious churchgoer, an uptight schoolmarm, or a too-obvious "saint." At Jesus' very birth he is fully identified with poverty, homelessness, immigrants, shepherds who were unclean by Temple criteria, and pagan astrologers from some offbeat Oriental religion! ...Christ did not come to create or maintain any in-groups or superiority systems, but to live and offer to the world a universal truth.

~ Richard Rohr

It's New Year's resolution time. Lose weight. Be more organized. Don't swear. Exercise more. Eat better. So many of the classic resolutions are about conforming to what society expects. Sure, they might make your life better or more healthy, but they are also usually about image, and being a "better person" in the eyes of our friends and neighbors.

We all know how often these resolutions are broken – in my case usually by February. Then comes the guilt, anger, shame, self defeat. Needless to say, I'm not a huge fan of most New Year's resolutions.

But this year, maybe we can all resolve to do something that has nothing to do with image, or with meeting society's expectations. Richard Rohr says mature followers of Jesus look like "holy fools." Maybe our New Year's resolution can be to look more foolish. Maybe our resolution can be to hang with the *wrong* people, celebrate our bodies as they are, love those other people hate, accept people for who they are, be ourselves, and give to others even when it seems silly.

We don't have to meet the world's expectations when it comes to being a "good person." We have to meet God's – and from where I sit, God's expectations are a lot more exciting, fun, and freeing. No need to keep up appearances for the sake of fitting in, being respected, or looking good. And God's expectations are not about being demanding – they are not about guilt or shame. God's expectations are the path to *true* health and wholeness, not just for us, but for our world and our neighbor.

So as you draw up your list of resolutions, give yourself a little room to do the *unexpected* this year. Dare to be different for the sake of a world where the bottom becomes the top and the least are no longer the last. Risk your reputation for the sake of a community that doesn't need people to fit any mold or look a certain way. Then enjoy letting go and being free to live as God intended.

Happy New Year, fellow fools!

Pastor Kirsten

SUNDAY SERVANTS

January

- 1 Liturgist: David Cranston
 Greeter: Montie and Suzanne Redenius
 Ushers & Coffee: Karla Kriegel, deacon;
 Chris and Dennis Day
 Acolyte: Jade Scheffert
 Van Driver: Montie Redenius
 Nursery Volunteer: Emily Moore
 Communion Servers: David Cranston,
 John McIntyre, Char Ewan
 Offering Counter: Gail Greenwald

- 8- Liturgist: Allison Brinkhorst
 Greeter: Bonnie Rutherford
 Ushers & Coffee: Marlene and Ray Peak,
 deacons; Mary Doty
 Acolyte: Gillian Ferguson
 Van Driver: Max Higgason
 Nursery Volunteer: Jill Kaiser

- 15- Liturgist: Donna Ricks
 Greeter: Ramona McCaw
 Ushers & Coffee: Janice Logan deacon;
 Deb and John Martenson
 Acolyte: Amber Martenson
 Van Driver: Jim Ferguson
 Nursery Volunteer: Linda Cranston

- 22- Liturgist: Dennis Day
 Greeter: Kendall and MaryAnne Nickle
 Ushers & Coffee: Max and Nancy
 Higgason, deacons; Linda Stoll
 Acolyte: Emma Geissinger Cutchins
 Van Driver: Montie Redenius
 Nursery Volunteer: Janet Ferguson

- 29 Liturgist: Jeremy Sanchez
 Greeter: Al and Donna Ricks
 Ushers & Coffee: Marlene and Ray Peak,
 deacons; Linda Cranston
 Acolyte: Pete Simpson
 Van Driver: Max Higgason
 Nursery Volunteer: Emily Moore
 Cake Baker: Chris and Dennis Day

February

- 6- Liturgist: Jim Ahrens
 Greeter: Irma and Ron Arnaman
 Ushers & Coffee: Karla Kriegel, deacon;
 Doty and Russ Stoker
 Acolyte: Adalyn Scheffert
 Van Driver: Jim Ferguson
 Nursery Volunteer: Marta Miller
 Communion Servers: Jim Ahrens, Chris
 Day, Tom Moore
 Offering Counter: Jim Ahrens



THANK YOU Doty Stoker for organizing our church's participation in No Room at the Inn. Thanks to all those who volunteered time setting up, cleaning up, and to those who loaned their nativity scenes to the project! Thanks also to our Sunday School kids for providing some music early in the evening.

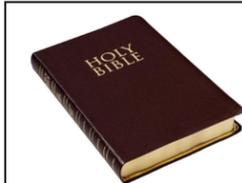
Eliot Uhlenhopp for providing another gorgeous Christmas tree for our sanctuary.

Gail Greenwald for working on the room next to Pastor Kirsten's office. It is transforming from a storage space into a wonderful Sunday School classroom that the kids will love!

Deacons for a wonderful Harvest Dinner

A NOTE FROM YOUR SESSION
REGARDING OUR 2012 PLEDGES

What a wonder!
What a blessing.
Thanks be to God.



BIBLE STUDY

Tuesday, January 24, 7:00 p.m. in fellowship hall. Read 1 Corinthians chapters 6 and 7. (Everyone is welcome.)





DRIVING MINISTRY

Since 2008 volunteers from our church have been offering rides to people with medical appointments both in and out of town. We do this for folks both in our congregation and people who live in the Grinnell community and find themselves in need of a ride.

In 2011, 27 out-of-town rides were offered, and 22 in-town rides. The driving volunteers were: the Greenwalds, Janice Logan, the Phillips, the McIntyres, the Dotys, the Higginsons, Jill Kaiser, and the Moores.

This is such an important ministry for the Grinnell area ó thanks so much to all those who drive! If you are interested in being a part of this ministry, please contact Tom Moore.

HELP GRINNELL BECOME A BLUE ZONE!

The Blue Zones Project was inspired by a study done by Dan Buettner to find the healthiest, happiest, and longest living communities around the world (which he called Blue Zones). The results of his study were published in a book, The Blue Zones. Dan found that living longer, happier, healthier lives needed to be a community effort, rather than just an individual effort.

Wellmark BlueCross BlueShield is sponsoring community efforts to turn American towns into Blue Zones through community health initiatives. Grinnell has been selected to apply to be one of only 10 Iowa towns to be sponsored Blue Zones Communities. To be selected, we need to show that our community members support the project. They can do this by signing up online at <http://www.bluezonesproject.com/citizens/signup> (select, ð am a citizenö), or by texting "BZP" to 7772937.

2012 ANNUAL MEETING

Our congregational annual meeting will be on **January 15th** after worship. At this meeting we will approve the pastor's terms of call, elect new officers, and distribute the 2012 budget.

The annual report, including the 2012 budget and pastor's terms of call, will be available the week before the congregational meeting. This will give you time to look over these documents and think of any questions you might have. If you do have any questions, don't hesitate to ask. You can call Pastor Kirsten or finance chairperson, Gail Greenwald, or you can ask questions at the meeting.

OFFICER'S RETREAT: Sunday, JANUARY 22nd 12:30-4:00 P.M.

Session and Deacon members will gather for training, visioning and planning on January 22nd in Fellowship Hall. Both groups will have a short business meeting during the retreat time. Lunch will be provided.

HELP!

This is a special plea for Third Sunday Potluck hosts. Please sign up on the sheet on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall. David Cranston is doing the January potluck but we do not have anyone for the remaining months. If you have questions contact Gail Greenwald.

THANK YOU!

A special thank you to everyone for the many cards, prayers and condolences expressed to me after the death of my mother . Your thoughtfulness is much appreciated.

Janice Logan



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WORSHIP IN JANUARY

January 1: Holy communion. Lectionary readings: Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Psalm 148, Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40.

January 8: Baptism of the Lord. Lectionary readings: Genesis 1:1-5; Psalm 29; Acts 19:1-7; Mark 1:4-11.

January 15: Lectionary readings: 1 Samuel 3: 1-10 (11-20); Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51. Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Third Sunday Potluck and Food Pantry Sunday.

January 22: Lectionary readings: Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 62:5-12; 1 Corinthians 7:29-31.

January 29: Birthday Sunday. Lectionary readings: Deuteronomy 18:15-20; Psalm 111; 1 Corinthians 8:1-13; Mark 1:21-28.

PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

Observe the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, January 18-25, when Christians around the world pray for the healing of divisions among churches.

Visit www.pcusa.org/ecumenicalrelations or www.geii.org for more information about this observance.

PER CAPITA

Every Presbyterian congregation is asked to pay a per-member assessment (per capita). What is Per Capita? Per Capita is not membership dues. Neither is it a tax. About twelve years ago, the General Assembly approved the following definition of Per Capita: Per Capita is an opportunity for all communicant members of the Presbyterian Church through the governing bodies to participate equally, responsibly, and independently by sharing the cost of coordination and evaluation of mission; of performing ecclesiastical, legislative, and judicial functions that identify a reformed church, while at the same time strengthening the sense of community among all Presbyterians.

The assessment this year is \$34.00 per member. A letter will go to all members in January asking all members to help with this annual payment.

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

	<u>November</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>
Pledge Income	\$ 7,903	\$103,869
Budgeted	\$ 9,537	\$104,903
Total Income	\$ 8,845	\$120,459
Budgeted	\$11,002	\$121,024
Expenses	\$10,763	\$119,971
Budgeted	\$10,989	\$120,874

If you have not turned in your **pledge card for the year 2011**, we hope you will do so soon. You can send it to the church office or bring it in during regular office hours (T-F; 8:30 to noon). If you need a new form, let us know and we will get one to you.

LECTIONARY STUDY

Every Friday at noon, a small group gathers at the church to study the biblical passages Pastor Kirsten uses for preaching on the coming Sunday. All are welcome you can drop in from time to time, or come every week. Bring a sack lunch.



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January 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10:30 Worship Holy Communion	2	3 2:00 Prayer Time	4 Matthew Kriegel	5	6 Rebecca Stuhr Ashley Peak 12:00 Lectionary Bible Study	7
8 9:15 Choir Sunday School 10:30 Worship	9	10 2:00 Prayer Time	11	12 Denise Sears	13 12:00 Lectionary Bible Study	14
15 Delilah Scheffert Kendall Nickle 9:15 Choir Sunday School 10:30 Worship Annual Meeting of Congregation Third Sunday	16 Emily Moore	17 Toshia Creps 2:00 Prayer Time	18 Stan Shiver	19	20 Pete Simpson MaryAnne Nickle 12:00 Lectionary Bible Study	21 Bob Hoisington
22 9:15 Choir Sunday School 10:30 Worship 12:30 Officer Retreat and Deacons and Session Meetings	23	24 Steve Meek Amy Moore 2:00 Prayer Time 7:00 Bible Study	25	26	27 12:00 Lectionary Bible Study	28 Marvin Kelley
29 9:15 Choir Sunday School 10:30 Worship Birthday Sunday	30	31 2:00 Prayer Time				

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Return Service Requested

PEACE!

