

FAIRPLAIN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
FEBRUARY 2022 NEWSLETTER

Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.
Romans 12:12

Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication.
Ephesians 6:18a

Dear friends,

I don't think I've ever known somebody I thought had a "closer connection" to God than Ree Enlow, my friend and supervisor when I worked at Jumonville, a United Methodist camp, from 2009-2012.

One time someone asked her something about prayer, and she said she's *always* praying. She said she has a constant dialogue with God. Whatever else is going on, she said, she always has a line open.

I still haven't figured out how to do that one, but I aspire to it.

Another day, we were having a conversation about the camp's unpredictable weather patterns. I joked that Ree has a red phone that puts her through directly to God, like the one between the Oval Office and Russia in the popular imagination. I think I suggested she put in a request for clear skies that afternoon.

She looked at me curiously and said, "We all have a red phone."

We all have a red phone.

At any time of day or night, we have a red phone we can pick up that will connect us directly with the creator of the universe, who never sleeps and loves us and rejoices over us with great joy.

Blessings,

Pastor David Schell

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

PRAYER REQUESTS

If you have prayer requests that you would like to leave as a voicemail to be played on Sunday morning, you can call 269-332-1118 to leave a message, and we will play it on Sunday morning.



Please join us following worship for refreshments in the Courtyard. There is a sign-up sheet on the serving table if you would like to help.



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

9: Parker Wendel
20: Pat Smith
27: Candi Kebschull



MUSIC NEWS

Greetings to all from Revelation 5:13.

“Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power for ever and ever!”

There were 5 Sundays in January. The following music groups and soloists enriched our Sunday Worship experience in January 2022:

January 02 – Family Herivonjy

January 09 – The Praise Band “Wherever Two ...”

January 16 – Chancel Choir and Family Slavujevic Chimes, Bells and vocals

January 23 – The Urbina Girls

January 30 – The Maier Family

We should emphasize that we at Fairplain are privileged to hear 2 musical items every Sunday by various groups and soloists. Most other congregations hear only 1, and the Offertory is usually done by the organist / pianist.

You have probably noticed that 3 families – guest volunteer singers and players participated last month on 3 different Sundays. I am very pleased to have students and their families willing to share their musical talent with us.

Sunday, January 23 was cold with snow falling. Adrianna, Isabelle and Ava Urbina came with their grandmother Olive from the Kalamazoo area. Olive called me earlier that morning doubting that they would be able to come and participate during our worship service due to inclement weather. However, they showed up around 9:45 am and performed well without having a rehearsal. Such determination and devotion are rare. They were brave to overcome bad weather and treacherous I-94 to sing and play guitars. They deserve our gratitude and praise.

Here is an interesting article about a famous 18th century English hymnwriter Charles Wesley (1707-1788). He wrote the lyrics for the following songs found in our church hymnal: # 1, 2, 6, 31, 113, 123, 155, 303, 376, 462, 463, 466, 477. This article is adopted from Randy Petersen’s interesting book “Be Still My Soul.”

Continued on Page 4 ...

PART TWO

(Part One was featured in the January 2022 issue of the Newsletter.)

Almost immediately John and Charles took their preaching ministry outdoors. Freed from the physical limitations of church buildings, they could speak to thousands – sometimes 10,000 - at the time. (They were supported in this by their friend and colleague George Whitefield, who later took this practice of mass evangelism to America.) Charles estimated that in the years 1739-1743, he preached to at least 149,000 people.

The brothers weren't trying to start a new religion. Loyal Anglicans, they just wanted to share their new life in Christ. Unfortunately, their enthusiasm threatened many established church leaders. This just gave the Wesleys even more reasons to preach outside, and they began reaching out to poor laborers, common folk who were often unwelcome in the churches.

Charles provided songs with which these new congregations could praise God and express their faith. He often used popular tunes – even replacing bawdy lyrics of tavern songs with his own faith-filled lines.

John Wesley knew how to organize. As new converts sought to grow in the faith, he grouped them in “classes” for Bible study, prayer, and accountability. Nowadays we would call them “small groups.” This level of organization eventually made the Methodist movement a church, despite the Wesleys’ ambivalence about the idea of breaking with the Church of England.

Because of poor health, Charles ended his travelling ministry in 1756, but he continued to write hymns, putting out 56 volumes of hymns in the 53 years between his ordination and his death in 1788. Many are masterpieces. In the following century, famed preacher Henry Ward Beecher spoke about his favorite – “Jesus, Lover of My Soul” – saying, “I would rather have written that hymn of Wesley’s ... than to have the fame of all the kings that ever sat on earth.”

In that and literally thousands of other hymns, Charles Wesley explored the mysteries of the heart of God, and he continues to bring millions of other believers along for a ride.

May God richly bless us all, grant us wisdom, protection, guidance, good health, prosperity and the opportunity to be a blessing to others.

Vladimir Slavujevic,
Director of Music



CLERK'S REPORT

Please plan to attend church in person if you can possibly do so on February 20. That Sunday will be our annual Congregational meeting. We need to have a quorum, so it is important to have as many as possible attend.

Speaking of attendance. We just sent out our Annual Statistical Report to Presbytery. I've not been very good about reporting attendance on a monthly basis during the pandemic, but having to complete the Statistical Report put pressure on me to come up with information for Presbytery. Beginning in July, Lew Burchard has been faithfully completing the little attendance book we keep in the Narthex. I took the numbers of persons actually in the sanctuary and added in the number of "views" that the streaming records each week. It's not totally accurate because one view could be 2, or more people watching our service, but I ultimately came up with an average of 38 people a week participating in our worship services. That made me feel good because some Sunday's there are not many in the building.



Thank you to all of you who have sent in your pledge cards. Jill Wendel, our Financial Secretary receives those, and reports that 99% of what was expected, are in. That's wonderful because we can plan a budget for 2022 knowing that we have support for that budget. Additional pledges are always welcome!

Our Per Capita is also due to Presbytery this month. If you have not submitted a check for \$36.73 per person, thus far, please consider doing that soon.

Lifeline Screening will be using our building on April 28 this year to complete health screenings for anyone in the community that wants to have them. If you want to have health screenings at a very reasonable rate, you might want to consider participating in that event.

Fairplain Presbyterian has 58 active members at this time. Home communion was served to Harold Gundersen, John Hall, Mary Bartels and Augie & Nan Meyer this month. Attendance for December was an average of 34 at each worship service including Blue Christmas and Christmas Eve.

Stay warm, spring is just around the corner.

In Christ,

Marlene Smith-Clerk



We have continued packing brown bag lunches for the Soup Kitchen staff to distribute every month. Dine In service has not taken place since the shut down in 2020. However, they have allowed volunteers to utilize the kitchen to help prepare bagged lunches if wanted/needed.

On Thursday, January 13th, 140 brown bag lunches were prepared at home and delivered to the Soup Kitchen by the following volunteers... Leslie Gilreath, Jenna McAllister, Marlene Smith, Sonja Stormo and Jill Wendel. Each bag included chicken salad on a kaiser bun, bag of chips, applesauce, pudding cup and a small candy. John Kauffman helped with ordering and picking up from Feeding America and loading the volunteer's car with the supplies needed on the Tuesday prior to Soup Kitchen. The supplies not obtained by Feeding America were shopped for by Jill Wendel and divided into groups of 28 for each volunteer. Marlene Smith was volunteer coordinator.

Do you like coordinating volunteers?

Do you like planning meals within a budget?

Do you like preparing meals at the Soup Kitchen?

Do you like making meals at your home and bringing them to the Soup Kitchen?

Soup kitchen volunteering became very different after Covid introduced itself in 2020 and we could use some fresh ideas and help!

If you would be interested in helping with Soup Kitchen in any way, please contact Linda in the Church Office.

MISSION STATEMENT

We, the members of Fairplain Presbyterian Church, rejoice in God's grace and redeeming love through Jesus Christ. We believe we have been called as God's children to create an open and welcoming community, to worship and praise God, and to nurture and support each other. We are called to develop our God-given gifts and to equip ourselves to reach out to the world in love and compassion. Thus prepared, we will share our faith, preach the gospel, feed the hungry, and be peacemakers according to God's will.

DEACONS

These Days Request: If you would like a copy of the current January – March These Days devotionals, please contact the church office and speak to Linda.

YELLOW PEW ENVELOPES

The yellow envelopes have been reprinted for your donations toward Deacons General/Funeral Fund and Food Pantry/Soup Kitchen and are in the pews. Since we're not worshipping in the church building until the stay-home-stay-safe order is lifted, you can just make a note in the memo line of a check mailed to the church.

Deacons General Fund:

Goes towards the purchase of communion cups, oil for candles, Advent wax candles, flowers for shut-ins (Christmas and Easter), printed support materials for members: These Days devotional, Care Notes (various topics), greeting cards and postage for members; CD players for shut-ins.

Deacons Funeral Fund:

Goes towards any funeral luncheon expenses that are not reimbursed by the family.

Checks for donations to the Deacons General Fund and/or Funeral Fund should be made payable to Fairplain Presbyterian Church. Include "Deacons" in the memo line.

CHURCH STAFF

The Rev. David Schell, pastor@fairplainpc.com

Linda Cogswell, Church Secretary – church email: office@fairplainpc.com

Vladimir Slavujevic, Director of Music – email: vladimirslavujevic5@gmail.com

Muyu Zou, Pianist – email: Raining1@gmail.com

Jody Pauley, Nursery Attendant – email: jodypauley1@gmail.com

Diane Cronk, Co-Treasurer – email: dcronk@comcast.net

Jenna McAllister, Co-Treasurer – email: jennabetz@comcast.net

Jill Wendel, Financial Secretary – email: jillannwendel@yahoo.com

Bud Cornelius, Custodian

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Linda Cogswell, Church Secretary, is in the church office during the following days/hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 8:30 am-noon and 1:00-3:00 pm

Wednesday: Church Office closed

Friday: 9:00 am-11:30 am