

The *Mustard Seed* February 2016

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HELENA, MONTANA

Issue 2, Volume 2016

Computus, Lent, and Love

Computus is not some new geek term. It is the calculation of the date Easter falls on. Easter occurs on the Sunday following the first full moon after the northern spring equinox (vernal equinox). Due to the fact that earth's orbit around the sun, and the moon's around the earth, don't equate exactly to earth's rotation (i.e., a multiple of 24.0000 hours), things like the timing of the equinox and full moon "float" a little in reference to our calendar. For consistency, the early church fathers picked some dates and values rather than go on the exact astronomical observation of the equinox and full moon - such as pegging the vernal equinox to March 21.

Logically, the earliest Easter could be is March 23 assuming March 21 falls on a Friday, there is a full moon on Saturday, March 22, and then Easter would be on March 23. The formula for calculating the date of Easter is very involved (an 11-step calculation accommodating the church fathers' declarations), and actually Easter can occur as early as March 22 or as late as April 25.

This Easter is on March 27, just about as early as it can get, which obviously pushes Lent early as well. So, here in 2016 we have *Lent, then*

Love, versus the more typical *Love, then Lent* - given Ash Wednesday falls on February 10, four days before Valentine's Day.

Regardless of which occurs earlier, *Lent* and *Love* intermingle, not always on the calendar, but at least from a theological perspective: Out of love, God brought creation into being.

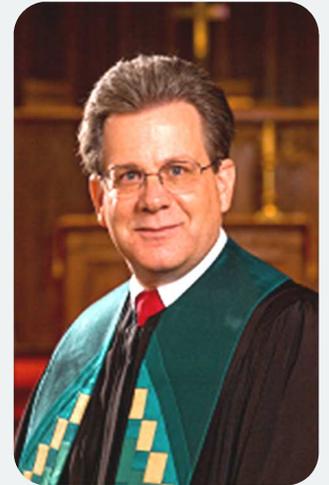
John 3:16: For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:17: For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

Christ so loved us as to assume our sins so that our "scarlet robes" would be turned to white.

1 John 3:16 This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.

Christ so loved us as to suffer humiliation, desertion, and a painful death for us. Loved so much to die for humanity, *yes*. Loved so much to die for you specifically, *yes*. Loved so much to die on a cross so you may live, *yes*.



Our Pastor
Rev. Scott Wiperman

First Presbyterian Church
535 North Ewing Street
Helena, MT 59601

406.442.4775
fpchelena.org

The Library Kiosk

We have a new Library Kiosk that resides just outside the Sanctuary doors in the Fellowship area. On one side there is information about the church and a sampling of books from the church library, and on the other side are offerings from the Children's Library. Feel free to borrow a book, or several.

“Computus, Lent, and Love” *continued from page 1*

Lent is the time of Christ’s journey to the cross. It historically has been seen as a season of sacrifice. Things were given up for Lent, to join with Christ in sacrifice and suffering. [Hence the evolution of “Fat Tuesday” - the day to indulge as much as possible in that which you are giving up for Lent.]

Did Christ sacrifice and suffer on this journey to the cross, *yes*. But this journey was a journey of love. So, let us journey with Christ in love during

Lent. May we be more loving to others and ourselves during Lent. May we embody love, ooze love, drip and drab love every where we go. May we recognize the power of love, and the impotence of that which is not love. May we conform our nature (whatever that is) to love. May we adopt love as our “sacrifice” for Lent. May we let Love and Lent commingle.

Pastor Scott

**First Presbyterian Church of Helena
Policy and Procedures Relating
to Sexual Misconduct**

This policy was adopted by Session at the January 19 meeting. The purpose of this document is to serve as a guide for the prevention of sexual misconduct and sexual abuse.

- To set and enforce standards of ethical sexual behavior consistent with scripture and the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (USA).
- To provide procedures for inquiry and response to allegations of sexual misconduct and/or harassment.
- To provide personnel employment practices and forms for the administration of appropriate employer/employee relationships.

Church workers will all be given a copy of this policy. If anyone would like to have a copy of this document, it will be available in the church office.

**A Lenten Prayer from
Dietrich Bonhoeffer**

This morning I came across this beautiful prayer by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, one of my heroes who always challenges me with what it means to follow Jesus as we walk towards the cross. It formed the center of my meditation this morning – so challenging knowing where his journey led. This prayer was used as one of the Lenten meditations in The Mosaic Bible.

Christine Sine

I Cannot Do This Alone

O God, early in the morning I cry to you.
Help me to pray
And to concentrate my thoughts on you,
I cannot do this alone.
In me there is darkness,
But with you there is light;
I am lonely, but you do not leave me;
I am feeble in heart, but with you there is help;
I am restless, but with you there is peace.
In me there is bitterness, but with you there is
patience;
I do not understand your ways,
But you know the way for me....
Restore me to liberty,
And enable me to live now
That I may answer before you and before men.
Lord, whatever this day may bring, Your name be
praised.

Amen

ASH WEDNESDAY

February 10

Dinner Service
5:30 pm 6:00 pm

Ash Wednesday Meal
You're cordially invited to dinner at 5:30 pm, prior to our Ash Wednesday Service. Soup, salad, bread and dessert will be served by your Fellowship Committee. The service will follow at 6:00 pm.

A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS DINNER!

What a wonderful Christmas Day it was! The church kitchen and Richardson Hall were filled with members of our church family busily working to prepare our first Christmas Dinner open to the public. The decision was made at a brainstorming session with the Education, Mission, Worship and Congregational Fellowship committees as part of our New Beginnings activities. So publicity was done to invite those in the community who would be alone to join in fellowship with members and friends of First Presbyterian Church.

The food was plentiful and very tasty. However, the community attendance was not what we had hoped for. Everyone who attended, there were approximately 30-40 people, enjoyed the food and fellowship, and some even played games after dinner. Even though we didn't have community visitors with us, there were a number of people blessed with the good food. The leftovers were packed up and taken to God's Love, and they were most appreciative.

I want to express my appreciation and thanks to all of our church family who helped with this affair and all of those who attended. You all are a wonderful group of people!

Rose Leavitt, Chair,
Congregational Fellowship Committee

GAME NIGHT

Friday, February 12
6:00 pm

Join friends and family and celebrate Valentine's Day early at this month's Game Night at the church. Pizza, veggies, snacks, pop -- fun and games! Rumor is there might even be a game of Hearts, in honor of the holiday!



Annual PW Birthday Luncheon

will be held on Tuesday, February 9, 2016. We will meet in Richardson Hall at 12:00 o'clock, noon. Please call in your reservations no later than Sunday, February 7, to Lucille Letcher whose phone number is 465-0467. Please leave a message if she is not at home. The cost of the luncheon will be \$5.00.

Join us to hear Barb Leland and Jane Ogle share some of their experiences from their very recent trip to Israel! Also, remember to bring your birthday offerings as these are an important part of Presbyterian Women's Mission gifts.

The Session in action.....

The Session meeting was held on Tuesday, January 19, at 6:30 pm. Rev. Scott Wipperman opened with worship and communion in the sanctuary.

Elder Marshall Gingery moved to give voice to a number of visitors present who would be discussing plans for a proposed new event to be held in September called **Arts and Crafts for Heaven's Sake**, and wishing to share their perspectives for Session's consideration.

Elder John Gneckow, Administration Chair, reported the Pledge total for 2016 is \$176,325. He also said a check in the amount of \$53,190 has been received from the Richardson Trust.

Elder Marsha Davis, Education Chair, reported the schedule for planned Sunday School activities and projects will be sent to families with young children.

Elder Melissa Stiles, Mission Chair, reported FPC would be participating in the Comfort Food Challenge on February 25. Tickets are available for \$15 each. This event is a major fund-raiser for Family Promise.

Elder Susan Steffens reported for the Personnel Committee. There were two action items: approve the Policy and Procedures Relating to Sexual Misconduct and approve the 2016 Interim Pastor Terms of Call for Pastor Scott Wipperman. Both items were approved by Session.

Elder Dianna Goodman, Worship Chair, reported there will be an Ash Wednesday Service on February 10 at 6:00 pm, preceded by a meal at 5:30 pm. Lenten Devotionals are available in the Narthex.

A written report of the Deacons' November 8 meeting was submitted. Carole Massman will serve as Secretary of the Deacons. The next meeting will be March 16.

Unfinished Business:

A Memorandum from Lynda Wadsworth, Financial Secretary, concerning special donation monies to be carried forward from the 2015 budget: Mission – After School Program - \$1,583.63; Congregational Fellowship - \$150; and Mission – Special Offerings - \$181.62. Motion was made, seconded and passed to carry these funds forward.

New Beginnings: Plan to arrange a congregational gathering in February.

New Business:

Motion was made, seconded and carried to transfer \$4,961.96 from the Sigrid Barnes Fund into the General Fund Savings Account for major repairs made to the church that were charged to the B & G budget initially, causing a budget overrun.

A proposal to hold an *Arts and Crafts for Heaven's Sake* was presented by Corky Lord. Following Session discussion, motion was made, seconded and carried to approve this vendor sale with the Administration Committee investigating some of the legal aspects including taxes and business licenses.

The 2016 Congregational meeting – February 7 at 11:00 am.

Next Session meeting – February 16 at 6:30 pm.

If anyone would like additional information about the Session meeting, copies of the minutes are available.

It's time for the Comfort Food Challenge!!!

The Mission Committee is gearing up for the Comfort Food Challenge which will take place Sunday, February 21. The committee has decided to make meatballs two ways, and we need your help. We will be looking for people to help prepare (and what is easier than dumping meatballs and sauce into a roaster?!), as well as a few people to serve. This is also a great opportunity to taste wonderful comforting food from local churches and restaurants. This fund-raiser helps to support Family Promise, helping families who are without a home to have somewhere to stay and food to eat, while helping them find housing and get back on their feet.

Mustard Seed

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

1st - Charlotte Meyer
2nd - Karyn Kovich
6th - Eileen Salo
10th - Phillip Borsberry
11th - Elaine Gingery
12th - Linda Granzow
13th - Sheryl Eriksen
14th - Arlene Carpenter
15th - Linda Egebjerg
16th - Stephen Bayless, Gail Danzer
17th - Tamara Laib, Randy Boysen
19th - Chris Shove
18th - Elaine Power
19th - Chris Shove, Annette Bertelsen
21st - Mary Craige, Harold Paulsen
22nd - Jane Ogle
23rd - Jake Blade
24th - Craig Henrikson
29th - Ron Witte

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

1st - Les and Louise Cramer
12th - Vern & Yvonne Moody
14th - Jeremy & Janet Fadness
22nd - John & Carol Gneckow

FEBRUARY CONDOLENCES

Our condolences go out to the family of Dave Samson, who passed the evening Sunday, January 10. Dave was a member of the church for 23 years and served on the Session body and Mission Committee.

Our condolences go out to the family of Evelyn Bahr, the mother of Cheryl Eriksen, who passed away on Wednesday evening, January 27.

**SUNDAY
COFFEE
TIME
TREATS!**

We have been blessed to have treats for the fellowship time following worship.

THANKS to all who have contributed. Your time and talent are much appreciated.

ABIGAIL CIRCLE will meet at 9:30, February 2, in the Huxley Lounge here at the church.

ESTHER CIRCLE will meet at 9:30, February 2, in the Ruth Room.

REBEKAH CIRCLE will meet February 4, at 9:30, here at the church.

Director of Christian Education

We are sad to relay that Amanda Grimmatt has moved back to Missouri to care for her parents. Their health is failing, and Amanda feels she is called to be with them and help care for them.

On the happy side, Lexsey Van Norman has agreed to be our Interim DCE. She will focus on the Sunday School aspect of the full position, ensuring we have quality educational experiences for our children. Lexsey led the January 24 Sunday School, providing a good transition for the children.

Please welcome Lexsey as the Interim DCE!

AUDIO/VIDEO OPERATORS



- 7 LaFournaise / Strasko
- 10 Albright / Cramer (6 pm)
- 14 Cramer / Albright
- 21 Strasko
- 28 Moses

Lay Liturgist



- 7 Carol Carpenter
- 14 "Butch" Plowman
- 21 Mark Goodman
- 28 Les Cramer

On-Call Deacons

Corky Lord (406-223-7359)
Merle Korizek (443-3793)

**Need a ride, a meal
or a home repair?
Call a
Deacon On Call.**

USHERS

- 7 Jim & Jan Benjamin,
Mary Wright
- 14 John & Carol Gneckow
- 21 Elroy & Lucille Letcher,
Linda Test, Judy Bayless
- 28 Carole Massman,
Kathy Chambers

Communion Servers

Melissa Stiles
Corky Lord
John & Candace Coefield

Communion Preparation

Corky Lord
Ward Stiles

"Thank you so much!"

To all of the wonderful women of the church who have been bringing treats for all to share on Sundays during the coffee time following worship. You make this fellowship time very special!

Also, a special thank you to Tonna Strasko and Stephanie Boysen for the monthly birthday cakes!

FEBRUARY 2016

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
	1 Education 10 am ----- Helena Xpress 6 pm ----- Girl Scouts 7 pm	2 Abigail Circle 9:30 am ----- Esther Circle 9:30 am ----- Bridge Club 11 am ----- 12 Noon Small Group ----- Personnel 5:30 pm ----- Boy Scouts 7 pm ----- AL-ANON 7:30 pm	3 Willing Workers 9:30 am ----- C. F. C. 11:30 am Lattes & Sundaes ----- CHOIR 7 pm	4 Rebekah Circle 9:30 am ----- Bridge Club 11:00 am ----- Agents of the Babylon Small Group 5:15 pm ----- District # 61 7 pm ----- It's In the Book AA Group 7 pm	5 Small Group 12 Noon ----- Hand & Foot 1:00 pm ----- ----- AA Group Friday Night Speaker 7 pm	6
7 COMMUNION SUNDAY Small Group 8:45 am ----- Worship & Education Hour 10 am ----- Congregational Annual Meeting 11:15 am	8 Helena Xpress 6 pm ----- Girl Scouts 7 pm	9 Worship Cmte 10 am ----- Bridge Club 11 am ----- PW LUNCHEON 12 Noon ----- 12 Noon Small Group ----- Admin Cmte 5:30 pm ----- Mission 6 pm ----- Bldg & Grnds 7 pm ----- Boy Scouts 7 pm ----- AL-ANON 7:30 pm	10 Willing Workers 9:30 am ----- CHOIR 7 pm	11 Bridge Club 11:00 am ----- Agents of the Babylon Small Group 5:15 pm ----- District # 11 7:30 pm ----- It's In the Book AA Group 7:00 pm	12 Small Group 12 Noon ----- Hand & Foot 1:00 pm ----- GAME NIGHT 6 pm	13
14 Valentine's Day Small Group 8:45 am ----- Worship & Education Hour 10 am	15 Staff Meeting 4 pm ----- Helena Xpress 6 pm ----- Girl Scouts 7 pm	16 Bridge Club 11 am ----- 12 Noon Small Group ----- SESSION 6:30 pm ----- AL-ANON 7:30 pm	17 Willing Workers 9:30 am ----- CHOIR 7 pm	18 Bridge Club 11:00 am ----- Agents of the Babylon Small Group 5:15 pm ----- It's In the Book AA Group 7:00 pm	19 Small Group 12 Noon ----- Hand & Foot 1:00 pm	20
21 Small Group 8:45 am ----- Worship & Education Hour 10 am	22 Helena Xpress 6 pm ----- Girl Scouts 7 pm	23 Bridge Club 11 am ----- ALANON 7 pm ----- Boy Scouts 7 pm	24 Willing Workers 9:30 am ----- CHOIR 7 pm	25 Bridge Club 11:00 am ----- Agents of the Babylon Small Group 5:15 pm ----- It's In the Book AA Group 7:00 pm	26 Small Group 12 Noon ----- Hand & Foot 1:00 pm	27
28 Small Group 8:45 am ----- Worship & Education Hour 10 am	29 Helena Xpress 6 pm ----- Girl Scouts 7 pm					



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www.fpchelena.com

OFFICE HOURS
Monday - Thursday
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 a.m.
Friday
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
406-442-4775

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of Greater Helena

First Presbyterian Church's next week with Family Promise will be March 1 - 7. We will begin sign-ups for the March date and will be needing meals for Sunday and Monday dinner and hosts to spend the night at First Baptist Church.

The family we hosted last time has recently graduated from the program and moved into their new home. The Board of Family Promise has recently hired a new Executive Director, Nick Zollo, who comes with experience with non-profits and a great amount of enthusiasm.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: The Comfort Food Challenge, where we all have an opportunity to try a great assortment of Comfort Foods is set for February 21 at 4 pm at the Fairgrounds. If you know of someone who could use the help of Family Promise, the contact number for Nick Zollo, Director, is 465-9467.

Questions or to volunteer, call Lucille Letcher at 443-3497 or Elaine Gingery at 461-0561 or email at megingery@bresnan.net.

HELENA FOOD SHARE



Helena Food Share continues to be one of the missions of this church. A box for donations is located in the church entry. Boy Scout Troop 228 graciously delivers our contributions to Helena Food Share.

Suggestions for February contributions include: canned meats, a variety of soups and chili, peanut butter, cold cereals, flour/sugar.