

A Ministry Update

Boulevard News

February 2009

see our webpage at 1stcob.net

First Church of the Brethren



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Upcoming Worship

What is Your Bliss? Follow Your Bliss. (February 1)

The above title comes from a quote by Joseph Campbell. In his book, *Reflections on the Art of Living*, Campbell suggests that it is important to be authentic. The best way to be truly alive is “to give the world the best we have to offer,” writes Campbell. Early in the Gospel of Mark, the scribes are amazed at Jesus' teachings. Today, we will contemplate how we are invited to follow our bliss.

Please read: Mark 1: 21-28

Taking Our Temperature. (February 8)

Healing ministries are important in the Gospel of Mark. This is the first healing reported. Let's consider some lessons we might learn from this story.

Please read: Mark 1: 29-39

Are There Ways We Might Be Cleansed? (February 15)

Our readings for the day come from the Old and New Testaments. The stories are of lepers being cleansed. Today's message invites us to explore ways we might need the cleansing power of God.

Please read: 2 Kings 2: 1-14 and Mark 1: 40-45

Both Sides Now. (Transfiguration Sunday). (February 22)

This Sunday's message will attempt to define “Transfiguration.” The scripture describes a transforming moment in the lives of some of the disciples. What changes would they make? What happens to us in such moments?

Please read: Mark 9: 2-9

Have Mercy on Us. (Ash Wednesday). (February 25) 7 A.M. Service

You are invited to begin the Season of Lent with an early morning service. Come for moments of prayer and scripture. The service will be approximately 20-30 minutes in length.

Pick a Parable

“And He began to tell the people this parable.” (Luke 20: 9a)

The above scripture is stated many times in different ways. Jesus told stories. Jesus told parables. Many of the parables are so familiar we can recite them easily. Some parables seem a bit confusing. Told centuries ago, we may wonder if some have meaning for our day.

Beginning in March, Pastor Kres will begin a preaching series based on some of the parables of Jesus. He will explore their significance in the scriptures and how they might provide some guidance for our daily lives.

What parables will be the focus of the messages? You can help decide. You are invited to pick a parable. All that needs to be done is for you to identify a parable that interests you. Write the name of the parable or the scripture on the sheet provided in the sanctuary and put your name next to it. Pastor Kres will select the order in which the parables will be used and will be in touch with each person who registers a parable.

A Service for Peace

First Church of the Brethren, Springfield, will host an interfaith service for peace at 6:30 pm on Thursday, March 19th at our meetinghouse at 2115 Yale Boulevard. The event, marking the 6th anniversary of the start of the Iraq war is being coordinated by the *Grassroots Interfaith Team* (G.I.F.T.) of Springfield. Planning includes speakers, music, and prayers giving voice to peace by representatives of the Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic, Jewish, Baha'i and Christian faith traditions. The G.I.F.T. group is made up of lay members interested in understanding the faith of others and strengthening the bonds of our common humanity. More about the group and contact information can be found at springfieldfaith.org/gift.

Pancake and Sausage Breakfast

First Church of the Brethren will hold their annual "all-you-can-eat" pancake and sausage breakfast on Saturday, March 7th from 7 am until 11 am. Tickets will be available at the door. The cost is \$5 for adults and \$2 for children. Proceeds will benefit various church ministries and activities. Please share this date with your friends and family.

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Bid Accepted

The Stewardship Commission received four bids on the restroom remodeling project. The bids ranged from 12k to 20k. At the January 22nd church board meeting, the Stewards recommended that the board accept the low bid which came from McElfresh Custom Carpentry out of Virden, IL. We anticipate a 2-3 week job beginning in late February or early March. Folks who still have not completed their pledges for this project are asked to do so, as soon as possible. Thanks to Diana Rokosz, '08 Stewards Chair, and Terry Link, current Stewards Chair, for helping us work through this project.

Rainbow Scarves Project

A group of women at the Modesto, CA. Church of the Brethren are knitting rainbow scarves to show their support for glbtq persons at Annual Conference this summer. A query will be coming from the Beacon Heights Church of the Brethren in Northern Indiana asking Conference to reconsider language in the 1883

Human Sexuality paper that states that same sex covenantal relationships are not acceptable.

Women's Caucus, a voice for women and their supporters in the Church of the Brethren, is joining with the women at Modesto to knit and crochet as many rainbow scarves for Conference as possible. These scarves will be given free to conference-goers wanting to wear them. The scarves are simple to make.

Both knitting and crocheting instructions for making the scarves and getting them to Annual Conference are posted on the Women Caucus website, www.womaenscaucus.org. They would like to hear from others who are willing to make scarves.

Feeding the Hungry

The Witness Commission is announcing a change in which we collect dry and canned goods for the Kumler Food Pantry. A large collection box will be permanently placed in an area behind the sanctuary. Food and other items may be dropped off on a regular basis. We will arrange to have the items delivered to the pantry on a monthly schedule.

In addition to the above announcement, two special offerings will be received. The first is a special collection for an area food pantry on February 15. We will ask the Church of the Brethren's Global Food Crisis Fund to match the collection we take on that Sunday. Our 2nd special collection is scheduled for



March 15 when we will receive financial gifts for the One Great Hour of Sharing appeal. One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) gifts are sent to our national office to be used for hunger, disaster, and development ministries around the world.