

# The Bell-Tower NEWS

FEBRUARY

*Enter as Guests, Leave as  
Friends, Return as Family*

## **Lent, Even in The Pandemic?**

The season of Lent is intended to gracefully challenge us to examine our life and maybe even help us to discern how our COVID-19 time of quarantine and isolation can both separate us and draw us closer to God's love. Confronted by needy crowds and angry Pharisees, even Jesus needs to retreat and be alone so that he might reconnect with God the Father and do the mission and ministry before him. Time and again, Jesus went to a solitary place to fast, pray and be in fellowship with God. Jesus practiced his isolated reflection times, not because of sin, selfishness, or a pandemic like us, but because he understood that taking time to be alone and closer to God means a more full and deeper relationship. He knew that prayer, reading scripture, and reflection are critical if we want to live a faithful and full life. Even in the midst of a pandemic, we are called to examine what separates and what inspires us to know and share God's love.

Our Lenten time of reflection starts with Ash Wednesday on February 17th this

year. Florissant Presbyterian Church will be having an Ash Wednesday service that evening at 7:00. Even during the challenges of the pandemic and social struggles, we are invited to examine our brokenness, our limitations, and our sin. It will be a time of worship to remember God's steadfast love is for us. I hope that each of you will join us in person, in our parking lot on our FM transmitter, or at home online throughout lent. Even in a pandemic, Lent can be an appropriate and wonderful time for all of us to grow closer in God's love.

Lenten Blessings,

Pastor Sean

## **CLERK'S REPORT**

The monthly Session of Florissant Presbyterian Church was held on Sunday, January 24, 2020 at 11:50 a.m. in Harmon Hall with social distancing and masks.

The sanctuary remains open for church services since Pentecost Sunday on May 31<sup>st</sup>. It is also on Facebook live and

broadcast to the parking lot through the FM receiver. Masks will be required, and social distancing maintained plus all St Louis County guidelines will be followed.

Candy continues meeting with other Clerks of Session via ZOOM.

**Treasurer's Report:** Financials have been posted.

**Task Force:** The next Sack supper giveaway continues the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday every month starting at 4:30. Help for set up is at 4:00 pm. Mobile Market will continue based on availability from St Louis Area Food Bank on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month. Leftovers will be taken to TEAM. Fresh produce and frozen food may be added to the non-perishables. Help needed starting at 7:30 am.

The Task Force is focusing on "connecting to the community".

**Christian Education:** Pastor Sean will begin an adult Sunday school class on "Opportunities of Anxiety (Gospel of St Mark)" by Dr Chang on the first Sunday of February. Lynn Bohler suggested children's books from the FPC library be given away or create a book exchange.

**Congregation Care** continues cards, calls, and visits to FPC members. A Calling Chain will begin in 2021 to all members of FPC.

**Church Life** – Per Capita for 2021 remains at \$32.

At the called presbytery meeting in January the resignation of Reverend Dr. Craig Howard was accepted and the relationship between Dr. Howard and the Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy dissolved. Presbytery Leader Search Committee (PLSC) was elected to begin working immediately. It also approved the call to The Rev Elizabeth Kanerva to serve as Associate Presbytery Leader.

Offerings can be mailed to the church. Paula is there Monday-Wednesday, 9-2. Also, gift cards can be purchased by calling Paula or on Sunday morning. PayPal is also available.

With ever changing circumstances, revisions and additions to plans will be made, as necessary.

## **CHURCH NEWS**

### **Growing Through Challenge: 2021 and Beyond**

As 2021 begins, FPC continues to address the many challenges of working through a Pandemic. What a blessing it has been to be able to continue having worship in many fashions. As we begin to look at 2021 and Beyond, the Session Commissions are being re-evaluated to better meet the needs of 2021. Church Operations is currently in the process of evaluating the building and determining areas of improvement. As the toilet is

leaking in the Sanctuary bathroom, a problem has become an opportunity to do some updating to the room. Thanks to the amazing assistance of Mark and Ellen Geerling, a new look is coming. As the FPC Task Force continues to work on meeting the needs of the community, this is a chance to build our evangelism and grow on what is working. Thanks to the work of Dan and Jared Edwards and the assistance of Presbytery, the sanctuary has now been set up with a new live streaming system to improve our on-line experience.

2021, also, will bring about how we now meet the needs of the congregation who have either physically distanced at home or joined us from the parking lot. Congregational Care will be an even greater focus. Now that we have addressed keeping everyone safe, we want to find ways of meeting the spiritual needs as well as social needs. 2020 provided an opportunity to evaluate where we need to increase focus in 2021 with more to come.

2021 is truly a year of refocusing to our wins and what can we do better. We welcome any and all feedback to assist as we vision to 2021 and Beyond.

**Grab n' Go** dinners are set for February 11 & 25.

The Mobile Market is February 20. We are in the process of getting fresh/frozen food to distribute. We will need even more volunteers to come out between 7:30am

and 10:30 am to help bag and distribute the food.

Hope to see you there to help with our food ministry. Thank you.

**FPC Apparel** - We are ordering more FPC apparel. The color will remain navy with white print. If you would like to order a t-shirt, crew neck sweatshirt, or hooded sweatshirt, please let Paula know. We have sizes S-4X.

### **Celebrating Service through the Years: Rolla and Ronna Smith**

As 2021 begins it seems appropriate to start the year celebrating the many individuals who have contributed to the continued success of Florissant Presbyterian Church. As Rolla and Ronna transition into retirement from their roles with FPC, a thank you goes out to them for their years of devotion, dedication, and support in many ways. From Ronna's leadership of the Congregational Care Commission to Rolla's leadership through operations, Church Life, and in many Stewardship drives. Their devotion to the Adult Sunday School can't go without mention as well. They have left an amazing footprint for others to now grow through. A large thank you goes to them for all they have done as we celebrate with them in their retirement.

## BIRTHDAYS

- 4 Jeanne Schwartz
- 6 Jen Mahurin
- 7 Carlene Moore
- 10 Joyce Buddeke
- 11 Steven Campbell
- 12 Barb Spurgeon
- 12 Georgiana Jones
- 13 Barb Anderson
- 14 Sylvie Buddeke
- 19 Rolla Smith
- 19 Paula Butler
- 27 Kathy Moore

## ANNIVERSARIES

Candy & Tom Shelton  
*Married 52 years February 7*

Arlene & Earl Arseneau  
*Married 49 years February 12*

Carlene & Lloyd Moore  
*Married 66 years February 20*

## PRAYERS

Jean, Trish, Jon, Marilyn, Doris, Carol, Sara, Pamela, Georgiana and her brother Garry, Mary's brother, Barb's son-in-law Cliff, Sue's friend Lill, Ruth and her great grandson, and Sue and her brother-in-law Shaw and her sister Lynn.

Sue's brother-in-law Jeff passed away from a massive heart attack at age 57. Prayers for Sue and Jeff's family.

## THE LEARNING CENTER

After the most challenging year in 25 years, we have started off 2021 with good health, fortune, and a happy bunch of kids.

The LC started a new program last year called Class Tag. The program keeps us in touch with parents virtually. With this program, our parents were able to watch the children's Christmas Program.

In December, our students made an adorable Christmas ornament for their trees at home.



In the past week, students made birdfeeders and hung them outside their classroom window.

