
The Waltham Courier

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November 2008

A Family Journal

Volume LVIII, Number 12

From The Pastor's Desk

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Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

The Backus family thanks all of the Waltham congregation who remembered us so warmly. We appreciate your cards, gifts, presence, and phone calls. We can not begin to share the overall joy it has been to be your interim pastor during these days. We will always carry the memories and friendships which we've made in this delightful setting on God's green earth.

The Backus's will be around the manse for a few more weeks. We are closing on our new house in late November and will have to have some work done on it before we can move in to the new setting. The Installation service for my ministry in Morris is on November 16th at 4 p.m. in the afternoon. Invitations will be going to all the churches in the Presbytery in the next week.

The Future of the Church:

Speaking as the Chair of the Committee on Ministry (COM) with my experience advising churches in transition between pastoral leadership, this is a time for the laity of the church to step up their commitment and participation in the life of the congregation. The roles of the Pastor

Nominating Committee (PNC), Session, Deacons, Trustees, committee members, and the members at large are essential in keeping good balance and the necessary open conversations which are crucial during this time at Waltham.

The Rev. William (Bill) Love, Interim Pastor at Park Presbyterian Church in Streator, is the new Moderator of the Session and the COM's representative for the Waltham Church. He's more than capable in his gifts and skills. Any questions concerning process and appropriate steps during this transitional time should be addressed to Session and/or him.

The Future of Our Relationship:

As for my future relationship with Waltham Presbyterian Church, it is a clear cut Presbyterian practice and policy that pastors (and interim pastors) only return to their past churches by invitation of the Session. I always encourage Sessions to think several times before extending such an invitation. The moderator and elders need to be sensitive to the present and immediate future needs of the church. A large part of those needs revolve around the necessity to move towards the church's future in ministry. It is essential for the congregation to move to its new pastoral and support relationships and directions with freedom. This doesn't mean that I can't be your friend, or even "past interim

pastor”, but I will not engage in conversations which concern the ministry and processes in this congregation. It is simply inappropriate.

Looking Back:

The easy and the difficult experiences of the past 4 years and 2 months are full of rich blessings which will always be with us. We will carry you in our hearts and will lift you up in our daily thoughts and prayers.

The Lord be with you all,

Interim Pastor Rev. Roy C. Backus, Ph.D.

PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN



Plan to join us on Thursday, Nov. 20th at 9 a.m. in fellowship hall. We will continue with our Bible study and finalize plans for the "Come to Christmas" Tea to be held on Wed. Dec. 10th at 1:30 p.m.

BLANKET + OFFERING received to date totals \$490.00. We thank all who shared with those in need!

THANK OFFERING 2008

"Do not neglect to DO GOOD and to SHARE WHAT YOU HAVE, for such SACRIFICES are PLEASING TO GOD." Hebrews 13:16

We will receive our annual Thank Offering on Sunday, Nov. 23rd. You may use the enclosed envelope for your offering. Application forms for grant money are available for local projects that fit

the criteria. The Thank Offering began in 1888 when Eliza Clokey of Springfield, Ohio urged each woman to give one dollar over and above her usual contribution to the Women's General Missionary Society of the United Presbyterian Church of North America as a "thank offering to her Lord." A day was set aside for meetings that were to be a "concert of prayer and praise and the gathering of the Thank Offering." The gifts presented at those meetings represented much soul-searching and self-sacrifice on the part of many women. The impact was immeasurable. It has been said that women's giving saved the worldwide missionary movement at that time. The thrust of how and where the money was used changed over the years, but a "thank offering to her Lord" continued to be an important part of women's giving by United Presbyterian Women. This expression of thanksgiving now is an important part of Presbyterian Women. The total offering received in 2007 was \$516,239. Thirteen grants were received for programs in the U.S. from the 2007 offering and fifteen were granted in other countries. In our own synod, Northminister Presbyterian Church in Peoria, IL received one of these grants for ANGEL'S ARMS. Angel's Arms will create a positive spiritual environment for all of God's children, regardless of age or ability, so that they can appreciate and learn from one another. Angel's Arms will provide opportunities for families of special needs children to attend adult programs while their children attend programs designed to meet their needs. Each family will be assigned a family coordinator who will work with them to determine the exact needs of the child and the family. The program will give mothers an opportunity to engage in activities through which they can grow spiritually and receive affirmation from other adults. The Thank Offering grant will purchase adaptive equipment, such as special needs chairs, rockers, beanbags and augmentative communication devices. The grant will also fund staff training and curriculum materials. At least 40 percent of the Thank Offering receipts are allocated for health ministries. The remainder of the offering is used to fund proposals that deal with issues such as childcare, domestic violence, homelessness and injustice.

THANK YOU'S

Thank you to everyone who made phone calls, sent cards and visits to Tom during his long illness. He appreciated every one. Thank you to the ladies that prepared and served the funeral dinner. Thank you to Mary who played the organ and to Malcolm who sang so beautifully. Thank you to Rev. Young for his participation in the funeral service.

A special Thank you to Pastor Roy for his love and care, his many visits to Tom who looked forward to his coming and who was comforted by his presence, his prayers with the family during Tom's last hours and his talks with the grandchildren, his beautiful funeral service.

All we can say is Thank You. It was truly appreciated.

The Family of Tom Freebairn

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

The Eternal Flame and the Church Triumphant

On Sunday, October 19, 2008, during the Worship Service, we dedicated the new Eternal Flame (Light or Sanctuary Lamp). The Jones' Family asked the Session almost a year ago if they would be permitted to purchase a lamp which would be approved by Session and placed by the Trustees in an appropriate place in the sanctuary. There was no plaque placed upon the lamp, because the image of the Eternal Flame was to remind all of us of those who have gone on before us in faith. For the Jones' family, it is a reminder of Chad and Christa (Demo) Jones in particular.

The Eternal Flame has been a symbol in church sanctuaries for centuries. Within the Roman Catholic tradition, the light was placed over the communion elements. The flame symbolized the presence of the Lord Jesus in the elements of the Lord's Supper. (Roman Catholics are instructed to have only lamps which burn oil. This is mandated in their denomination's laws.) The tradition of the Sanctuary Lamp was carried over into the Anglican (Episcopal) church designs and adopted by the Methodist Episcopal tradition. We know the Methodist Episcopal as the present United Methodist Church. Lutherans also follow the tradition of the Sanctuary Lamp, and they too place the lamp near the Communion Table. The old Evangelistic Reformed denomination, basically German Presbyterians, who joined with the Congregational Christian Churches to form the United Church of Christ employ the Sanctuary Lamp in their church designs too. There are many Presbyterian Churches which use the Eternal Flame too. (The La Rose Presbyterian Church has two in the front of their sanctuary.)

In general, the Protestant Churches who have Sanctuary Lamps usually call them Eternal Flames and see them as reminders of the Body of Christ with respect to believers, the Church. From the Early Second Century Church on, there has been two congregations of Christians. One congregation is called the Church Militant. It is made up Christians who live in this world now, and who fight the good fight for the faith. We are called to the army of God and are called to live for the world in a way which draws people to Christ in faith. The second congregation is made up of Christians who have gone to be with the Lord. We call this group the Church Triumphant. They know the Lord intimately and are now in heaven with the heavenly host. The Biblical text for this reality is in the Letter to the Hebrews, Chapter 12, verse 1 and following. The Church Triumphant is addressed as the "great cloud of witnesses" who cheer us on as we compete in the Olympic games of faith. The metaphor is a picture of the crowds of cheering bleachers in heaven, and

the participants who are still competing on the field of life.

Many Reformed Protestants (Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and other Reformed Denominations) have Eternal Flames in their churches. These flames continue to remind the congregations of those of faith who have gone on before. The Church Triumphant still influences our lives, the heart of our churches, and our core values. Because past believers lived faithfully, we have the opportunity to worship in freedom. Their lives are worth remembering, and the Eternal Flame is a constant symbol reminding us of their love of God and investment in our lives of faith. If any church has the right to celebrate great Christians of faith it is the Waltham Presbyterian Church which over the last 160 years has been blessed with many people of deep commitment and action on behalf of the Kingdom of God.

One final word, the Eternal Flame was a gift totally funded by the Jones family. No money from any Waltham Presbyterian accounts or offerings were used for this beautiful and thoughtful gift to the church.

THINGS TO DO

Holiday Cookies-

We will be decorating holiday cookies for our shut-ins on **November 9th during our Sunday school hour**. Please have any donated cookies to the church by 8:30 A.M November 9th.

We also will have a sign-up sheet for volunteers to deliver the cookies to our shut-ins. We appreciate all of your help!

Mark your calendars . . . **Youth retreat at Stronghold on January 16 - 18, 2009**. This will be for youth grades 6 through College. Watch for more info!

DECORATING COMMITTEE

This year we have a choice of red or white poinsettias for the Advent Season. We do not have a price at this time, but will publish it in the Sunday Bulletin as soon as we know. You will find an order form enclosed within this Courier. Thank-you.

HARVEST BLESSINGS!

HARVEST BLESSINGS

Community Worship Service Thanksgiving Eve-
Wednesday, November 26th
6:30pm First Congregational Church in Peru
(adjacent to Illinois Valley Community Hospital)

Dear Friends in Christ,

Even in challenging times, we can be certain that our Lord loves us and that all things, under His hand, work together for our highest good. Through His generous nature, our Heavenly Father provides abundantly for us all, day after day. What a wonderful opportunity, then, to give our Loving God thanks and praise by sharing in community worship this year. And so, please make time to join other Illinois Valley Christians in an evening of heartfelt worship and praise as we celebrate our HARVEST BLESSINGS! Reverend Chris Surber and the good folks of Peru's First Congregational Church will be the host for this years ecumenical service which will begin at 6:30pm. Scripture, music and prayer will highlight the one hour service which will be followed by a wonderful time of fellowship as we enjoy breads and beverages of the season. As we remember those in need, we will be collecting an offering to be equally distributed to LaSalle, Bureau and Putnam County Food Pantries.

Please also bring a boxed or canned food item to be sent along with the monetary gifts. Hope to see many Waltham friends and neighbors that night!

Marlene Moshage
Waltham Presbyterian Ecumenical Liaison

WALTHAM MUSICIANS!

A community choir will once again be organized as part of the HARVEST BLESSINGS Thanksgiving Eve ecumenical worship service.

The choir will be directed by Nancy Janssen of Peru's First Congregational Church and will sing 2-3 songs.

Music will be distributed in advance with one rehearsal of the group to be arranged (probably the day of the event). Please join us in making a "joyful noise" unto the Lord!

Call Marlene Moshage (815-326-1192) for more details. THANKS!

There are also opportunities for special numbers from vocalists or instrumentalists-please let Marlene know if you would like to share your musical talent!

WALTHAM BAKERS!

As you are planning your baking for your family Thanksgiving celebrations, please consider making an extra loaf or two of your favorite holiday bread to be shared during the fellowship time at the HARVEST BLESSINGS Community worship service on Thanksgiving Eve.

Please contact Marlene Moshage (815-326-1192) if you can donate. I will also post a sign-up sheet on the narthex bulletin board.

THANKS SO MUCH FOR SHARING!

FROM OUR PNC

Our last mission study meeting was held last Sunday. Twenty-four members of the congregation

participated in reviewing what this mission study has evolved into and also discussed our picture of an ideal church and ideal pastor.

Some characteristics of a perfect church included good music; an energetic, inspiring worship; a reverent atmosphere; good communication; and an abundance of activities that allow for a "more than Sunday" involvement. Some attributes of a perfect pastor knowing Christ is not an option included: ability to preach the gospel, organized, energetic, sense of humor, relates well with all ages, good listener, an ability to teach and relate in practical terms, truthful, and an ability to train lay leaders.

This being our last mission study meeting, Jan explained that the next step in our process included completing a Congregational Information Form. The PNC is currently underway in composing that document. Please keep the PNC and this congregation in your prayers, and remember that the Lord is already grooming a new pastor to lead us.

MEETING REPORTS SESSION

The session of the Waltham Presbyterian Church of Utica, IL held a regular meeting on October 15, 2008 at 7:07 in the upper lounge of the Church. The meeting was opened with prayer by the Rev. Dr. Backus.

Members present - Dave Edgcomb, Ross Wilson, Bonnie Walsh, Eileen Hagenbuch, Ida Brown, and Ralph Moshage.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the previous meetings.

Communion was served.

Lois Edgcomb had questions on the Excel program. Eileen will find a tutor to assist her.

A motion was made and carried to approve sending required funds to Presbytery.

Committees will work on budgets at the November committee meetings.

The Christian Education Committee plans to decorate cookies for shut-ins during Sunday School on November 9. The Christmas Program is scheduled for December 14. There is a youth retreat scheduled for January 16-18 at the Walnut Lodge. A flat rate of \$1250 will be charged. Member will be charged \$30 and non-members \$60. Donations will be sought for food.

Pastor Roy expects to be out of the manse by the second week of December.

A place has been chosen for the memorial monument. The work should be done within a couple of weeks.

The eternal flame has been installed in the sanctuary.

An estimate of \$2000 was received for repair work on the roof.

The Boy Scouts will be selling popcorn before and after church.

It was moved, seconded, and carried to adjourn at 8:20 pm. The meeting was closed with prayer by Pastor Roy.

Ida Brown, Clerk of Session

check this and sign up.

*A proposed use of the Kennedy Memorial fund use will be sent to the session for approval.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Christian Education Committee Meeting
October 14, 2008

Present: Dena Ficek, Karen Pillion, Lois Edgcomb, Eileen Hagenbuch, Sue Hughes, Sharon Reel
Ellen Wilson talked about youth retreat at Stronghold/Jan. 16-18. We will ask congregation for donation of food items.

The children singing in Church was awesome! Plan to sing again October 26.

Christmas Program: December 14.

Decorate cookies for shut-ins on November 9.

Need people to volunteer to deliver.

Prepared budget.

No scholarships.

Baptisms: Lanie Mae Ploch.

Next meeting is November 11, 2008.

The Children's Christmas program will be December 14, 2008 at 12:30 p.m. following the potluck. Any one interested in helping with the program please contact Dena Ficek.

MISSION COMMITTEE

MISSION COMMITTEE REPORT

October 14, 2008

*The Mission Committee met on October 14, 2008.

Those in attendance were Relynn Olivero, Carol Freebairn, Janet Small, Monica Blue, Carol Shaver...

*Minute for Mission will be given about the Food Pantry on October 26...

*November Minute for Mission will be about PADS.

*The monthly meal that our church will be serving at the PADS shelter began in October and went well...the sign up sheet for upcoming months is posted on the bulletin board...please take time to

TRUSTEES

No report received for this publication.

DEACONS

No report received for this publication.

Stewardship & Finance

No report received for this publication.

TREASURER’S REPORT

September

5 Deposits/Credits for amt of \$ 6,898.30
32 Check/Debits for amt of \$16,780.74
Ending Balance is \$98,047.32

Keri Sundberg, Treasurer

Reminder . . . Donations are still being accepted for the “Old Church Memorial”. Please mark your donations as such and leave in the Treasurer’s mailbox.

BENEVOLENCE FUND

Balance as of October 15, 2008 - \$ 9,595.27
Linda Chalus, Benevolence Treasurer

MEMORIAL FUND

Memorials have been received for Thomas Freebairn and Lavon Blue.
Joyce Anderson, Memorial Treasurer

Scout Master Bob’s Corner

Upcoming Events

Oct. 28 – Troop Meeting 7:00 P.M.
Nov. 4 – Troop Meeting 7:00 P.M.
Nov. 5 – TLC Meeting 7:00 P.M.
Nov. 6 – Cub Scout Meeting 6:30 P.M.

Nov. 11 – Troop Meeting 7:00 P.M.
Nov. 14-16 – Troop Campout
Nov. 18 – Troop Meeting 7:00 P.M.
Nov. 19 – Troop Committee Meeting – 2009 Planning Meeting 7:00 P.M.
Nov. 20 – Cub Scout Meeting 6:30 P.M.
Nov. 25 – Troop Meeting 7:00 P.M.
Dec. 2 – Troop Meeting 7:00 P.M. – Dues/Rechartering Meeting
Dec. 3 – TLC Meeting 7:00 P.M.
Dec. 4 – Cub Scout Meeting 6:30 P.M.
Dec. 9 – Troop Meeting 7:00 P.M.
Dec. 12-14 – Troop Campout
Dec. 16 – Troop Christmas Party
Dec. 18 – Cub Scout Meeting 6:30 P.M.
Dec. 23 & 30 – No Troop Meeting
Jan. 6 – Troop Meeting 7:00 P.M.

Troop 97 meets every Tuesday night at the Waltham Presbyterian Church. Contact Ralph Moshage at 667-4511 or Ross Wilson at 434-1469 for information about the troop.

FAMILY LIFE COMMITTEE

Advent Sunday, November 23, 2008
Tony & Phyllis Mertes*, Don & Leila Croisant*, Mathew & Stephanie Sebastian, Bob & Shelly Chapman, Roger & Marilyn Laatz

Coffee and Juice Organizers - November
Music & Worship

Liturgist Organizers - November
Music & Worship

Deacon of the Month - November

Jean Jones & Tom Walsh, Asst.

Trustee of the Month - November

Mark Small

NURSERY VOLUNTEERS

November 2

Bob, Rita, & Rachel Van Drimmelen

November 9

Dena Ficek
Marlene & Nick Moshage

November 16

Scott & Heather Freebairn

November 23

Tom & Wendy Olivero

November 30

Dave & Diana Deutsch

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Glenn Stevenson
- 3 Jessica Edgcomb (Dan)
- 5 Ralph Moshage
Kevin Walsh
Diane Williamson
- 8 Clint Baker
Norman Videgar
- 9 Melissa Dapkus
Jill Durant
Mandy Tomaseski
- 12 Shannon Small
- 15 Jessica Lynn Reel
- 16 Tony Mertes
- 18 Tim Leonard
Wendy Olivero
Andrew Ostrowski
- 20 Sarah Finley
Beth Hahne
- 21 Corlin Lukas
- 22 John Christopher
Tyler Hagenbuch
Raymond Jones*
- 23 Stacey Kinzer
- 26 Chris Moshage
- 27 Jayden Brown
Caleb Tomeseski
- 28 Amy Ploch
- 29 Marcie Holland
- 30 Steve Finley
Rich Muckey

** Special Birthday greetings from your Waltham Church Family!*

NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 03 Mr. & Mrs. Roger Laatz*
- 14 Mr. & Mrs. Wayne English
- 16 Mr. & Mrs. Irwin Jann
- 24 Mr. & Mrs. Steve Finley
- 25 Mr. & Mrs. Don Scharlau