

THE VALLEY BRIDGE



December 8, 2015

DECEMBER 13: 3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Zeph. 3:14-20; Isaiah 12:2-6; Phil. 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18

Fellowship of Prayer: First Presbyterian Church of Currie

Commissioned Ruling Elder: David Erickson

Clerk: Wendy Steffen

Treasurer: Robin Leonard

Prayer Concerns:

- Many thanksgivings to Almighty God our Creator and Judge
- God's blessings on our fellowship; to each other and those we might meet daily
- The Sunday messages, Sunday School, Bible studies
- Opportunities for mission
- Health to carry on our assigned tasks



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MN Valleys Presbytery
4055 Abbott Drive
Willmar MN 56201
320-235-7910

minnesotavalleys.org

Monday-Friday
8:00-4:30

We're on Facebook, too!

AROUND THE PRESBYTERY

YOU ARE INVITED!

Who: Area churches (clusters 5 and 6 and any others who wish to attend!)

What: A chance to talk and fellowship (and of course, eat!) with other Presbyterians. Rick Carus will be there to talk with us about the possibilities of our Presbytery's new Mission Design and to answer questions.

When: Thursday, January 7 at 7:00 p.m. (Snow date: Thursday, February 4) Please save the date! More information to follow.

Where: First Presbyterian, Edgerton

An Invitation from the folks at **Maine Presbyterian Church of Underwood**: Members of the congregation gather to meet at The Lamp Post on Sunday morning for four Sundays to discover the Advent in Narnia. We'll be using the classic tale by C.S. Lewis, The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe.

"With its enchanting themes of light and darkness, temptation and sin, forgiveness and hope, and an appearance of Father Christmas"
– C. S. Lewis, we will engage ourselves in the message of Advent. Come join us.



On the second Tuesday of each month, **First Presbyterian Church of Willmar** serves lunch at the Religion and Life Center at Ridgewater College. In October and November, there were about 100 students served.

The Deacons at **First Presbyterian Church of Saint James** voted to start a new column in the church newsletter called 'Silent Disciples.' There are so many people who do things behind the scenes, with no thanks ever extended to them. This column is a place for all of us to thank someone for the things they do. So, if you've noticed something in particular has gotten done, or something positive is happening, call or email the church office and get it into the column. It doesn't need to be fancy or elaborate, just a simple sentence will do, and it is not necessary to sign your name.

Margaret Berg Schroeder's memory shared in the **First Presbyterian Church of Round Lake** newsletter: *Was it ever special to be part of the Christmas Program at the Round Lake Presbyterian Church! Each child was given a piece to learn, and on the night of the program, one by one we went to the front, up the steps, and (hopefully) spoke our piece. Did we ever think we were important and felt so good if we did a good job. Miss Florence Peterson was such a large part of the Sunday School, and I'm sure it was important for her students to be "on stage." I remember the program was singing Christmas songs, saying our part, and then—receiving our little brown bag of Christmas goodies. One year the present that Miss Peterson gave each child was a rubber ball covered with a green and red crochet or knitted cover.*

ON THE ROAD WITH RICK

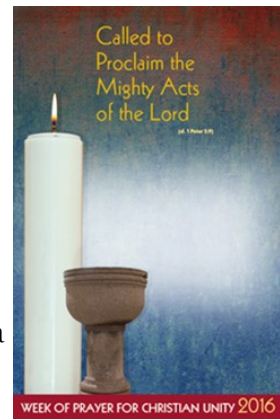
December 7-12 – Study Leave: Western Area Staff Conf., Mercy Center, Burlingame, CA
December 15 – Session Meeting at First Presbyterian Church of Osakis
December 20 – Worship at First Presbyterian Churches of Round Lake and Brewster
December 24 – Christmas Eve Worship at First Presbyterian Church of Saint James
December 27 – Preach at First Presbyterian Church of Willmar



OBSERVING THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

In observance of The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, which takes place January 18-25, 2016, all congregations within the Presbytery of Minnesota Valleys are invited to join together with other Christians across south-central Minnesota for a Service of Word and Prayer at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, January 24.

This year's service will be held at the First Presbyterian Church in Redwood Falls and will be led by pastors from the Redwood Falls community, along with representatives of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA, the Diocese of New Ulm, and the Presbytery of Minnesota Valleys. The preacher will be our Synod Executive, Elona Street Stewart!



There will be a time for fellowship following the afternoon's worship time. Please mark this date on your calendars and plan now to join us for this time of worship together.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ASHBY & OUR SAVIOR'S-TEN MILE LAKE LUTHERAN CHURCH, DALTON: This shared ministry in two small towns just off of I-94, is beginning its formal search for a pastor. The Ministry Information Form (MIF) will be posted soon.

EBENEZER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, RENVILLE: This congregation just north of Renville is seeking a pastor to serve in a temporary relationship for at least three years, with the opportunity for that relationship to become called and installed at that time. A position description and modified MIF is available! Contact Rick Carus at the Presbytery Office for more details!

SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM THE COMMITTEE ON REPRESENTATION

As it prepared the new Mission Design for our presbytery, the Next-Pres Team prepared an FAQ sheet. Question #13, was this ~ What can I do to help? Where do I volunteer? The question was answered this way:

Pray without ceasing in words, spirit, and actions. Encourage one another. Trust that God's Spirit is at work among us even when we least expect it. Hold fast to hope. Practice forgiveness skills often. Step forward when God calls you through the voice of the presbytery to some ministry or mission. Call someone or send an email encouraging and sharing in the ministry they carry out on our behalf. Ask questions.

The Committee on Representation will be responsible for making nominations of individuals who will serve in the Mission Design. "You are the light of the world." Do not hide your light! Please make your willingness to serve known: to your pastor, your presbytery commissioner, and the Committee on Representation.

Friends, your Committee on Representation, which also serves as our presbytery's Nominating Committee, continues to seek nominees for the commissions and committees of this presbytery, and it is calling upon individuals across the presbytery to "step forward" and offer themselves to serve the congregations of this presbytery on one of its new commissions or committees. If you, or someone from your congregation has the gifts, the passion, and the energy to offer in any of these areas, please let the Committee on Representation, through our chairperson, Rev. Bill Yueill (wyeill@izoom.net) know as soon as possible. We still need both Ruling Elders and Teaching Elders to serve!

The committee's next conference call meeting will be Wednesday, December 16, and in order for us to complete our work, we need the assistance of every pastor and members within this presbytery. We appreciate your encouragement, prayers, and support.

FRIENDLY REMINDER

The Financial Books will be closed on December 31, 2015. Any funds that are not in the mail box at the office on that day will be credited to the 2016 books.

It has been great working with all of you in 2015 and I am looking forward to working with you in 2016. Everyone have a great holiday season and a wonderful new year.

Virginia Molitor
Presbytery of MN Valleys
Finances



2016 PASTORS' SCHOOL: SPIRITUALITY FOR MINISTRY

1:00pm Monday, February 1–1:00pm Thursday, February 4

Holiday Inn Express, 3605 Cimarron Plaza, Hastings, NE 68901

[Driving Directions](#)

You're invited to our next annual 2016 Winter Pastors' School at Holiday Inn Express in Hastings, Nebraska. This event is sponsored by Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation and Quad Presbyteries. Dr. Sam Hamilton-Poore will be our featured speaker. Dr. Hamilton-Poore is pastor/Head of Staff at Collegiate Presbyterian Church in Ames, Iowa. He is the author of *Earth Gospel: A Guide to Prayer for God's Creation* and is currently researching/writing a book on Christian spirituality.



Winter Pastors' School is a time of renewal, fellowship, spirituality and education. We encourage you to attend.

Click on a link to get more information, to register or to RSVP.

[Get more information](#)

[Register Now](#)

[I can't make it](#)

You can also register at the [OPSF Website](#).

Thank you for your attention and response. We look forward to seeing you at the Winter Pastors' School.

Grace and peace,

Dr. Gary S. Eller

Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation

opsf@opsf-omaha.org

888 244-6714

CALENDAR

This week: Rick attends Western Area Staff Conference at Mercy Center, Burlingame, CA

Wednesday, December 9: 10:00 Committee on Preparation for Ministry meets at the First Presbyterian Church of Redwood Falls

Tuesday, December 15: 10:00 Council meets at the presbytery office

Wednesday, December 16: 10:00 Occidente Partnership meets at the presbytery office

Thursday, December 17: 9:00 Budget & Finance conference call

Thursday, December 31: Funds received by this date will go into 2015 financials.



LUKE 3:7-18

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, ‘You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, “We have Abraham as our ancestor”; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.’

And the crowds asked him, ‘What then should we do?’ In reply he said to them, ‘Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.’ Even tax-collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, ‘Teacher, what should we do?’ He said to them, ‘Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.’ Soldiers also asked him, ‘And we, what should we do?’ He said to them, ‘Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.’

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, ‘I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.’

So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.