***Presbyterian Times***

***January, 2018***

First Presbyterian Church

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**A Message from Our Pastor**

Reverend Lou Ellen Hartley

Happy New Year!

I hope your holiday season was full of hope, peace, joy and love.  I hope you were able to give as well as receive.  I pray you found moments to reflect on God’s love born into this world.

As we all move forward I also hope none of us are making resolutions we can’t keep.  Why start 2018 setting ourselves up for disappointment? I do hope, however, we all take a moment or two to relish the idea of a fresh start.

On our session we will have a fresh start of sorts.  We will have three new elders to serve:  Ken Kwantes, Jonathan Kimball and Leslie Skelton.  We will also form a new committee:  The Way Forward Committee.  Jonathan Kimball will be moderating this committee which will be focusing its work on our building. Some of the main concerns voiced in the responses to the Today and Tomorrow group’s interviews in 2017 were about our decreased membership, our finances, and our building costs.  In response, the Way Forward Committee will be trying to address some of these concerns.  They will be exploring our future in our current building, what it costs, how we use the building, the upcoming, ongoing, and long term maintenance concerns. They will seek answers to accessibility, affordability, and other facility questions.  The committee will also consider the feasibility of moving to another location, whether it is possible, what it would  take, and at what cost. We feel it is time to gather information in order to make informed decisions and to seek God’s guidance as we continue to be a viable congregation in Rolla.

The Session realizes the idea of moving is new to many and may come as a shock that we even raise this question. We think, however, now is the time to explore all of the possibilities so we can all rest in the knowledge that the session is fully informed as we lead the congregation.  Once again, this is the very beginning of prayerful exploration.

As the Way Forward Committee addresses their assigned task, the Session as a whole will be at work considering our mission.  A building is just bricks and mortar without the people of God working in and through and out of the building.  The Session will need your prayerful support as they begin to walk this path and lead us all in a faithful direction.

May this be a Happy and Faith-filled New Year for us all.  Let’s hold up one another as we all seek to follow God’s call in our lives.

Peace,

Pastor Lou Ellen

**Presbyterian Preschool**

Kyla Gavura, Director

Wow! Where did 2017 go?? We have been so busy in 2017 and it’s shaping up to be a busy year at preschool in 2018! We are so excited about what God has in store for us in the New Year! In January, we are going to work on getting back into our routine and we will be hosting a “Snow Ball” on January 19th. During our “Snow Ball” the kids get to participate in center type activities and have snacks and a dance party! It’s a super fun time! We also have Ms. Gina Zervos coming to talk to the kids about staying fit and healthy in the New Year.

Our character trait for January is: Respect

We are defining Respect as: thinking and acting in a way that shows others you care about their feelings and their well-being.

Our Bible verse is:

 “Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.” – Romans 12:10

**PW News**

Melba Read

The Cookie Walk and Bazaar was a success, with thanks to the cookie bakers, workers and those who purchased the items. The proceeds will go to local missions. A mission of the PDubs within our church is the Pre-School. A Christmas lunch was prepared and served to the Pre-School Teachers last week with gifts of Christmas oven mitts filled with goodies. Several of our PW’s give to our Pre-School by reading for the children on a weekly or monthly basis. Our Pre-School is a blessing and the sounds of children when we are in the church are wonderful.

**Christian Education**

Marcia Brewer

2018 will see the Adult Sunday school class studying the life and works of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, German pastor and theologian who openly opposed the Nazi regime and paid with his life near the end of WWII.  Jan Roberts will lead this study, using printed materials and video.

Tentatively, the next several-weeks’ subject will be the Dead Sea Scrolls.  In the 1940s, the caves at Qumran were explored by Bedouin boys who discovered 2000-year-old pottery containing manuscripts hidden there, many of them with writings relating to the Bible, well-preserved because of the desert-like climate.  Called “the greatest archaeological discovery of the 20th century”, the retrieval and study of these scrolls led to publication of new versions of the Bible, in spite of political infighting over who and what organization should have possession of the scrolls.  World-renowned scholars discuss the importance of the writings in shedding light on Rabbinic Judaism and the roots of Christianity.

**Christian Education**

**In the Sadler Library**

**Bible Dictionaries**

Larry Roberts

Dic-tion-ar-y- A book containing the words of a language or a department of knowledge, arranged alphabetically with their spelling, pronunciation, definition, and usage. The word, itself, meant “a manual or a book of words”.

Dictionaries date to ancient Samaria. For centuries they were basically wordbooks, containing a definition of the work. The actual word- dictionary- was coined by an Englishman in 1220. Most often in the medieval times, dictionaries were works which translated one word in a language, such as classical Latin, to its most common version in the vernacular language. Noah Webster published his first dictionary in 1806. In 1863, Dr. William Smith published his Bible Dictionary. At first it was three volumes, but later editors compressed it to one volume.

We have a number of bible dictionaries in the Sadler Library. Some are basic works such as *Smith’ Bible Dictionary*, and contain comparatively brief definitions and descriptions of people, places, things, and some concepts. Others, such as the Harper Collins *Bible Dictionary* (Paul J. Achtemeir, General Editor, Harper: San Francisco, 1989), offer much fuller discussions of words found in the Bible. The *Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible* (George Arthur Buttrick, General Editor, Abdingdon Press, Nashville, 1962), is a five-volume work. Its discussion of the Gospel of Mark runs ten pages.

Bible dictionaries, along with concordances, are great resources for doing word studies of the scripture. The also offer the reader concise discussions of places, people, and concepts. These dictionaries are much like the few Bible encyclopedias we have in the library.

**From the Office**

Betti Jo Pyatt, Office Manager

*I would like to extend a sincere thank you to everyone for their holiday wishes and gifts to the staff. It is very much appreciated to be thought of and recognized.*

*Happy birthday wishes to:* Melba Read, Pat Look, Mary Williams, Katherine Cook-Russell, Dixie Finley, Jan Roberts, Angela Isaac, Jim Jackson, Tricia Lewis, Carlene May, Morgan Romine, bob May, Carol Bennett and Eban Fox.

*Happy Anniversary to:* Leslie and Steve Skelton, Bill and Sharlene Morgan, and Cheryl and Lenn Koederitz.

**Upcoming Events**

1 – Office closed for New Year’s Day

5 – First Friday Night Out at Di Trapani’s’ Italian Bistro

14 – Pizza / Game Night

15 – Office closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day

28 – Annual Congregation Meeting following worship

29 – Newsletter article deadline