

PASTOR'S
PONDERINGS

By
Pastor Gordy
Pennertz
First Presbyterian
Church

Verse for April: *"Praise the Lord for his love and the wonderful things he does for all of us." Psalm 107:21 cve*

Dear Friends,

On Sunday, March 15, I gave a sermon entitled "Lenten Limericks." I had fun and I hoped the message of hope came through. A couple days later, I received a wonderful note from Ruth Townsend. It was a note written



in the form of three limericks. It began,
"Dear Pastor Gordy"

*I'm glad that we walked 'cross the street,
The sermon we heard was a treat;
It made 'hope' more real
And that made me feel
God's gift of Christ Jesus is neat!*

*When limericks get in my head
I cannot relax, so instead
with paper and pen
I write words and then,
I pause and am ready for bed."*

(she actually took a nap here before writing the next verse)

*I took a quick nap then, 'tis true-
What else can a tired person do?
But my mind kept humming
the limericks kept coming
And so I will send them to you!*

It made my day to receive that note and I hope it raises your spirits too. As I said, the message was hope, but our journey to hope is not simple. This path to hope was laid out by Paul in Romans, "Suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope." I wrote this next limerick with the Covid-19 crisis firmly in mind, the suffering that Paul wrote of leading to character:

*Our character is about being true,
true to what God calls us to do.
It's being honest and fair;
showing others of God's care--
but it doesn't grow without a tear or two.*

Limericks
by Readers

There are plenty of challenges right now, along with a tear or two. I don't want to focus on the virus, I want to focus on God with us bringing us hope in times of trial. I pray you live in hope as we approach our day of victory, Easter morning!

In Christ's love,
Pastor Gordy

Pastor Gordy's hours: Tuesday and Thursdays 3-5 PM
He can be reached at 320-221-0489 (cell) 320-693-3437 (home)
Church: 320-693-3548

Here is from the Governor's order:

Exemptions – Critical Sectors. All workers who can work from home must do so.

Workers in the following Critical Sectors, who are performing work that cannot be done at their home or residence through tele-work or virtual work and can be done only at a place of work outside of their home or residence, are exempted from the prohibition in paragraph 1 as set forth below. These critical services Exemptions apply only to travel to and from an individual's home or residence and place of work and an individual's performance of work duties that cannot be done at their homes or residence. Travel may include transportation to and from child care or school settings as necessary to ensure the safe care of children.

This list of Critical Sectors may be clarified, as deemed necessary by the Governor, to ensure the health, safety, and security of all Minnesotans. Clarifications will be available for public review at: <http://mn.gov/deed/critical/.....>

v. Faith leaders and workers. This category includes officials, workers, and leaders in houses of worship and other places of religious expression or fellowship, wherever their services may be needed. This category also includes workers necessary to plan, record, and distribute online or broadcast content to community members.



April : (7) Barbara Bremseth (7) Bill Barr (8) Bruce & Shirley Good AND Philip and Leetha Waldron Ann. (9) Katie Pennertz (21) David & Katie Pennertz Ann.



LITURGY:

April 5: PALM SUNDAY! Isaiah 50:4-9a Philippians 2:5-11
Matthew 26:14-27

April 12: EASTER: 1 Corinthians 3:1-4 Acts 10:34-43 John 20:1-18

April 19: Acts 2:14a, 22-32 1 Peter 1:3-9 John 20:19-31

April 26: Acts 2:14a, 36-41 1 Peter 1:17-23 Luke 24:13-35



APRIL: Due to the Covid 19 virus, everything is cancelled or postponed until further notice. HOWEVER... we will continue to have Bible study via computer and ZOOM on Tuesday mornings from 10 AM -11AM. We will also continue with worship

via computer on Sunday mornings at 10 AM via ZOOM. Please contact Pastor Gordy if you would like to be included in either of these endeavors. It is a GREAT way to stay in touch with members of our church family.

April 7 Bible study online 10:00

April 10 Good Friday ecumenical service 6:30 PM on KLFD; 8:00 pm on local cable channel; Pastor Gordy and Ecumen chaplain Keith Carlson will give short messages.

April 12 Easter Sunday... my best guess is we will celebrate online, but we will celebrate no matter what!

April 14 Bible study online 10:00; Session meeting 5:00...

April 20 Cluster 3 meeting for Pastor Gordy

April 21 Bible study online 10:00

April 22 Food for Kidz 4;00 TO 6;00 and 6:00 to 8:00 (tentative)

April 25 decorate church for Holy Humor?? (tentative)

April 26 Holy Humor (tentative)

April 27 Mary Martha 4:00...we will be on lesson 5 (tentative)

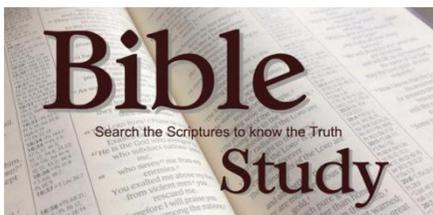
April 28 Bible study online 10:00 unless notified otherwise.

April 30 Pastor Gordy preach at Ecumen 2:30 (tentative)



Our Bible verse for the month comes from Barbara Bremseth. She said that she was looking through a stack of cards that she had and ran across this verse which she felt was appropriate with all that is going on.

"Praise the Lord for his love and the wonderful things he does for all of us." Psalm 107:21 cve



Bible Study:

Our current Bible Study is on the Gospel of Luke. We are taking a chapter by chapter look at Luke's story of the Savior. We meet via Zoom on Tuesday mornings at 10:00. Please join us! Again, let Pastor Gordy know if you need help connecting with us.

THE PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN COORDINATING TEAM MET ON March 2, 2020.

--Rosie opened with a prayer. Present were: Jayne, Darlene, Julie Rae & Rosie. The secretary's and treasurer's reports were read and approved. Our current balance is \$1052.88. Soup and Sandwich suppers are scheduled for March 25th & April 1st. (Since canceled) Our Lilac



Luncheon is scheduled for May 20th. Shirley Good has once again donated a quilt for “raffling”. Thanks Shirley!! The following is the list of salads you are asked to bring based on when you serve coffee hour etc... Remember, if you serve more than one month you are asked to bring a salad (that serves 20) for each time you are scheduled as follows:

January through April committees: Vegetable salad

May through August committees: Meat salad

September through December committees: Fruit salad

The PW Spring Gathering is scheduled for June 2nd at Renville. More information coming.

Rosie Graphenteen chair/secretary

FOOD FOR KIDZ: We are all saddened by the cancellation of our Wednesday night gathering with our brothers and sisters from around town. Our hope now is that maybe we can meet for Easter, but that seems less likely by the day. **A reminder that our offerings from our Wednesday night services were designated to go toward “Food for Kidz”, a program we have supported in the past. The funds will be used for supplies to pack food bags. We are all encouraged to help fill the bags on April 22. (Mark your calendars with the understanding that may change) and they are still taking donations to help with this cause. Send to Methodist Church Attn: Food for Kidz.

Game Day: Watch for another FUN day of games!!



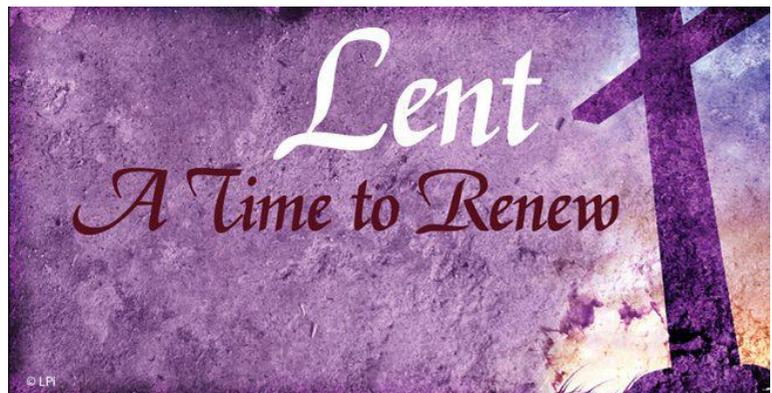
Sara & Tyler Ackman Aiden and Lane
1315 Keystone Circle
Brookings, SD 57006



Come and join us on the 4th Monday of the month as we study the Ten Commandments, or “Ten Words”. For March we meet on Monday, April 27th at 4 PM with Judy as hostess. We will be studying the 5th lesson.

May 18: Jayne

With all that is happening, don't forget LENT...God is still there and he deserves our praise and thanksgiving in ALL things.





If you or a family member is in the hospital, contact the Deacon of the month. Do you need a ride? Contact the Deacon of the Month. Here's the schedule for the year:

April: Darlene (320-535-0034) Easter: ReNae (320-310-5637) May: Bev (320-221-4464)
June: Barb (320-693-2445) July: Rosie August: Stephanie (507-317-7650) Sept: ReNae
Oct: Bev Nov: Barb Dec: Stephanie Christmas Eve: Stephanie January: Darlene

EASTER RESURRECTION COOKIES! Rosie Graphenteen sent me the following ideas and we decided to share them with you! **This is meant to take place the night before Easter.

1. Preheat oven to 300 degrees
2. Place 1 c. pecans (or other nut) in a plastic bag and let children beat them with either a rolling pin or a wooden spoon. EXPLAIN that after Jesus was arrested, he was beaten by the Roman soldiers. (Read John 19:1-3)
3. Let each child smell 1 tsp. Vinegar and place it in a mixing bowl. EXPLAIN that when Jesus was thirsty on the cross he was given vinegar to drink (Read John 19:28-30)
4. Add 3 egg whites to the vinegar. EXPLAIN that eggs represent life and Jesus gave his life to give us life. (Read John 10:10-11)
5. Add a pinch of salt into each child's hand and let them taste it. Brush it off and add a pinch to the mixing bowl. EXPLAIN that this represents the salty tears shed by Jesus' followers and the bitterness of our own sin. (Read Luke 23:27)
6. Add 1 cup of sugar to the bowl. EXPLAIN that the sweetest part of the story is that Jesus died because he LOVES us! He wants us to know and belong to him. (Read Psalm 34:8 and John 3:16)
7. Beat the mixture on high speed for 12-15 minutes or until the mixture forms stiff peaks. EXPLAIN that the color white represents the purity in God's eyes for those whose sins have been cleansed because of Jesus. (Read Isaiah 1:18 and John 3:1-3)
8. Fold in the broken nuts (You can leave some "batter" separate if you don't want nuts) Drop by teaspoons onto 2 parchment lined cookie sheets. EXPLAIN that each mound represents the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid. (Read Matthew 27:57-60)
9. Put the cookies into the oven, close the door, and turn off the oven. Give each child a piece of paint tape and seal the oven door closed. EXPLAIN that Jesus' tomb was sealed.
10. GO to bed!! EXPLAIN that they may feel sad to leave the cookies in the oven overnight. However, Jesus' followers were also sad because Jesus was sealed into the tomb. (Read John 16:20 and 22)
11. On Easter morning remove the tape before the children come and then together open the oven and give everyone a cookie. Notice the cracked surface and take a bite. The cookies are hollow! EXPLAIN that on the first Easter, Jesus' followers were stunned to find the tomb open and empty. (Read Matthew 28:1-9)
12. HAPPY EASTER!!

***Another idea is to cut our egg shapes from multi-colored paint swatches and hang in the window on strings

SESSION MEETING: March 10, 2020 at 5:00PM

The Session met on March 10, 2020 at 5 pm, in the Memorial Room. Elders present Susan Berg, Amy Levinski, Donald MacKay, and Judy Holmes. Elders excused absence: Robert Powers. A Quorum was established.

The Moderator, Lay Pastor Gordon Pennertz opened the meeting with prayer and education. The education was the first chapter from the book "The Neighborhood Church". The Agenda was presented. The minutes of the January 25, 2020 session meeting, the Installation and Ordination meeting, and the Annual Meeting were reviewed and approved. The Treasurer's report was presented and approved as printed. Balance on hand, \$ 51,951.70 in designated funds, and \$ 33,709.96 in undesignated funds.

PASTOR'S REPORT

Home Communion and visitation in the month of March was provided to: 1 member and Darlene was the attending Deacon. There also was a hospital visit made to 1 person, home and nursing home visits were made to 7 people along with 7 office visits.

CLERK'S REPORT

The number of people served communion for the month of February was 28 and March was 25. A thank you was received from a Tabitha Heart volunteer and she thanked us for the continued support and feels we are making a difference in the life of Rachel's kids. This was posted on the bulletin board in the Memorial room. Sue presented a change in the language for the Nominating committee policy. The change was to allow a member to serve more than one 2 year term, this was M/S/C.

Commissioners Report: Sue and Pastor Gordy reported on Presbytery. A speaker from General Assembly Elder Vilmaire-Cintron-Olivieri presented in the morning and then again after the meal. There were 2 overtures brought to the floor on racism and the laying on of hands more than one time. These overtures both passed.

OLD BUSINESS:

The audit will be completed in May.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Request for membership for Mark Kollé, the was M/S/C
2. Approval for the Baptism of Gwendolyn Ann for May 24, 2020. This was M/S/C
3. Approval of the Offerings for OGHS and the Christmas Joy. This was M/S/C

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PRAYER: Pastor Gordy prayed for the elders and the church family and the friends on the prayer list that are ill, having surgery, or waiting for results from surgery.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Worship/ Christian Education: Chair--Amy Levinski—the committee met on March 9th and they have started to plan Holy Humor Sunday, it will be a retrospective. Amy also relayed that Pastor Gordy is doing face time Confirmation classes with Kennedy so he does not get behind.

Buildings and Grounds: Chair: Donald MacKay—we discussed the ceiling in the sanctuary and if the repairs can be made before the celebration. Don is looking into options. We also discussed the lift, it was fixed, and the guy left because he was missing a part but said we

could use it if needed. Gordy tried it and something fell out so he called him to let him know what happened. Further repairs need to be done. \$2200 to fix and his is the last time.

Tech committee: Chair: Julie Pennertz—the computer issues have been dealt with and everything is working great. Rosie’s son in law came and fixed the computer issues so they are both able to print to the printer in the office. Also a booster was added in the memorial room to help with the Wi-Fi for the Television in the sanctuary. Julie is also looking a another word processing program as the one that came with the new computer is not compatible with past programs

The next meeting will be held on April 14th at 5:00 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 6:07pm with the Blessing Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Berg, Clerk of Session

Worship & Christian Education Meeting

April 9, 2020

Committee members present: Mary C, Rosie G., Jayne A., Julie Rae P., Gordy P., Amy L; chair

The Worship & Christian Education Committee met March 9, 2020 at 10:00 AM at church.

Committee members spent most of the meeting discussing the Holy Humor worship service.

There will be a final meeting to firm up plans before Holy Humor Sunday.

Committee discussed Mother’s Day (May 10): Carnations will be handed to women of the congregation Sunday morning. Pentecost Sunday (May 31): 34 red balloons will be ordered for the pews. Graduation Sunday (June 7): We are celebrating Moriah’s high school graduation.

Rosie will get a cake and Julie will purchase her gift. Father’s Day (June 21): lands on the 150th

year celebration. We will invite the men of the congregation to wear their favorite and most fun tie and there will be a tie parade to show off their wares. August 9 we will be holding our

worship service in the Prayer Garden.

There was discussion around how we are recording Gordy’s sermons. Julie is working on the technology part.

There was discussion around how we are recording Gordy’s sermons. Julie is working on the technology part.

Christian Education: Confirmation has been held via FaceTime as Rech’s are currently in Texas.

Chair update: as in accordance with Session decisions and state mandates of shelter in place, the April 6th W/CE committee meeting is canceled. Holy Humor Sunday (April 26) is possibly postponed. Gordy is facilitating worship through Zoom. If you are interested in participating in worship services and did not get an email invitation, please contact Gordy or Julie Rae for instructions.

ADAPTED FROM "THE BACK PEW" by Jeff Larson

PANDEMIC DAYS:

Far reaching than any random sick or PTO days you may have there is a much more concerning is the today's headline where Coronavirus (aka COVID-19) has been declared a global pandemic by the Center of Disease Control and the World Health Organization. This sobering bit of news has put our lives on hold until further notice. In response to COVID-19 we are closing of schools, stores, restaurants, sporting events, churches, and about everything else you can think of. The practical affects of this troubling news are the shortages of canned goods, cereal, and.. toilet paper. **TOILET PAPER?** side note: I heard someone say if you are hoarding TP you most likely have a greater 'problem' (rogue IBS?) than catching COVID-19.



But very seriously.. the real health risks of Coronavirus are not to be ignored. My understanding is those especially at risk are over 65 years old, or with compromised immune systems. The longer this continues the greater damage is done. **So I pray.. for God's protection,** and His wisdom to be displayed in ALL our leaders at all levels.

So I pray ALSO.. for a return to God as this is a time where we can be quiet (we are like on a government timeout). This is a time to pray, read God's word, and then.. pray some more. A time to un-clutter our lives, our minds, and unplug from many of the subtle entrapments of our modern life. Maybe.. **LESS is MORE.** **Share and talk** with friends about important issues, and about life. **Pray for God** to speak to you and to



others without the 24/7 din of life. Spend more intentional time with family regaining perspective on what is important. (Via safe distances or technology) Let go of things.. minimize the madness, rethink your financial priorities, and just say no to the evening news SHOWS/PROPOGANDA. AND of

course be careful to stay safe and healthy without letting Corona run your lives.

ETERNITY:

Also, I have heard it said more than a few times.. We listen intently to the CDC when it warns us there is a pandemic. We must take precautions to minimize COVID-19 from taking lives. BUT We don't listen intently when the Bible warns us the wages of SIN is death. Wide is the road that leads to destruction, but narrow is the path to Heaven. I am concerned that our society and even the church is more focused on a possible pandemic than a pending pandAMNIt

May God bless and protect all of you during this time. May the peace of God be realized in your lives through this pandemic and anything that comes our way.

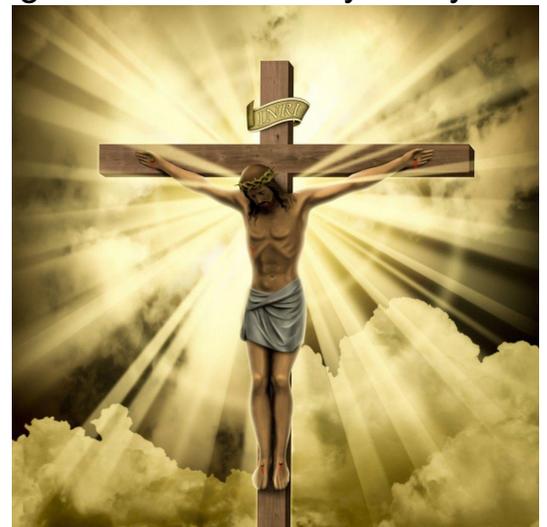




“When peace like a river, attendeth my way, When sorrows like sea billows roll
Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say... It is well, it is well, with my soul
Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come, Let this blest assurance control,
That Christ has regarded my helpless estate, And hath shed His own blood for my soul

*It is well (it is well)
With my soul (with my soul)
It is well, it is well with my soul*

“Eugene O’Neill, the American playwright who won a Nobel Peace Prize for literature, once wrote, “Man is born broken. He lives by mending. The grace of God is the glue.” We are indeed a broken people, and we do need “mending.” Only by God’s grace does that mending--that healing--come. God’s grace was extremely costly. Not only did the only begotten Son leave heaven, but when he did so, He took on the nature of a human being. That choice to become flesh and blood made Jesus vulnerable to suffering and death. Yet His suffering and death were the means by which God’s plan of salvation would be carried out. Jesus’ sacrifice opened the door to our reconciliation with the Father. We humans can do absolutely nothing to reconcile with God. That reconciliation required a sacrifice. The perfect sacrifice. The shed blood of a spotless Lamb. No angel met these standards. No human being could do this. Only the Son of God was qualified, and Jesus willingly embraced that role.”



APRIL PRAYER LIST

- 1-Dennis & Melva Burnette
- 2-Roger & Mary Crosbie
- 3-Beverly Driver
- 4-Bruce & Shirley Good
- 5-Rosie Graphentzen
- 6-Greg & Karen Heath
- 7-Deb Holmes (&Michael)
- 8-Judy Holmes
- 9-Laurie Johnson
- 10-Harriet Koelln
- 11-Adam & Darlene Kotelnicki
- 12-Amy Levinski
- 13-Lila Lundberg
- 14-Don Mackay
- 15-Dottie Madsen
- 16-Jerry Meuleners
- 17-Emily Morrison
- 18-Robbie Nordling
- 19-David & Katie Pennertz
Theodore and Gwendolyn
- 20-Pastor Gordy & Julie Rae
- 21-Tina Pennertz
- 22-Jackie Ashley and Emily Perez
- 23-Bob Powers & Rena Olson
- 24-Scott & Stephanie Rech
Kennedy & Franklin
- 25-Amy & Kevin Sullivan
- 26-Tom & Ruth Townsend
- 27-Philip & Legtha Waldron
- 28-Bill & Bev Barr
- 29-Grace & Chris
- 30-Mark & Nancy Chamberlain

The Burden Bearer

“Preach the gospel at all times, and when necessary, use words.” This famous quote is from St Francis of Assisi, and builds on the thoughts that actions speak louder than words. Action is essential because the burdens of those we love do, in fact, have weight. To come alongside someone who is struggling under the weight of difficult circumstances can be a great blessing to that person. To be present with a heart of compassion—a heart ready to serve however and whenever needed—is to be present with the heart of Jesus. BUT there’s more. This bearing of one another’s burdens entails a mystery you may have already been blessed to experience. You see, miraculous and life-changing power is released when one human being shares another’s pain. The greatest burden-bearer ever, Jesus Christ healed, fed, washed others and died for our sins. Even today, Jesus continues to share his power with us, enabling us to discern the place he has for us to love, and the avenue to walk as we take HIS heart into our world. AMAZING! What a beautiful privilege from our wonderful Lord.