

The Spirit

Byron Presbyterian Church July-August, 2009
(Web Page edition - abridged)

Summer is Here!

Pig Roast at Byron Heritage Day, Saturday, July 25, serving at 5:00 pm. 100 tickets are available. This is a benefit for the Byron Presbyterian Church.

The Byron Heritage Festival runs all day in the Town Park, beginning at 9:00 AM, with craft vendors, food, music and games for all ages.

Outdoor Worship - Sunday, July 26, 9:45 AM, in the park next to the church. Please bring your own lawn chairs and blankets. Refreshments on the front steps follow the service.

The Byron Youth Group is undertaking a variety of service projects for the church and mission projects in the community. See inside for more details.

For more news and photos, take a look at our web page: www.byronfpc.org

Sunday Worship happens at 9:45 AM
Christian Education for all ages on the 2nd Sunday of the month.
Nursery Care is available for young children
Church office phone is 548-2800
Contact Pastor James Renfrew at 548-2800

Church Information

Sunday Worship & Sunday School: 9:45 AM
Church Office: 548-2800
Church Web Page: www.byronfpc.org
Pastor: *James Renfrew*
Clerk of Session: *Mary Ann Blair*
Treasurer: *Robin Glazier*
Organist: *Elizabeth Weber*
Board of Trustees: *Marc Kenward*
Sexton: *Rhonda Hickey*
Secretary: *Janet Pike*

Strawberries

The strawberries are ripe this week, and they have been worth waiting for. I love how each plant sends out runners to spread new plants in the garden, and I am hoping for even more strawberries next season.

Our prayer chain is like this, each prayer has the potential to start a whole new center of prayer somewhere else. If you have prayers we are happy to be your "runners" with our Prayer Chain. Just let us know what you're praying about and we'll run with them. Please contact the church office (548-2800). Enjoy the strawberries!

Trustees Tidbits

Parsons, the business that maintains our organ, has submitted a report to Trustees concerning the need for major repairs. Our organ was installed as used equipment in the 1950's. There are numerous moving parts that are experiencing corrosion and electrical wiring is deteriorating, all due to the effects of time and damp conditions in the attic. Parsons' recommendations involve work that would total at least \$60,000.

This figure would be daunting even if the economy was healthy! There are some less expensive measures that could be taken - one such measure would cost \$1160, and another solution would be in the area of \$10,000. A redesign of the fan ducting could also reduce some of the worst corrosive effects. But these would only serve as stop-gap measures that Parsons would not guarantee. We might get lucky and carry on for many years, but we might get unlucky and face major costs in the near future.

Trustees believe that spending \$60,000 on equipment that is quite old may not be prudent at this time. Consider what we normally do when an auto mechanic recommends car repairs that would cost more than the car is worth - it may be time to consider alternatives! Trustees we will continue authorizing limited repairs that will prolong the use of the organ for as long as possible, at the same time accepting the fact that the organ may become less functional over time, and perhaps ultimately

become inoperable. The initial symptoms that we are already experiencing - "ciphers" (organ keys that fail to make a sound) will probably become incrementally worse over time.

In a way we are passing the problem along to a future group of trustees. In case you are wondering, the installation of a new organ similar to the one we have would be \$125,000 or more. It is likely that when the time comes we would replace our organ. A modern electronic organ with sound amplification system is one lower cost strategy to be considered.

Trustees realize that none of this is welcome information, but we are putting it before you now in the event that you have questions, ideas, technical or financial solutions for us to consider. [*Marc Kenward, Trustees*]

From the Pastor

Dear Friends,

During August we'll be reading a series of stories about the time that Jesus fed the large crowd. They were far from home, the hour had grown late, and they were hungry. With no store nearby, and no money even if there was, Jesus urged his disciples to figure out a solution. Finally, Andrew came forward, having found a boy with five loaves of bread and two fish. Jesus offered a prayer, and then they started passing the bread and fish up and down the rows and columns of people. Everyone was amazed to find that there was plenty of food to go around, and even a large quantity of crumbs left over.

Everyone was looking at Jesus, wondering how he did it. Was it because he held the bread in his hands and imparted miraculous power? Was it because of the words he said in his prayer? A skeptic might suggest that it was all a trick, a staged event, where the bread was secretly on hand, to be triumphantly presented at a key moment, to boost Jesus' reputation.

Some have said that the boy who came forward with such generosity shamed all the rest who were keeping their food hidden so they wouldn't have to share it. As his bread and fish started being passed along, everyone else started bringing out their own food and passing it along as well. I've actually seen it happen in a church that was located in a poor neighborhood. In that neighborhood there were too many families with too little food in their refrigerators or cupboards, but whenever the church had a potluck supper there was always enough to go around. Even so, it is still a miracle story, because any time one person responds to human need with generosity like that boy, it can unleash all kinds of possibilities that touch many others.

As the crowd pressed him for an explanation, Jesus tries to get people to look in a different direction, not at himself, not at his hands, not at his words, not even at the bread, but look to heaven. The bread comes from God, and it comes with a very important purpose: to give us our first taste of eternal life. Listen to what Jesus says in John 6:27: "*Do not work for food that spoils; instead, work for the food that lasts for eternal life.*" And in verse 33 Jesus says even more: "*For the bread that God gives is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.*" And in verse 35 we arrive at one of the key verses in John's Gospel: "*I am the bread of life, anyone who comes to me will never be hungry.*"

It should be these verses that we keep in mind as we share in the Lord's Supper, help out neighbors during summer mission work, and collect food every Sunday morning during worship. It is to enjoy the bread of life, and to share it!

James R. Renfrew, Pastor

Deacons In Action

The Deacon's have been meeting monthly. We continue to collect food items for the emergency food program of Genesee County Churches United at the Salvation Army in Batavia. The Salvation Army is also happy to get grocery bags. Any and all nonperishable food items are welcome and are now brought forward to be blessed during our offering time.

We have sent many cards and there has been visitation as requested. We have provided refreshments as requested at a memorial service.

The Deacon's would like to remind all members of the church that there is a library of Christian Books available at the church, and any and all are encouraged to sign out a book and enjoy. Take one while on vacation! Watch for an upcoming book review to be done by Bridgette on one of the books available from our library.

[Pamela Lynch]

PS - With the H1N1 virus confirmed in our area, please make use of hand sanitizers in the sanctuary provided by the Deacons. Thank you!

Session Notes

Session an endorsed an extensive proposal from the Christian Education Committee to undertake major cleaning and improvements to the Dining Room, front entry, kitchen and kitchen hallway as a summer youth project. The funds have already been raised by the youth group during the last several years. Portions of the proposal regarding conversion of the former Nursery School space into meeting/lounge space and the establishment of a pastor's office were deferred until Trustees have opportunity to examine underlying architectural issues over the next several months.

The Finance Committee gave a very positive report: Extra-Mile commitments have reached \$4000 and fundraising efforts have already exceeded the \$5000 goal for 2009 by \$1800. We are now \$992 short of overcoming the deficit, with two more fundraisers ahead of us. Upon reviewing this information, Session acted on the advice of the Personnel Committee to restore the Sexton's summer hours to the budget for 2009. Special thanks to our Sexton for hanging on during this roller-coaster!

Natural Church Development

In May we participated in a second Natural Church Development (NCD) survey. As we go to press with this newsletter we have just received the results of that survey.

NCD is a process used by churches around the world to improve the health of congregations. "Health" is measured using eight quality characteristics. Our first survey indicated that "Passionate Spirituality" was our minimum factor and this became the focus of our attentions over the course of the past year.

The second survey results show remarkable improvement across all eight quality characteristics, but the most notable result is more than doubling our "Passionate Spirituality" score, from 20 to 46. And our average score for all eight categories has risen from 44 to 61.

Empowering Leadership	49	65	+16
Gift-Based Ministry	44	64	+20
Passionate Spirituality	20	46	+26
Effective Structures	46	66	+20
Inspiring Worship	40	56	+16
Holistic Small Groups	46	52	+6
Need-Oriented Evangelism	43	65	+22
Loving Relationships	58	73	+15
AVERAGE	44	61	+17

Mission Committee News

Backpack Program Update: We have had great success in gaining local support for this program, and currently have a reserve of about \$1000 to start up with in the fall. We provided backpacks to about 18 kids total, with some fluctuations due to students moving out of the school district.

Each week we provide a backpack filled with nutritious food items, easy to prepare and eat, for children whose families need a little extra help. The backpacks are returned to school each week by the students, to be refilled. What is in the backpacks? Individual applesauce and fruit, 100% juice boxes, 2-3 healthy snacks, 2 breakfast items such as oatmeal or cereal, and 1 or 2 lunch items. This is based on a national program started many years ago; we just "borrowed" the idea to help children in our own community. Late summer, we will have a "kick-off" day, with some instruction on what we do. We will announce this in the church bulletins and hope to have some new faces join us. It takes many hands to make this a successful program, and your help is needed! The packing takes about 1/2 hour each week, and then backpacks need to be dropped in the elementary school office.

Mission Dinner: "From Russia With Love". On Saturday, September 26th the Byron Presbyterian Church will be hosting two international visitors to our Presbytery: ***Mr. Piotr Anatolyevich Romme, International Peacemaker, and Mrs. Ellen Smith, a Mission Co-Worker*** are spending a week with the congregations of Genesee Valley Presbytery.

Piotr is coordinator of a network for ministry with the Roma people. Piotr is Russian-German, descended from the Volga River Germans who were transported to Siberia, where Piotr was raised. Translation will be provided by Ellen Smith. Ellen and her husband, Al, are coordinators of the congregational twinning project in Russia and Belarus that matches interested congregations in the United States with congregations in Russia and Belarus for friendship and mission. Watch for more details about this special event in August.

Save the Date: We will be traveling to Cameron Community Ministries on Sunday, December 6 to offer a warm, filling meal and a Sunday Celebration Service to the residents of the Cameron area in Rochester. Please save the date in join us! It is always a fun, rewarding experience when we go to Cameron. Great chance for community service hours, high school students!

THANK YOU!

For your faithfulness in supporting the Church budget, Special Fund Raising Projects, and the Extra Mile Campaign.

Between Special Fund Raising and Extra Mile Giving, we have been able to reinstate Rhonda Hickey's (our Sexton) work for the summer. Her work schedule was reduced in February due to our church budget deficit. Our financial picture now appears brighter and she will again be working this summer. No other budget reductions are being considered at this time.

Reminder: Due to vacations and other activities of summer, contributions often become irregular during June, July and August. The church's obligation go on as usual, however. Please continue to be faithful in your financial commitments to our church so that we may end 2009 with a surplus rather than a deficit.

The "Living Budget" Series

Part II - Trustees

Electric	\$1,600
Gas	4,500
Phone/Internet	900
Sewer & Water	1,525
Insurance	2,760
Repair & Upkeep	2,400
TOTAL	\$13,685

Trustees oversee and maintain the church's infrastructure, that primarily being building and grounds maintenance, repair and upkeep. We are also instrumental in developing and managing capital improvement projects. Trustees also have some oversight of organ maintenance and repair.

While most of the above can be planned or anticipated, it is always the Repair & Upkeep that keeps things interesting as most are not anticipated or expected. In the past it may be a broken furnace, leaking water heater or a malfunctioning stove. In recent months it has been wind damage repair, expenditures of building code compliance, and consideration of organ repairs to extend its service life.

The church building is and will continue to be a focal point in our community for worship and fellowship. It is important that we understand its significance and continue to offer a place of warmth, caring and sanctuary.

Youth Group News

Our Byron Youth Group has an active summer planned! First, we want to thank all who helped make for a successful car wash at the beginning of June. In 2 hours we raised \$387.50.

Summer Project #1 will be a return to mission sites in Orleans County that we visited last year, including Holley Agribusiness Child Development "Grace's Place" in Holley, the Genesee-Orleans Ministry of Concern in Albion and Project Life in Waterport. These projects were wonderful experiences for our youth last summer, and we hope to arrange similar experiences in July and August of 2009.

Summer Project #2 will be a an in-house project to upgrade, redecorate, and beautify some rooms in our church building. Having benefited from so much help and encouragement from the church over the years, our youth would like to return the gift and undertake projects involving the Dining Room, Kitchen, Kitchen Hallway and Front Entryway. The project originally envisioned work on the former Nursery School space, but Trustees have asked for a delay on that part of the plan until some structural issues can be researched more closely.

We are still researching summer camp and family vacation schedules, but it appears that we will be doing these projects during the weeks of July 13-17 and August 3-7, with mission projects in Orleans County in the mornings, and our in-house projects in the afternoon. We will work on Monday, Tuesday

and Wednesday of those weeks.

New Hymnals

The Choir has just received new Presbyterian Hymnals to expand their available music resources. Several anonymous donations allowed 20 Hymnals and a loose-leaf organist's copy of the Hymnal to be purchased. Plans are underway to make use of this new music in the fall, when the Hymnals will be dedicated for the Choir's use.